

DEFINING A CHANGING WORLD:  
THE DISCOURSE OF GLOBALIZATION

A Dissertation

by

GILLIAN TEUBNER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2004

Major Subject: Speech Communication

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## ABSTRACT

Defining a Changing World:

The Discourse of Globalization. (May 2004)

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Globalization has, within academic, political and business circles alike, become a prominent buzzword of the past decade, conjuring a diversity of associations, connotations and attendant mythologies. The literature devoted to the issue of globalization is both vast in scope and diverse in nature, becoming increasingly prominent not only in academics and politics, but in the popular press, as well. The goal of this dissertation is to provide the reader with a map of themes, narratives, and characterizations related to globalization circulating in the United States in order to demonstrate the potential ways that individual thought on the issue is shaped by public discourse. A secondary goal is to critically examine specific texts to identify areas where their arguments overlap, conflict, or may be misconstrued due to weak or inaccurate evidence. By better understanding the map of rhetorical formations in widely-read texts regarding globalization, it may be possible for people to be better able to understand the concerns and intentions of those voicing various and often competing viewpoints.

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CHAPTER I  
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY  
AND MEANING OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization has, within academic, political and business circles alike, become a prominent buzzword of the past decade, conjuring a diversity of associations, connotations and attendant mythologies. The literature devoted to the issue of globalization is both vast in scope and diverse in nature, becoming increasingly prominent not only in academics and politics, but in the popular press, as well. It is perhaps not surprising that this literature has not yet coalesced around a common set of arguments or principles but has rather developed within distinct disciplinary discourses (see Robertson and Khondker, 1998). Economists debate the extent to which we now inhabit a perfect mobility of goods, labor and capital – a condition created by deregulation, financial liberalization and the continued advancement of information technology. In a related vein, political economists consider the extent to which such economic processes generate a withering of the state even more abrupt than that envisioned by Marx. Increased capital mobility and the punitive discipline of the financial markets, it is argued, weaken the authority of the state in the spheres of fiscal and monetary policy, driving a seemingly inflexible process of convergence, “institutional isomorphism” and state retrenchment. Political scientists, normative political theorists and scholars of international relations consider the desirability and, in

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This dissertation follows the style and format of the *Southern Communication Journal*.

some cases, the claimed “reality” of global governance, a world political system and an emergent post-national “cosmopolis” (see, for example, Hoffman, 1995; Luard, 1990; Zolo, 1997). Similarly, sociologists debate the existence of a homogenous global civil society as the world has become united by political struggle and patterns of mobilization which transcend the boundaries of the national by Westernization, McDonaldization, Coca-Colonization and American cultural imperialism (see Albrow, 1996; Giddens, 1990; Latouche, 1996; Shaw, 1994; Tomlinson, 1991). A diverse group of cultural theorists, literary critics and anthropologists have debated the nature and existence of a global culture that is postnationalist, postcolonial, postmodern and cosmopolitan (see Appadurai, 1996; Cheah and Robbins 1998; Featherstone, 1990; McLuhan, 1964; Wilson and Dissanayake; 1996).

While these texts share a common emphasis on the flows of capital, labor, information, technology, and culture, globalization still lacks precise definition. There appear to be varying interpretations regarding both the meaning of the term globalization in general, and, more specifically, whether or not the phenomenon exists at all. Analyses of globalization often exhibit not only a multitude of definitions of the term (and often even the lack of any attempt at a definition), but present several differing arguments regarding the nature of the phenomenon, including arguments that it does not exist as a new set of processes, but is merely the continuation of a process that has been ongoing for centuries. Also, globalization is positioned in various discussions in two differing ways. It is discussed both as a tool for explaining a given process (or set of processes) and as that which needs to be explained. Despite variations in the way that it

is discussed, the term globalization captures elements of a widespread perception that there is a broadening, deepening and speeding up of world-wide interconnectedness in all aspects of life, from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the environmental. At issue appears to be a “global shift”; that is, a world being molded, by economic and technological forces, into a shared economic, political, and cultural arena (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, 1999). Given the variations in views on the definition, causations, and outcomes of such a global shift, one is easily led to question which is the “correct” way to view globalization? An additional question stemming from the variety of definitions would be, is it possible to state for certain that one view is the correct one?

It is not my intention to demonstrate the pervasiveness of globalization or to argue for widespread acceptance of a particular definition of the term. Perhaps globalization is merely a term used to provide a rhetorical vision of the world climate at a particular period in the course of history<sup>1</sup>, but it may also be that the world is currently experiencing an epochal shift. The goal of this project is to provide the reader with a map of themes, narratives, and characterizations related to globalization circulating in the United States in order to demonstrate the potential ways that individual thought on the issue is shaped by public discourse. A secondary goal is to critically examine specific texts to identify areas where their arguments overlap, conflict, or may be misconstrued due to weak or inaccurate evidence. By better understanding the map of rhetorical formations in widely-read texts regarding globalization, it may be possible for people to be better able to understand the concerns and intentions of those voicing



various and often competing viewpoints. It may be argued that unspoken communicative choices shape how we view globalization and therefore it is important for those speaking on all sides of the issue, as well as their audiences, to better understand how arguments about globalization are framed in order to engage in a more direct dialogue with one another, and avoid talking past each other. This project views selected globalization discourse through a critical lens, attempting to identify underlying assumptions the authors are relying on when making specific arguments, as well as the ways in which the arguments made about the issue globalization may be flawed or framed in a manner that is inconsistent with actual events occurring around the world. Such an analysis seeks not only to lead to a better understand the potential for globalization discourse to influence current and future policy, but also to illuminate several different ways that the phenomenon is viewed.

A common thread in both contemporary rhetorical theory and in critical or ethnographic organizational communication research is a new interest in narratives as organizing principles of worldviews, ideologies, or cultures. Fisher, for example, contends that public moral argument is based on competing narratives about history and public life. Condit (1990, 1999) examines both the abortion and humane genome controversies in terms of conflicting narratives, characterizations, and ideographs. Aune (2001) examines competing globalization narratives in far-right accounts of the Federal Reserve Bank. Since the purpose of this dissertation is to enable metacommunication across ideological divides in the globalization debate, one simple perspective for

comparing and contrasting Friedman, Hardt and Negri (2000), and dominant media frames on globalization is to identify their narrative forms.

For example, Hardt and Negri (2000), following Marx and Engels (1965) tell a satiric story in which the effort of Empire to conquer the world creates its own "gravediggers" by globalizing the possibility of resistance. Friedman (2000), and to a lesser extent, the hegemonic elite media narratives, tell a romantic story in which the heroic entrepreneurs of global capitalism battle against the naive forces of protectionism and adolescent anarchism to bring about a new, more equitable world order. Other narratives are possible, such as Weberian tragedy, in which humane values fall prey both to the secularization, "disenchanted" forces of capitalism and bureaucratization, and to the "charismatic" leaders and movements (e.g., radical Islam) that emerge to protest against capitalist rationalization.

First, it is important to examine the history of the term globalization along with the various definitions of the term in order to set up a framework for the aforementioned analysis. The issue of globalization has been so widely discussed that I will first attempt to demonstrate why a critical analysis of globalization arguments is needed. The subsequent chapters analyze the ways that globalization is discussed in best-selling books read by the general public, and examines the rhetorical formations existing in U.S. press coverage surrounding several events significantly connected to the issues of globalization. There are certainly other sites of discourse that could be included in this analysis (including presidential speech on issues related to globalization, voices from the far Right and far Left, and media coverage outside of the U.S.), but I chose these two

sites (best-selling books and U.S. press coverage) because they are likely the arguments that most U.S. citizens hear regularly and, therefore, may have the most potential to shape thoughts on globalization. This discourse, being the most widely circulated in the U.S., arguably has the potential to shape legislation and policy-making on a number of issues, ranging from free trade considerations to governmental subsidies. I will conclude by comparing and contrasting my findings from these two sites of discourse in order to better understand how this discourse, to the extent that it is effective, shapes public opinion and, perhaps, behavior (such as voting behavior or other forms of political activism).

### **What is globalization and when did it begin?**

The term globalization has been in use since the early 1960s. Academic use of the word only began in the early 1980s, but has become increasingly prevalent in a number of disciplines. Publications on the issue of globalization started to appear in the first half of the 1980s, at a rate of one to three per year (Busch, 2000)<sup>2</sup>. The term began appearing regularly in the mainstream press in the late 1980s, beginning primarily as a reference for the expanding free market but more recently including more political and cultural references and, more specifically, has begun appearing in reference to specific events, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) protests in Seattle and the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Although it appears that the usage of the term has increased consistently in recent years, globalization remains what may be called a shifting concept in that there is not a universally accepted definition of the term (Busch, 2000). Not only has globalization

been considered “*the* concept of the 1990s, a key idea by which we understand the transition of the human society into the third millennium” (Waters, 1995, p. 1), it has also been criticized as “largely a myth” (Hirst and Thompson, 1996, p. 2). Some definitions that illustrate the great variety of understandings of globalization, ranging from strictly economical to relatively all encompassing, include:

Globalization refers to a world in which, after allowing for exchange rate and default risk, there is a single international rate of interest (Brittan, 1996).

...globalization means the partial erasure of the distinctions separating nation currency areas and national systems of financial regulation (Strange, 1995, p. 294).

Globalization refers to the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections between the states and societies which make up the modern world system. It describes the process by which events, decisions, and activities in one part of the world can come to have significant consequences for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the globe (McGrew, 1992, p. 23).

[Globalization]...is the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before – in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper, cheaper than ever before (Friedman, 2000).

A social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding (Waters, 1995, p. 3).

...a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. xii).

Globalization is “action at distance” (Giddens, 1994, p. 4).

This list of definitions is by no means comprehensive, but it clearly demonstrates that globalization means different things to different people. Some consider it a predominantly economics-based phenomenon while others suggest that it is a worldwide system of hegemony. Many suggest that it is misunderstood and ill defined. Susan Strange even refers to it as “a term used by a lot of wooly thinkers who lump together all sorts of superficially converging trends in popular tastes for food and drink, clothes, music, sports and entertainment with underlying changes in the provision of financial services and the directions of scientific research, and call it all globalization without trying to distinguish what is important from what is trivial, either in causes or in consequences” (1995, p. 293). Despite such cynicism regarding the nature of globalization rhetoric, it abounds and, as such, begs for both serious and critical analysis in order to better understand the contexts in which it is discussed and the predominant themes in those discussions.

### **Research questions**

The increasing popularity of the term globalization in conjunction with the continued lack of a concrete definition or definitive understanding of the nature of the process (or processes) referred to by the term leaves a number of questions unanswered. To attempt to begin to map the globalization debate and narrow the scope of the project, the following research questions direct this analysis. Note that these questions are not exclusive of one another in that the answer to one may, in fact, provide insights toward answering others. Listing the questions individually is merely an attempt to guide the direction of the analysis. This list is meant to be neither limited nor comprehensive and

has been guided by previous works examining public arguments in an historical, macro, or longitudinal method (see, for example, Aune, 2001; Condit, 1990 and 1999; Condit and Lucaites, 1993).

- How do various texts approach the issue of the “reality” of globalization? It seems as if there is a tendency to assume that globalization is some new phenomenon by some (e.g., Friedman, 2000), while others (Hardt and Negri, 2000) suggest that is a myth that promotes the spread of capitalism.
- How are differing arguments for the “causes” of globalization discussed (e.g., globalization as the inevitable product of multiple forces changing the nature of the world versus globalization as the result of intentional actions leading to domination)? Some arguments suggest that technological advances in areas such as communications are at the heart of globalization while other arguments are made suggesting the spread of global capitalism is resulting in world domination by multi-national corporations and is diminishing the power of the nation-state.
- What are the specific themes that run through the discourse on globalization (e.g., repetitive exemplars, analogies, metaphors, narratives, etc.)? Friedman (2000), for example, uses the metaphor of the relationship between the Lexus, as the symbol of world economic production and globalization, and the olive tree, which represents community, land, and tradition, the opposing force.

- What is missing from the discourse on globalization? What specific aspects of the phenomenon have not been adequately discussed or need to be elaborated upon? A Lexis-Nexis database search for the term globalization revealed that it is talked about in U.S. mainstream media almost solely in economic terms. This suggests the possibility that other aspects of globalization (i.e., cultural and environmental issues) may be suppressed or even ignored.
- How has the discourse surrounding globalization changed over time? Is it possible to identify a particular point in time when this term came to be used and how its use has spread? Are there pivotal moments or events that have expanded the focus on globalization, such as NAFTA or the protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle in November of 1999?

I do not mean to suggest that answering such questions will make the murky and evasive concept that we currently call “globalization” clear and precise. Instead, it is my goal to analyze a variety of sites of discourse related to the issue of globalization to gain a better understanding of how the term is used not only as a reason for certain conditions that exist and ongoing changes the world is experiencing, but also to better understand the motivation for the heavy focus on globalization. Is this merely a “sexy” topic that academics and economists feel obligated to use as the basis for research and discussion? Has the “reality” of globalization been rhetorically constructed by scholars and the discourse surrounding the issue? How do the media portray issues related to globalization? It may be that academics are shaping our own knowledge of both the

world and our own disciplines by the ways we approach researching and writing about globalization. It is important for academics to remember that we have the potential to succumb to the public arguments that fall most closely in line with our own ideologies, rather than taking a more critical approach and looking at the way we frame our own discourse as a result.

### **Analytical procedure**

The questions posed in the previous section are difficult to answer in any definitive manner. However, it is my goal to provide an analysis of the discourse of globalization by choosing several specific sites of discourse that dominate the globalization literature. Initially, it seemed that identifying specific texts within different disciplines would provide a comprehensive body of literature to analyze. However, the problem of how to identify a “discipline” arises with such an attempt, particularly when there are numerous texts written by multiple authors from different disciplines, for example, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (2000) is the combined effort of Michael Hardt, a professor of literature, and Antonio Negri, a political scientist. Therefore, rather than focusing on the analysis of specific texts within different disciplines, I identify specific texts within different sites of discourse as representative of the discourse on globalization. Although there is no perfect method of determining what discourse represents each view on globalization (or even insuring that every view is considered), I examine discourse stemming from two distinct areas: a selection of best-selling, popular books and United States popular press because these sites of discourse are the primary sources of globalization information for the educated U.S. general public. The criteria I



use to identify these texts are based primarily on popularity, not only in terms of sales but also in terms of the predominance of citations of the works and number of reviews of these existing texts (specifically, of globalization books).

In addition to the difficult task of identifying specific texts to include in this analysis, identifying the best method for systematically analyzing these texts is a challenge. Some potential approaches include content analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) and grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), but the examination of discourse on such a large scale prohibits many of the micro-level analyses suggested by these approaches. However, the identification of themes suggested by these approaches seems to be of primary importance in the analysis I am proposing. Therefore, I turned to Condit's (1990) "Decoding Abortion Rhetoric" and (1999) "The Meanings of the Gene" as models for my analysis. As Condit suggests, the comparison of a large number of texts on a micro-analytic scale present numerous problems. Condit resolved this problem by selecting specific sets of arguments and analyzing texts that most closely resembled these arguments.

Another problem associated with such a textual analysis is procedural in terms of what to compare and how. Condit (1999) resolved this problem by conducting a preliminary critical reading of the texts and developing a set of internal hypotheses regarding the framing of the issues. Condit refers to rhetorical formations to designate the relatively co-occurrent sets of discourse (metaphors, narratives, values, etc.) and to indicate that most time periods are dominated by change processes, or attempts to establish different ways of seeing the world, as opposed to a static, monolithic

perspective that dominates the public space. Due to the varying principles and theories related to globalization, it is important to consider the details of various parts of the discourse, including topics, metaphors, story lines, and images that frequently occur. By analyzing the rhetoric of globalization in this manner, I hope not only to better understand what “globalization” actually means from various viewpoints, but also to better comprehend the ways in which the issue is discussed in public discourse.

According to Condit and Lucaites (1993),

From our perspective, there is no dominant ideology that inexorably governs social and political action. Instead, there is the rhetorical process of public argumentation in which various organized and articulate interest group negotiate the problems of resource distribution in the collection life of the community, and there is a shared rhetorical culture out of which they all draw as they strive to express their particular interests (pp. xiv-xv).

In addition to analyzing the discourse by looking at the rhetorical formations that exist circulate in various camps with different views of globalization, I will examine it through a critical lens. I will look not only for what EXISTS in the discourse, but what is MISSING from the discourse (in this sense, I will be looking at what voices may be privileged over others and how certain voices speaking on the issue of globalization get silenced).<sup>2</sup> Also, I will attempt to identify contradictions in the arguments within the discourse and potential underlying, potentially hidden, biases that may not be visible to the general public. Gramsci’s notion of hegemony plays a role in this analysis in that I must allow for the possibility that the rhetorical culture of the U.S. and Western Europe is attempting to map global problems, and in doing so, is struggling for a language for which we have had no global equivalent.

### **The meaning and history of globalization**

In the past decade the phenomenon of globalization has become a major focus of public discourse. Traditional ideologies and theories have not been able to adequately explain or even describe the idea of globalization. It has, in fact, taken on the mantle of a new paradigm (Held and McGrew, 2002). Much as modernization took on intellectual primacy within the social sciences during the 1960s, globalization has become the center of discussion about economics, politics, culture, and religion.

Although media references to globalization have become increasingly common since the 1980s, the concept itself is not a new one. It can be traced back to the work of many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century intellectuals, including sociologists such as Saint-Simon to students of geopolitics such as MacKinder, who recognized how modernity was integrating the world. But it was not until the 1960s and early 1970s that the term “globalization” was actually used. During this period of rapidly expanding political and economic interdependence, much reflection took place on the inadequacies of traditional approaches to thinking about politics, economics, and culture which presumed a distinct separation between internal and external affairs, the domestic and international arenas, and the local and the global. The debate over the increasing interconnectedness of human affairs resulted in the emergence of world systems theory, theories of complex interdependence and the idea of globalization itself as varying methods of accounting for the processes through which the actions of states and people were becoming more linked. Following the collapse of state socialism and the consolidation of capitalism worldwide, academic and public discussion of globalization

intensified dramatically. The belief that the world was becoming a shared social and economic space soon dominated public discourse that spread quickly due to the rapid spread of information brought about by technological advances. While this belief has not been rejected by many, whether the idea of globalization ultimately helps or hinders our understanding of the contemporary human condition has become the focus of much intellectual and public debate. Any attempt to make sense of this debate is difficult due to the multiple and varying conversations coexisting without much real dialogue. Taken together, these conversations do not allow for any simple characterization of the phenomenon. No single account of globalization has prevailed as competing assessments continue to muddle the discussion. Additionally, the dominant ideological traditions of conservatism, liberalism or socialism fail to offer coherent readings of, or responses to, a globalizing era. While some conservatives and liberals find common ground in diminishing the significance of globalization, others of similar political persuasion view it as a serious threat to traditional values. The greatest difficulty in attempting to seek understanding of the phenomenon through the ongoing discussions regarding its nature is the overwhelming heterogeneity of the correspondence between the positions adopted by those on various sides of the issue.

As with most core concepts in the social sciences, the precise meaning of globalization remains contested. It has been conceived as action at a distance (meaning that the actions of social agents in one location can have significant consequences for “distant others”); time-space compression (referring to the way in which instantaneous electronic communication diminishes the constraints of distance and time on social

interaction and organization); increasing interdependence (conceptualized as the increasing connection between national economies and societies so that the events occurring in one country directly impact others); a shrinking world (the erosion of borders and geographical barriers); and various other concepts, including global integration, consciousness of the global condition and intensification of interregional interconnectedness (Giddens, 1990; Albrow, 1996; Held et al., 1999). Despite the diversity of existing definitions of globalization, Held and McGrew (2002) argue that what distinguishes these definitions is the emphasis on material, spatio-temporal and cognitive aspects of globalization.

Globalization has an undeniably material aspect in that it is possible to identify flows of trade, capital and people across the globe. The different kinds of infrastructure, such as physical transport or banking systems, normative trade rules, and symbolic elements such as English as a lingua franca, establish the conditions for regularized and enduring forms of global interconnectedness. Globalization does not refer to random encounters, but rather enduring patterns of worldwide interconnectedness. However, it refers to more than a stretching of social relations and activities across regions. It also suggests an increasing intensity of global flows such that states and societies become increasingly enmeshed in worldwide systems and networks of interaction. As a result, distant occurrences and developments can have serious domestic impacts while local events can have significant global implications. In this sense, globalization represents a significant shift in the spatial reach of social action and organization toward the interregional or intercontinental scale. The constraints of social time and geographical

space no longer appear to impose fixed barriers to many forms of social interaction and organization (examples include the World Wide Web and 24-hour trading in global financial markets). As distance “shrinks,” the relative speed of social interaction increases so that event in distant parts of the globe may potentially have immediate worldwide impact involving diminishing response time for decision-makers.

Globalization also implies a cognitive shift manifested in both a growing public awareness of the ways in which distant events can affect local realities (and vice versa) as well as public perceptions of shrinking time and geographical space.

Essentially, globalization denotes the “expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of interregional flows and social interaction” (Held and McGrew, 2002). However, the transformation in the scale of human social organization that links distant communities does not necessarily imply the emergence of a harmonious world society or a universal process of global integration involving the convergence of cultures and civilizations. According to many of the existing public arguments about globalization (see, for example, Giddens, 2000, and Hardt and Negri, 2000), the awareness of the growing interconnectedness creates not only new animosities and conflicts, but it may also fuel reactionary politics and deep-seated xenophobia. Globalization is experienced in different ways in various parts of the world and, therefore, remains a deeply divisive and vigorously contested process.

### **Globalization: myth or reality?**

Many have questioned the reality of globalization, wondering what is the “global” in globalization? If the global cannot be interpreted literally, as a universal

phenomenon, then the concept of globalization lacks clear specificity. There is also the issue of the more relativist or subjectivist conception of the global which simply conceives of it in terms of a hierarchy of spatial scales of social organization and interaction (from the local to the national, regional, and global). Some argue that because much of the literature on globalization fails to specify the spatial referents for the global that the concept become too broad to operationalize empirically. It therefore becomes largely meaningless as a tool for understanding the contemporary world.

In an effort to test the globalization thesis, many have attempted to construct an abstract model of a global economy or global culture and then assess how contemporary trends compare to it (Hirst and Thompson, 1996). Such attempts to establish the “truth” about globalization presume that statistical evidence by itself can prove the nature of its existence. In this sense, there is a questioning of the descriptive or explanatory value of the concept of globalization from this skeptical perspective. Rather than providing an insight into the forces shaping the contemporary world order, the discourse of globalization is understood as a primarily ideological construction, or a myth that helps justify and legitimize the neoliberal global project - the creation of a global free market and the consolidation of capitalism within the world’s major economic regions. In this sense, the concept of globalization is a “necessary myth” used by governments to force their citizens to meet the requirements of the global marketplace. This skeptical position is often associated with an essentially Marxist or a realist ontology. Traditional Marxist analysis suggests that capitalism has a pathological expansionist logic, necessary for survival because national capitalism must continuously expand the geographical reach of

capitalist social relations. Realism also views the existing international order as constituted primarily by the actions of the most economically and militarily powerful states. From this perspective, the internationalization of economic and social relations is contingent upon the policies and preferences of the great powers. For example, without the exercise of American power, according to this argument, the existing liberal world order underpinning increasing international interdependence would eventually collapse.

In contrast to the assertion that the concept of globalization is largely a myth, an ideological construction, or a synonym for Western imperialism, others argue that, despite the fact that the discourse of globalization may serve the interests of Western society globalization reflects real structural changes in the scale of modern social organization. Evidence for such a position is found in the growth of multinational corporations (MNC's), world financial markets, the diffusion of popular culture, and global environmental ruin. Globalization is not merely an economic phenomenon. This post-Marxist and post-structuralist understanding of social reality conceives of globalization as differentiated and multidimensional. It is a "set of interrelated processes operating across all the primary domains of social power, including the military, the political and the cultural" (Held and McGrew, 2002). The patterns of globalization, however, are not necessary identical. Patterns of cultural globalization, for example, may not necessarily replicate patterns of economic globalization. Globalization proceeds at different tempos, with distinctive geographies.

An additional difficulty with an attempt to establish a more systematic specification of the concept of globalization is the significance attached to its temporal



or historical forms. Those arguing that globalization is a real, identifiable phenomenon attempt to locate contemporary globalization within long-term patterns of secular historical change. The existence of premodern world religions confirms that globalization is not only a phenomenon of the modern age. Making sense of contemporary globalization requires placing it in the context of secular trends of world historical development.

Whether one is to take a skeptical stance and assume that globalization is largely a myth perpetuated to provide Western powers more ability to expand their economic influence or a globalist stance believing that globalization is a real phenomenon consisting of not only economic, but also cultural and social dimensions, it is necessary to understand the various historical events and conditions that led to the contemporary global condition. Such an understanding requires identifying significant periods in time that demonstrate the nature of global changes, suggesting that globalization discourse is useful for better understanding how the contemporary world order differs from the systems of the past.

### **The globalization debate**

The verb "globalize" occurred for the first time in the English language in 1944, and is according to Merriam Webster's dictionary denoting "to make world-wide in scope or in application." In the French language, the word "mondialisation" occurred for the first time in 1953, the word "globalization" occurred for the first time in 1968, and they are both synonymous with the English term globalization. This definition of what it means to "globalize" is, needless to say, rather broad and requires some clarification. As

a starting point, it may be useful to compare it with the concepts of internationalization, transnationalization and multinationalization. These are, however, also rather vague concepts, and a comparison is therefore doomed to be cursory.

The following is an attempt at schematizing the four concepts of globalization, internationalization, transnationalization and multinationalization, and thus to contrast them with each other. The various concepts are to a great degree being used interchangeably, and laying out the conceptualization that forms the basis for the analysis will be useful.

“Internationalization” may be said to focus on the relationship between states (i.e., that the state is considered the basic unit in the process). Exchange of goods, services, money, people and ideas take place between states, and the concept of internationalization denotes an increase in such exchanges. The term “transnationalization” is interpreted as transfers on other levels than the state level (i.e., exchanges across state borders between various kinds of organizations, companies and individuals). The concept of “multinationalization,” on the other hand, focuses on the company as the unit of analysis in international political economy, and signifies a process in which a so-called multinational company (MNC) transfers resources from one national economy to another. An ideal-typical MNC would be assumed to be independent of national borders and beyond state control, and such companies are by many politicians as well as by political scientists considered to be one of the major challenges to state sovereignty. It may be claimed, however, that the term multinationalization is used interchangeably with transnationalization, but the usage of

the former may be said to focus on the firm as a basic unit to a greater extent than the latter. The concept of “globalization,” being the object of the present study, is even more elusive than the above-mentioned concepts. There is little consensus as to the definition of the term among leading academics, and it is being used in the most diverse contexts such as culture, politics, economics, technology, etc. However, several elements are recurrent. Firstly, the importance of information technology in connecting and speeding up different processes, especially the finance market and the media, is often emphasized. Secondly, intensification of international trade causing the national economies to merge into one global market is another important aspect. Thirdly, globalization in all the different domains mentioned is often considered a challenge to the state, namely its ability to play the role it has had through the last century in providing a secure and predictable environment for its citizens. Thus, one sees that as the concept of internationalization focuses on the state and transnationalization and multinationalization on the (multinational) company, the term globalization may in many cases be said to signify an all-encompassing process that covers all aspects of modern civilization and not only economy or politics.

Ranging from cultural through technological to economic issues, globalization is a keyword in analyses of international and domestic politics. As mentioned above, however, both the term itself and the phenomena it is intended to describe are highly contested. Several attempts at categorization have been advanced. This categorization may however be disputed, as it clearly appears to be an oversimplification of the different approaches. Held et al. (1999) have proposed another categorization, ordering

the different theorists according to three main categories, namely the hyperglobalists, the skeptics, and the transformationalists. This approach is clearly more nuanced, and provides a solid basis for a discussion of globalization. The categorization is based on the following five variables:

1. Conceptualization
2. Causal dynamics
3. Socio-economic consequences
4. Implications for state power and governance
5. Historical trajectory

#### *The hyperglobalists*

The hyperglobalist approach to globalization starts with a rather broad conceptualization in which almost all aspects of social interaction are taken into account. Thus, globalization is considered a fundamental and dramatic political, social and economic development (Held, et al., 1999). According to Held, et al., economy is strongly emphasized by the hyperglobalists, because it is causing a denationalization of economies through various types of international exchange. This approach is a common trait for the so-called hyperglobalists. As concerns the causal dynamics of globalization, the hyperglobalists emphasize the importance of capitalism and technology as driving forces. Thus, the spread of market liberalism is fundamental to the processes, and the new technologies are pivotal in reducing the friction caused by time and space in all sorts of transfers. Implications for state power and governance are according to this approach clear: the globalization processes definitely erode the power of the state. A

main cause of this erosion is the mobility of transnational companies that presumably makes it hard for the state to have significantly higher taxes than neighboring countries. As the tax-base is weakened, so is the economic power of the state. An important premise is the demise of the welfare state, a process that creates new socio-economic patterns of winners and losers within the state. As concerns patterns of international distribution, the hyperglobalist view typically underlines the importance of knowledge in the new economy: the difference between skilled and unskilled labor will determine the economic development within as well as between countries. The historical trajectory of globalization according to this view clearly points towards a global civilization, in which nationality and geographical borders no longer have any significance.

#### *The skeptics*

Paul Hirst, professor at the University of London, who disagrees with the hyperglobalists on most accounts, represents the skeptical view of globalization. His concept of globalization is based primarily on economic indicators and he accordingly sees globalization mainly as a process of internationalization. As concerns causal dynamics, the typical skeptic would stress the importance of states and markets, thus delimiting the concept more sharply than the hyperglobalists and the transformationalists (Hirst and Thompson, 1996).

Consequently, the role of political choice with respect to the issue of globalization, is focused as compared to the hyperglobalist view. When it comes to socio-economic consequences, the typical skeptic does not consider globalization such a fundamental and consequential phenomenon, and this of course influences the

assessment of this variable. First, the skeptics claim that globalization is by no means unprecedented; relatively speaking, today's international trade has not yet reached the level of the interwar period. Second, they find the empirical basis for claiming that there is such a phenomenon as globalization dubious at best. Genuinely transnational companies are rare (Hirst and Thompson, 1996), capital mobility has not caused a shift in investment from the developed to the less developed countries, and most importantly, the so-called globalization signifies an increase in trade, investment and financial flows primarily between the triad countries of the US, the EU and Japan. Finally, Hirst claims that the major economic powers definitely have the power to exert governance - given the will. Thus, the skeptics conclude that there are still great inequalities both between and within countries, and that globalization does not have a great impact on this situation.

As concerns the historical trajectory of globalization, the skeptics typically consider today's international transfers as concentrated between the regional blocs, (i.e. USA, Europe and Japan). Accordingly, the development goes toward increased contacts between these blocs, and not towards a general globalization. There is no consensus as to whether this development implies a higher degree of conflict. Held mentions Huntington and his "Clash of Civilizations" among the skeptics, (Held, et al., 1999) but it is hard to put forward any strong generalizations about the skeptics on this point. The skeptics are rather critical towards both the concept itself and the processes it is intended to describe. Although the skeptics generally claim that nothing much has happened, they would typically agree with Hirst in saying that "globalization is a concept with real effects",

(Hirst and Thompson, 1996, p. 3), thereby suggesting the rhetorical force of the word.

Thus, the skeptics claim that the alleged globalization has not taken place, but at the same time, they would generally have been critical towards it if it had. In other words, it may be said that the typical skeptic is critical towards many of the processes that are said to be part of the globalization processes, even though he would not agree that they may correctly be categorized as such.

### *The transformationalists*

As Held defines himself as a transformationalist (Held, et al., 1999) it may be claimed that the concept is defined so as to appear a reasonable middle ground as compared to the other two categories. One should therefore be cautious in applying this concept, but it nevertheless appears to have some analytical force in categorizing the various approaches to globalization. The transformationalist conceptualization of globalization appears to be situated somewhere in between the hyperglobalist and the skeptical definitions, as it according to Held, et al., is perceived as "the reordering of interregional relations and action at a distance" (p. 10). In short, this may be interpreted as emphasizing the decreased importance of spatial dimensions, in that actions in one place have direct consequences for actors in other places. Thus, the concept is wider than the skeptics' rather precise economic definition, but at the same time narrower than the all-encompassing definition of the hyperglobalists.

However, Anthony Giddens, the director of the London School of Economics, is counted among the transformationalists, and he definitely employs a rather broad conceptualization. For instance, he speaks of globalization as a "package of change"

(Giddens, 2000, p. 3) that covers all aspects of social, political and economic life. Concerning the causal dynamics of globalization, the transformationalists are according to Held much less precise, when he formulates this to be "the combined forces of modernity" (Held et al., 1999, p. 10). It is hard to see whether this implies a stringent model of causation, but it definitely appears broader than both the hyperglobalist and the skeptical definitions. As to state power and governance, the transformationalists may also be said to be less precise when saying that it is reconstituted and restructured. However, they typically claim that we are in the middle of a process that has as yet no precise tendencies, but will eventually have strong bearings on state power and governance. The same goes to a certain extent for the socio-economic consequences: the transformationalists predict new patterns of global stratification, but how and according to which factors this stratification will take place is less clear. As causal dynamics and socio-economic consequences appear rather unclear according to the transformationalist model, it is hardly surprising that the historical trajectory appears indeterminate. According to this thesis, we will witness a dual process of global integration and fragmentation, of which the outcome is yet to be predicted. Although caution is definitely in place, this approach seems difficult to position in relation to the other two categories.

### **The history of the world system**

Although it may be argued that globalization has been an ongoing set of processes that have been in existence for a very long time, globalization became a defining term in the 1990s. Optimists argued that trade with the third world would keep



American inflation low, despite ten years of high U.S growth rates, a belief that helped underpin the great bull market of the Clinton Presidency. Pessimists argued that globalization was boxing the world into a “global trap”, increasing inequality and undermining the ability of the state to deal with pressing social problems. While they might have disagreed about everything else, optimists and pessimists seemed to think that modern globalization was unprecedented.

Economic historians agree with the statement that the world economy in 1913 was extremely well-integrated even by late 20th century standards. World historians have gone much further. They argue that globalization is a phenomenon which stretches back several centuries, or even several millennia. Some attach globalization “big bang” significance to the dates 1492 (Christopher Columbus stumbles on the Americas in search of spices) and 1498 (Vasco da Gama makes an end run around Africa and snatches monopoly rents away from the Arab and Venetian spice traders), viewing the period after 1500 as inaugurating a genuinely global epoch of world history.

The many meanings of the word "globalization" have accumulated very rapidly, and recently, and the verb, "globalize" is first attested by the “Merriam Webster Dictionary” in 1944. In considering the history of globalization, some authors focus on events since 1492, but most scholars, theorists, and journalists concentrate on the much more recent past. Two of the bestselling popular books on globalization are Thomas Friedman’s *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (2000), and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (2000), which has been so widely read that Harvard Press made it available on the internet for download because it had not printed

enough copies to meet the public demand for the book. The next chapter takes a critical look at the ideas of these authors, whose two books take radically different perspectives on the impact of globalization.

## CHAPTER II

## CRITIQUES OF POPULAR BOOKS ON GLOBALIZATION

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use the metaphorical distinction between trees and rhizomes (or roots) as one of the ways to illustrate the possibility of extricating thought from what they call the “State model” (p. 374). For Deleuze and Guattari, there is a certain mutually reinforcing conformity, or complicity, between the form of thought and the model of the sovereign state. As they explain:

It is easy to see what thought can gain from this: a gravity it would never have on its own, a center that makes everything, including the State, appear to exit by its own efficacy or on its own action. But the state gains just as much. Indeed by developing in thought in this way the State-form gains something essential: a whole consensus. ...If it is advantageous for thought to prop itself up with the State, it is no less advantageous for the State to extend itself in thought, and to be sanctioned by it as the unique, universal form (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 375).

It is within this context that Deleuze and Guattari’s metaphor of “arborescent thought” can be used, for the tree “plots a point, fixes an order” (p.11) – an order based upon a knowing, thinking subject, a consistent conceptual matrix, and the objects the world to which these concepts are applied. In doing so, this type of thinking ordains an exteriority with regard to the object of analysis that is seen as occurring in a world “out there.” Furthermore, in keeping with the quotation, this order suggests a world constructed through mutually constitutive dualisms (roots-branches) by concealing the roots under the earth and exposing the trunk and the branches, which gives the illusion of self-engenderment, unity, and multiplicity. It is precisely this illusion of exteriority that confers a certain order upon the world and the concealment of its generative

principles that are of particular interest to an understanding of the nature of globalization. The distinction between the arborescent approach and the rhizomatic approach with regard to understanding globalization is in the fact that the rhizome, or root, metaphor, implies that there is an underlying, hidden structure to globalization. In contrast, the arborescent approach implies that the exposed aspects of the phenomenon can be used as units of analysis. Ultimately, however, the roots remain attached to the tree, suggesting that there are generative principles that can be examined as well as the products of that generation. In order to further explicate the ways in which this metaphor can be articulated within the context of globalization, I will supplement the above with the critique of “social science” put forth by Claude Lefort<sup>3</sup>.

According to Lefort, the social scientific approach starts from an a priori notion of society – a space defined as society that can be observed and acted upon from a vantage point outside the latter. This objectification of society fails to underscore that observation and construction are, in themselves, products of this same society. It is this objectification – or, rather, the concern with objectivity within positivist social sciences – that allows for the circumscription of what is seen as being the political sphere through the economic, the social, or the religious. This organization of “reality” presupposes a form of knowledge, and epistemological viewpoint, in which a knowing subject, at “a sovereign distance from the social, makes the world “out there” intelligible and can categorize the latter from a position of scientific neutrality (Lefort, as translated

by de Larrinaga, 2000). In failing to acknowledge that what we understand as society is not a pre-established given (i.e., that instead of being a self-referential system, what can be understood by society is shaped by a particular mode of the social), social sciences fall prey to the positivist fiction “of placing society before society, by setting down as principles that can only be apprehended from an experience which is already social” (p. 147).

Within the context of globalization, this critique can help to clarify the ways in which various approaches to understanding how the discussions of the global processes are continuously altering our sense of both self and society. Although the authors previously mentioned (Deleuze and Guattari, 1997; de Larrinaga, 2000), have made unique contributions to academic understanding(s) of the processes involved in, and the nature of, globalization, these authors are rarely read by the general public and are therefore not likely to be representative of the kinds of literature that inform public opinion regarding issues surrounding globalization.

According to Condit (1999), most scholars have tended to focus on the discourse of intellectual leaders because it is more coherent and thus easier to write about and describe. In contrast, ideology as it appears in public media is necessarily abridged and incompletely elaborated. As academics, it is commonplace to debate such lofty and complex theories of the implications of globalization, but the public does not typically have an awareness of globalization debates on such a level. The public receives a mix of discourses

that are mostly fragments of theories. There are, however, several popular, widely-read works that attempt to provide more complete understandings of globalization. Whether they actually accomplish this task may be debated, but they are, nevertheless, arguably primary sources of information about globalization for the general public. Therefore, I will examine several authors' arguments regarding globalization that are more likely to be read by the U.S. public and, in turn, influence the way they think and talk about issues related to a changing global society and economy.

The rationale for conducting such an examination is that public understandings of globalization are not likely to directly consider the linguistically constructed elements of many of the debates and issues surrounding the phenomenon. By considering the possibility that varying arguments about globalization are constructed through the use of carefully chosen language (either included or excluded from the discourse), it may be possible to demonstrate how the way that language is used influences the way that the public views the issues surrounding globalization. I chose to critique two bestselling and dramatically contrasting books in an effort to demonstrate how different conceptions of globalization have the potential to shape how the public thinks and behaves with regard to the changing world: Thomas L. Friedman's "Lexus and the Olive Tree" (2000) and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (2000).

After examining these works, I will provide a summary of how the books characterize globalization and how the arguments might impact public perceptions of the phenomenon. If we examine globalization from the rhizomatic/arborescent perspective that Deleuze and Guattari (1997) discussed, it may be that there are generative yet hidden elements of globalization (rhizomes, or roots) that are overshadowed by the exposed and more publicly discussed trunk and branches.

### **Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree***

I've gotta have a framework. My predecessors had the Cold War-it really shaped the whole thing. My framework is this thing we call 'globalization.' That's the framework through which I cover the world, and there's an intellectual thread that runs through all my columns that's reflected in that. What I tell people very sincerely is that I may be wrong about globalization, its power, its relevance. But I'm not going to be five per cent wrong, I'm going to be 100 per cent wrong. Because I've got a framework. and either it's right-and I'm always building it and adjusting it, reshaping it-or I'm going to be 100 per cent wrong. I'm going for the big one-oh-oh. (Friedman, 1997).

Friedman's (2000) book, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* seeks to describe the future of the world as new systems and institutions fill the vacuum left by the Cold War. Friedman's thesis is that globalization is replacing the bipolar Cold War internationally. Globalization, according to Friedman, includes the diffusion of Western values and culture worldwide, but its main component is the global financial community (The Electronic Herd). Friedman argues that real power rests with the Herd, which imposes its values upon countries which are the recipients of investment.

Friedman is the foreign affairs columnist for the New York Times, and in the past he has been bureau chief for the Times in Beirut and Jerusalem. He has traveled

extensively, from the Amazon to Southeast Asia to Berlin to Angola to rural China and much more as a reporter with the Times. His anecdotes and metaphors drawn from these experiences are alternately educational, insightful, and amusing, although his theory is overzealous. He styles himself one of America's leading interpreters of world affairs.

Friedman (2000) defines himself as a "globalist", and attempts to define a fundamentally new era of human history, which he calls globalization:

The inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before - in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations, and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before (p. 9).

He also says,

The more I observed this system of globalization at work, the more obvious it was that it had unleashed forest-crushing forces of development and Disney-round-the-clock homogenization, which, if left unchecked, had the potential to destroy the environment and uproot cultures at a pace never before seen in human history (p. 23).

This book is rife with hidden (and blatant) assumptions, contradictions, and faulty logic. The subtitle of this book is 'Understanding Globalization', yet his arguments lack historical analysis and a clear understanding of the power structure of human affairs. Friedman's (2000) core thesis is defined thus:

That globalization is not simply a trend or a fad but is, rather, an international system. It is the system that has replaced the Cold War system, and, like that Cold War system, globalization has its own rules and logic that today directly or indirectly influence the politics, environment, geopolitics and economics of virtually every country in the world (p. 7).

He focuses on the differences between the "Cold War" era and "Globalization" in colorful, sometimes inane metaphor: "how big is your missile?" vs. "how fast is your



modem?” sumo wrestling vs. 100 meter dash, or “friends and enemies” vs. “competitors” (p. 10).

Friedman (2000) says that globalization has its own demographic pattern: “a rapid acceleration of the movement of people from rural areas and agricultural lifestyles to urban areas and urban lifestyles more intimately linked with global fashion, food, markets, and entertainment trends” (p. 13). It also has its own defining power structure. According to Friedman, the cold war system was built exclusively around nation-states, whereas globalization is built around three balances (between nation-states, between individual nation-states and the global markets, and between nation-states and individuals).

First, to look at human affairs today and divide the last fifty years into “cold war” (post-WWII until the fall of the Berlin Wall) and “globalization” (1989 to present) is simplistic. The face-off between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. was not the only defining large-scale thing happening in the last 50 years. The exodus of American corporations overseas post-WWII, the proliferation of communication technology and electronic media post-WWII, and the civil rights movement were also extremely important trends of the last half-century.

Second, the assertion that this demographic pattern is unique to the last decade is questionable. People have been moving from country to city since cities existed. Likewise, food, fashion, and entertainment change and mutate through cultural exchange. Certainly the extent to which these movements and changes occur is different,

but the pattern has been in existence for quite some time, and well before the last decade, to be sure.

Finally, his description of the power structure is overly optimistic about the outcomes of global capitalism and fails to adequately acknowledge the hegemonic forces at work and the potential for the corporation to become THE global power. The cold war (and after) was not as simply as he explains it. American corporate interests, specifically the arms industry, were (and are) major players of the power structure.

The global markets are financial centers set up by corporations and governments to fundraise. The purchase of stocks (or bonds, or swaps, or futures, or whatever else) essentially lends money to a corporation or government, which in turn attempts to use that money to make more money before they (hopefully) give more money back to the stockholder. In this sense, people come together to make money.

What Friedman (2000) fails to recognize is the possibility that some of the market examples he uses as success stories may, in fact, function quite differently than the way he portrays them functioning. For example, the markets of Singapore, New York, Tokyo, Frankfurt and the rest are not a power structure; they are places set up by the power structure (and those riding their coattails) to raise money. Friedman calls these millions of investors the “Electronic Herd”, an apt analogy. A huge pool of money flows around the world, seeking profitable opportunities. Through technological advances and worldwide market connections, more money moves faster and farther than ever before. The electronic herd is increasingly competitive, quick, connected, and volatile. And yet Friedman does not take this analogy of the herd far enough: it is

obvious that the herd has cowboys, who run it to market to milk it, shear it, slaughter it, and whatever else is possible. And these cowboys work for someone who lives in a big house.

Friedman (2000) recounts a story of reporters peppering Bill Gates with this question about inflated stock prices: “These stocks, they’re a bubble, right? They must be a bubble.” Gates gets annoyed, and finally responds: “Of course they’re a bubble. You’re missing the point. All this new money will drive innovation faster and faster” (p. 343). Is the point being missed? Haven’t we seen that technology stocks have been wildly inflated, and isn’t this a good example of some herd animals getting led to the slaughter?

The Lexus and the olive tree are “actually pretty good symbols of this post-Cold War era,” says Friedman (2000, p. 7). He writes of a tension between modernization and the ancient forces of culture, geography, tradition, and community. He says,

Olive trees represent everything that roots us, anchors us, identifies us and locates us in this world - whether it be belonging to a family, a community, a tribe, a nation, a religion, or, most of all, a place called home...we fight so intensely at times over our olive trees because, at their best, they provide the feelings of self-esteem and belonging that are as essential for human survival as food in the belly. Indeed, one reason the nation-state will never disappear, even if it does weaken, is because it is the ultimate olive tree - the ultimate statement of whom we belong to linguistically, geographically, and historically (p. 31).

He goes on,

The attachment to one’s olive trees, when taken to excess, lead us into forging identities, bonds, and communities based on the exclusion of others. And when these obsessions really run amok, as with the Nazis in Germany, or the murderous Aum Shinrikyo cult in Japan or the Serbs in Yugoslavia, they lead to the extermination of others. (Friedman, 2000, p. 32)

Friedman characterizes conflicts between the Serbs and Muslims, Jews and Palestinians, and the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda as fights over who owns which olive tree. He refers to India's nuclear testing program and English soccer hooligans as olive tree, Yugoslavia under Milosevic as an olive-tree-hugging nationalist regime, and messages posted by hackers on the *New York Times* website as having a high-tech olive-tree language of their own.

The Lexus, Friedman (2000) writes, represents an equally fundamental, age-old human drive, the drive for sustenance, improvement, prosperity, and modernization, as it is played out in today's globalization system. The Lexus represents all the burgeoning global markets, financial institutions and computer technologies with which we pursue higher living standards today. He says,

Of course, for millions of people in developing countries, the quest for material improvement still involves walking to a well, subsisting on a dollar a day, plowing a field barefoot behind an ox or gathering wood and carrying it on their heads for five miles. These people still upload for a living, not download. But for millions of others in developed countries, this quest for material betterment and modernization is increasingly conducted in Nike shoes, shopping in integrated markets and using new network technologies. The point is that while different people have different access to the new markets and technologies that characterize the globalization system, and derive highly unequal benefits from them, this doesn't change the fact that these markets and technologies are the defining economic tools of the day and everyone is either directly or indirectly affected by them (p. 33).

The olive tree is a powerful symbol of the foundation of western civilization. It was and is a staple crop of the Greeks and Romans. It represents a life sustaining connection to the earth. We come from the earth, as does our food, our shelter, and our

clothes. This is not a symbol, but a fact. Those we share food with and our connection to the earth; these are the foundation, the root from which civilization exists.

This is the olive tree that Friedman (2000) talks about. And yes, defending this connection, this self-sufficiency, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, can rightly be called an “olive tree” struggle. But what about cults, cyberpunks, India’s nuclear testing program, the Nazis, being a complete person with feelings of self-esteem and belonging? To say that this is the “olive tree” desire or motivation is nonsense. Even more ludicrous is the claim that the nation-state is the ultimate olive tree.

Farmers have been an oppressed group for much longer than recorded history, and nation-states play a large role in this oppression. The development that led to the systems that produce a Lexus (and that give many of us a high level of comfort and convenience) is supported by our connection with the earth. We still need to eat. The Lexus does not exist independent of the olive tree, but the olive tree definitely exists independent of the Lexus.

For Friedman (2000) to suggest that the Jew/Palestinian conflict is a fight over who owns which olive tree is inaccurate and ridiculous. This ongoing conflict was fanned by the military might and the colonial power-broker diplomacy of Britain, the U.S., and France. Equally questionable is Friedman’s (2000) claim that India’s 1998 nuclear testing program is “olive.” In response to this testing, the U.S. imposed sanctions and the major credit-rating agencies downgraded India’s rating, in effect raising interest rates on international loans and black marking the country for international investors. India wanted respect from the international community, but the rat race that nations play

becomes problematic in terms of the essential connection to the earth that sustains us as humans.

It seems as if many of us have a weak connection with the earth. We eat food and haven't the first clue where it came from or who harvested it. We buy clothes made half a world away, and someone else built our house.

The most coherent thing Friedman (2000) says about the symbolism of the Lexus is that it is "a fundamental, age-old human drive...for sustenance, improvement, prosperity and modernization..." (pp. 32-33). The Lexus is an outgrowth of the olive tree, and technological development is a natural unfolding out of our connection with the earth. We expand and improvise, we improve on old tools, we seek more efficiency and comfort, power and status.

It is imperative to understand this phenomenon, its influences in our lives and in the broad sweep of human affairs. It is closely related to our desire for security, convenience; in our greed, our competitiveness, our profit seeking, and in empire. It is imperative to know our history to see and sort out this tangled web of dependency we find ourselves in.

What convergence of circumstance brought us to this point? Friedman (2000) puts almost no energy towards attempting to understand development in a historical context, and much less does he try to understand the causes and conditions of poverty and empire. To him, development is a "Lexus," "the new era of globalization," the new global economy that everyone must plug into or be left behind.

Friedman (2000) mentions the nineteenth century in passing (the railroad and the steam engine causing a rapid extension of trade networks in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) and refers to colonialism once, quoting Chandra Muzaffar, the president of a Malaysian human rights organization. Muzaffar says,

I think that globalization is not just a rerun of colonialism. People who argue that have got it wrong. It is more complex than that. Look around. As a result of globalization, there are elements of culture from the dominated peoples that are now penetrating the north. The favorite food of Brits eating out is not fish and chips today, but curry. It is no longer even exotic for them. But I am not just talking about curry. Even at the level of ideas there is a certain degree of interest in different religions now. So while you have this dominant force [Americanization], you also have a subordinate flow the other way...there are opportunities now for others to state their case through the Internet. Iran is highly linked to the Internet. They see it as a tool they can use to get their point of view across. In Malaysia, Mahathir now gets some coverage [all over the world] through CNN. The campaign for banning land mines was launched through the Internet. This is what globalization does for marginalized groups. To argue that it is a one-way street is not right and we must recognize its complexity. People operate at different levels. At one level they can be angry about injustices being done to their society from Americanization and then talk about it over McDonald's with their kids who are studying in the states (Muzaffar, as quoted by Friedman, 2000, pp. 357-358).

Mahathir was the former prime minister of Malaysia when the country was burned by international investors. He accused the developed countries of manipulating Asian currencies to destroy them as competitors. He says, "This is an unfair world. Many of us have struggled hard and even shed blood in order to become independent. When borders come down and the world becomes a single entity, independence can become meaningless" (Mahathir, as quoted by Friedman, 2000. p. 342).

Friedman (2000) quotes some hard facts. As of a 1999 U.N. Human Development Report, Internet access was largely confined to OECD (Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development), the richest countries of the world. 19% of humans live in these countries, and account for 91% of all Internet users. The U.S. and Sweden have 600 phone lines for every 1000 people, and Chad has 1 per 1000. South Asia, with 23% of human population, has less than 1% of Internet users. Bulgaria has more Internet hosts than the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, not including South Africa.

The fifth of the world's people living in the highest-income countries (OECD) has 86% of the world gross domestic product, 82% of the world export markets, and 74% of the world's telephone lines. The bottom fifth has about 1% in each of these areas. Sure, Iran has the Internet; that is, the government and the elites have it. It is misleading, arrogant, and absurd to talk about the benefits of the Internet to poor people when the vast majority of the poorest fifth of the people on the planet do not even have phones (Kearney, 2003).

The gap between the rich and the poor is widening. In 1960, the 20% of the world's people who live in the richest countries had 30 times the income of the poorest 20%. By 1995, the richest 20% had 82 times as much income (Kearney, 2003). The implicit assumption running through Muzzafar's statement is that globalization is helping "marginalized" people. Not a surprising belief from the president of an activist group, and while no doubt true in some cases, it is questionable in the big picture.

Globalization arguably is at least, in part, an extension of the past and Friedman's (2000) framework as globalization being the beginning of a new world order after the end of the Cold War is simply that: a framework for analysis. Globalization may very well be part of the continuing evolution of humanity. Its roots are found in the ebb and



flow of war, tool making, farming, city-states, nations and empires; from mutual survival to mutual gratification. European colonialism starting around the 15<sup>th</sup> century is a huge part of this legacy.

With superior transportation and weaponry, the Europeans (and later Americans) made contact with the cultures of the globe, and with very few exceptions, dominated them. The techniques varied. Some colonialists traded (not always with willing participants - witness America's gunboat diplomacy with Japan), some enslaved, some converted and then enslaved, some slaughtered out of hand, some exploited natural resources, some inadvertently killed entire cultures with smallpox. Nowhere was the balance of power even in the long term, and everywhere indigenous culture changed dramatically. This is the root of the endemic poverty of today's 3<sup>rd</sup> world.

One of the first corporations, the East India Company, was created in England in 1600 by Queen Elizabeth I and her business partners. The Queen granted the company limited liability for losses incurred; that is, if the ships, crews, and cargos were lost, the financiers could lose their money, but could not be held responsible for the lives of their employees. Hey, she was the queen. Ltd., Inc., and other such legal definitions are in fact decrees that unite government and business in making money.

This was a watershed for the English and later American power structure. The East India Company greatly profited from international oceangoing trade, with the essential benefit of protection by (and later dominance of) the English Navy. This trend is amplified today, with American transnational corporations acting through, above, and beyond the U.S. government. The U.S. military defends the supply lines of oil

companies, arms contractors are financed by the government, capitalists puppet presidents and other government officials, the U.S. government pays “foreign aid” through American transnational corporations (as with the Marshall Plan), and gives huge subsidies to corporations in the form of tax deductions for virtually every business expense; big corporations own and operate virtually every major newspaper, television and radio station in the U.S.

The power structure utilizes technological, economic, and psychological tools to attain supremacy. It is interesting that the flag of the East India Company was the inspiration for the flag of the United States. The company’s flag had 13 red and white horizontal stripes with the Union Jack in the top left corner.

Friedman (2000) describes free-market capitalism as the dominant system of today’s global economy:

The driving idea behind globalization is free-market capitalism – the more you let market forces rule and the more you open your economy to free trade and competition, the more efficient and flourishing your economy will be. Globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world. Therefore, globalization also has its own set of rules – rules that revolve around opening, deregulating, and privatizing your economy, in order to make it more competitive and attractive to foreign investment (p. 9).

The free market, where prices are determined by unrestricted competition, may not exist outside of economic rhetoric (Aune, 2001). However, it is being approached by today’s global economy with the advent of the internet, the increasing privatization of both government industry and debt, and the increasing pressure on emerging markets of the third world to open themselves up and fundraise for foreign capital to improve the quality of life for their people. Friedman (2000) describes this phenomenon in three

parts: 1) democratization of technology, 2) democratization of finance, and 3) democratization of information.

First of all, the term democratization is a misnomer here. Democracy is a government by the people. The twin facts are that international investors own a country's foreign debt, and that the government is being run like a business to retain and attract more international investment (making it essentially beholden to foreign capital), put this country at an extreme distance from anything resembling a democracy. All the innovations and advances in microchip technology, telecommunication, digitization, the Internet, and satellite broadcasting, in the hands of profiteers, do not make or allow for democracy.

Second, microchip technology, telecommunication, digitization is very closely related to the Internet and cable & satellite TV, Friedman's (2000) definition of the democratization of information. His point is well taken, though. Electronic media and information exchange is increasingly sophisticated, and Internet commerce is redefining business. Governments are becoming more like businesses to attract investment from the private sector, businesses are becoming more streamlined and efficient, and more people than ever (the little capitalists) are playing the market in a variety of ways, trying to make money from the businesses and governments that are fundraising off of them.

In short, the profit motive is usually the primary objective. Companies race frenetically for more capital, quicker and more accurate information, new markets, cheaper and more skilled labor, more effective advertising, better customer service, and more innovative, efficient, and cheap research, development, design, production, and

distribution of something to make more money on. Poor countries compete to attract international investment and industry to build a quality of life in the model of America, the OECD is riding America's coattails, and America is the power broker, chief consumer, and undisputed dominant force in human affairs today. There is another name for this: the rat race. It is a modern version of a very old story.

And of course, not everyone wants to join the race. For a variety of reasons, some countries refuse to enter the game, or are having a hard time entering it. Friedman (2000) refers back to the cold war, and describes the situation as free-market democrats vs. free-market kleptocrats. He says,

Kleptocracy is when many or all of the key functions of the state system – from tax collection to customs to privatization to regulation – have become so infected by corruption that legal transactions become the exception rather than the norm (p. 146).

Also,

Kleptocracy is the billions of dollars that have been made in corrupt privatization programs throughout Eastern Europe and Russia, where tiny oligarchical elites, often in cahoots with local mafia and government officials, have managed to gain control of the formerly state-owned factories and natural resources at below-market rates, making them overnight billionaires (p. 149).

Friedman (2000) goes on to blast these “robber barons,” which are much like mutual funds in the U.S., and says that at least the American robber barons invested in American stocks and real estate, whereas the Russians also invest in America, impoverishing their own country. The ruthlessness and greed exhibited by American industrialists of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are a textbook study of corruption and oppression. Chapman (1856) said it well:

It was inevitable that the enormous masses of wealth, springing out of new conditions and requiring new laws, should strive to control the legislation and the administration which touched them at every point...nothing can blind us to the fact that the methods by which they were obtained were subversive of free government (p. 247).

Friedman (2000) rates economies from communist operating system DosCapital 0.0”up through to DosCapital 6.0 (U.S., Hong Kong, Taiwan and Great Britain), and provides a formula for countries to be more effective in the global economy with his metaphor of the golden straitjacket, the defining political-economic garment of the globalization era. He ticks off a list of the economic characteristics of this straitjacket: eliminating/lowering tariffs, privatizing state-owned utilities and industries, opening banking and telecommunications systems to private ownership, removing foreign investment restrictions, and opening industry and stock & bond markets to direct foreign ownership. Friedman ominously tells the world, “If your country has not been fitted for (a straitjacket), it will be soon” (p. 184).

He goes on to describe the effects of this straitjacket on the governments of Britain, the United States, and Germany: there is no real difference between major political parties, and the foundations of trade and foreign policy remain essentially unchanged from one administration to the next. “...on the political front, the Golden Straitjacket narrows the political and economic policy choices of those in power to relatively tight parameters” (p. 106). The people’s choice for president, prime minister, or some other office is really no choice at all. Whether it be Bush, Gore, Clinton, Major, Blair, or Dole; it just doesn’t matter. It is going to be business as usual. Which begs the

observation: these countries are not, in operating fact, democratic. They're capitalist. Democracy and capitalism do not necessarily exist side by side.

Friedman (2000) likes to compare countries to the parts of a computer; the hardware, the operating system, and the software. He vaguely defines hardware as "the basic shell around your economy," and says that throughout the cold war there were three kinds of hardware in the world: free-market capitalist, communist, and hybrid hardware that combined the first two. The operating system is the broad macro-economic policy of the country, and the software is the legal and regulatory systems of the country.

His definition of a nation's hardware is simplistic and inaccurate. Countries are not eggs, and capitalism is wealthy people leveraging their power and influence in the entire system (hardware, OS, and software). Likewise, communism is a central government that is administering and managing the entire system. Equally preposterous is his definition of the operating system and software. The legal, political, and regulatory systems of a country are the basis of that country's macro-economic policy (corporate law, tariffs, etc.); software doesn't determine the operating system, the operating system determines the software.

This analogy, upside down and backward, falls short. A better comparison: The hardware of a country is the people, the industry, the technological capacity; the actual physical structure. The operating system is the political, legal, and regulatory systems; the organization of the physical structure. The software is the implementation; the

position and direction of trade, foreign policy, education, and social and public works programs.

Friedman's (2000) analogy expands into an even more incongruous description of the ways in which countries operate. He says of the end of the cold war, "Suddenly, we found ourselves at a remarkable moment in history: for the first time, virtually every country in the world had the same basic hardware: free-market capitalism" (p. 152). This is a gross assumption based primarily on Friedman's belief. He dwells on the need for poor countries to get their operating systems and software up to speed to participate in the global economy, and blithely assumes capitalism to be the foundation of their successful development. He ignores 400 years of capitalist exploitation of these countries, the latest episode being the transnational corporations setting up shop to take advantage of cheap labor, resources, and tax breaks. He argues that the transnationals and the Electronic Herd will be the impetus for better operating systems and software that constitute the building blocks of democracy. Granted, when capital flows into the government and industry of poor countries, this government and industry might become more efficient in creating more money. But what about promoting democracy? The people with capital will benefit, and the poor will not.

Friedman (2000) backs out of this obvious discrepancy by claiming that "if there is a common denominator running through this book, it is the notion that globalization is everything and it's opposite. The state of human affairs today is not a notion. It simply IS. It is a fact, independent of our beliefs, discourse, theories and predictions about it. And it is likely that this vast pool of capital spearheaded by transnational corporations

does not build the foundations of democracy in developing countries, much less as an indirect side effect of the intent to profit in these countries. It is also likely that the digital divide is further widening already huge income gaps. Even in America, income gaps are widening, and it isn't just because people are getting richer. Between 1979 and 1995, the poorest 20% of Americans saw their income drop 21%, and the richest 20% saw their income jump 30% (Kearney, 2003). Friedman says that many workers in developing countries face the following:

Oppression by the unregulated capitalists, who move their manufacturing from country to country, constantly in search of those who will work for the lowest wages and lowest standards... These workers need practical help... For years, U.S. manufacturers have used their clout in Congress to block any attempt to impose U.S. working standards on their factories abroad (p. pp. 206-207).

He goes on to say,

The AOL subsidiary in the Philippines paid its college-educated workers in 1999 about \$5.50 a day... which is 34% more than the (Filipino) minimum wage, but roughly what an unskilled American worker would make in an hour. This is a meager wage, but it is a first step to bringing a whole new generation of educated Filipinos into the fast world (p. 52).

Exploitation is not the first step to equality, but Friedman (2000) advances many possible solutions to this problem. These include working with transnational corporations to show them how they can be both green and profitable at the same time, by improving their public and consumer relations through upgrading environmental practices and labor standards; “being green, being global, and being greedy can go hand in hand” (pp. 282-283). He also advocates microlending (\$100-1000 with no collateral) to women making \$1/day to buy a sewing machine, a bike to take vegetables to market, or a cell phone to rent out to other poor villagers, developing technology that will help to



preserve the environment and slow the rate of wilderness destruction, and using the Internet to inform and mobilize people worldwide against corporate exploitation of people and resources, like the microfinancing of the Grameen Bank (Hassan, 2002). Yet Friedman says,

While all these filters for protecting culture and environment make sense in theory, you need them all working at once to have any hope of making an impact. The rain forest park alone will never pay enough to eliminate all logging; bureaucrats alone will never have enough political will to apply all environmental laws; green corporations alone will never be enough to slow the pace of degradation; Internet activism alone will never be enough to restrain the Electronic Herd. That is why I hope, and I actually believe, that as we are going to enter this next decade of globalization, someone, or some party, is going to build their politics around the notion of making all of these filters work together. I'm not talking about Greenpeace, I'm talking about mainstream parties and politicians (p. 300).

He goes on,

America has had two hundred years to invent, regenerate and calibrate the balances that keep markets free without becoming monsters. We have the tools to make a difference. We have the responsibility to make a difference. And we have a huge interest in making a difference. Managing globalization is a role from which America dare not shrink. It is our overarching national interest today, and the political party that understands that first, the one that comes up with the most coherent, credible and imaginative platform for pursuing it, is the party that will own the real bridge to the future (p. 437).

This is difficult to reconcile with earlier points Friedman makes. Friedman has already expounded on why politicians do not and cannot affect significant change within this capitalist system. Markets are not monsters. However, the people participating in and controlling these markets certainly can be. Friedman then asks,

Can globalization create the biggest solution of all? Is there anything about globalization, and the rise of the internet and other modern

technologies, that can make a difference for those at the bottom of the barrel – the 1.3 billion people still living on one dollar a day (p. 440)?

He bases his answer (definitely, yes) on the enhanced ability of activists and individuals (through communication technologies) to make a difference, telecommunications industry estimates, which predict that by 2005, 1 billion low cost portable internet connections will be deployed in the world, and 3 billion by 2010. He also cites the standardization of accounting, legal, and regulatory systems in the poor countries in order to attract foreign investment. It remains to be seen whether these things will work in the long run.

It is critically important to understand this situation before even beginning to talk about solutions. We see our profiteering, our greed, our desire to be superior, and many times our job contributing to suffering. It is critically important for each individual one of us, especially in wealthy countries, to understand this parasitical nature in ourselves, this web of dependency, and to personally balance this technological capacity we've inherited with self-sufficiency.

A strong theme running through this book is, in essence, that the world's problems related to globalization are not Friedman's (2000) fault. "I didn't start this thing, and I can't stop it" appears several times. A closely related theme is Friedman's (2000) blatant American bias, evident in his response to a former Algerian prime minister who expressed anger at a speech he gave at a 1997 economic conference in Morocco. He says,

I listened politely to (the former prime minister's) remarks and then decided to respond in a deliberately provocative manner, in hopes of bursting through his fixed mind-set. I said roughly the following (with my

profanities edited out): ‘Mr. Prime Minister, you spoke of globalization as just another conspiracy to keep you down. Well, I have to tell you something – it’s much worse than you think. Much worse. You see, you think we are back there in Washington thinking about you and plotting how to keep you down, and turning all the dials and pulling on the levers to do just that. I wish we were. God, I wish we were. Because I like you, and I would turn the dials the other way to let you up. But the truth is, we aren’t thinking about you at all! Not for a second. We don’t give a flying petunia about you. And it’s not out of malice. It’s because we’re trapped under the same pressures you are, and we’re trying to keep one step ahead of the competition just like you are, and we’re worried about what the bond market is going to do next, just like you are. So I wish I could confirm for you that there is a conspiracy to keep you down, but I can’t. . . . Now if you want to build an Islamic bridge to this globalization train, build an Islamic bridge. If you want to build a Maoist bridge to this train, build a Maoist bridge. If you want to build a Jeffersonian bridge to this train, build a Jeffersonian bridge. But promise me one thing – that you will build a bridge. Because this train will leave without you’ (p. 392).

Friedman then proceeds to mix his metaphors to say,

To be a French-educated Arab intellectual is the worst combination possible for understanding globalization. It is like being twice handicapped, since both of these cultures are intuitively hostile to the whole phenomenon. On a trip to Egypt to promote the Arab edition of this book, I was struck, after a week of discussing both the costs and benefits of globalization, how most Egyptians, including many intellectuals, could see only the costs. The more I explained globalization, the more they expressed unease about it. It eventually struck me that I was encountering what anthropologists call “systematic misunderstanding.” Systematic misunderstanding arises when your framework and the other person’s framework are so fundamentally different that it cannot be corrected by providing more information (p. 391).

Friedman (2000) met several times with the editor of an Egyptian journal, who expressed strong reservations about Egypt joining the globalization system. The editor told him that the U.S. should slow down the train so that Egypt could jump on, and Friedman told him, “I wish we could slow the globalization train down, but there’s no

one at the controls” (p. 343). At the suggestion that the U.S. is controlling globalization, Friedman responds,

That’s us. We Americans are the apostles of the Fast World, the enemies of tradition, the prophets of the free market and the high priests of high tech. We want “enlargement” of both our values and our Pizza Huts. We want the world to follow our lead and become democratic, capitalistic, with a Web site in every pot, a Pepsi on every lip, Microsoft windows in every computer and most of all –most of all- with everyone, everywhere, pumping their own gas (p. 384).

The pumping gas is a reference to a metaphor for America’s powerhouse economy as compared to the rest of the world. And then,

Not surprisingly, as I traveled around, I found that not only the Iranians were calling America “the capital of global arrogance,” but, behind our backs, so, too, were the French, the Malaysians, the Russians, the Canadians, the Chinese, the Indians, the Pakistanis, the Egyptians, the Japanese, the Mexicans, the South Koreans, the Germans – and just about everyone else (p. 388).

From ugly American to racist to anthropologist to victim to deluded propagandist to capitalist tool to aloof intellectual to the proverbial ugly American. Friedman (2000) tells of a stop he made for coffee at an Internet cafe in Jordan. Apparently the banana cream pie at this café was made by the wife of the Israeli ambassador, which prompted a boycott of the café. He refers to the boycotters as “anti-Israeli-made banana cream pie fundamentalists” (p. 344), and is very flippant about a conflict he claims to understand.

Friedman (2000) also regularly constructs imaginary responses and conversations, as between “a very decent” American secretary of state Warren Christopher and a man of olive trees and the Cold War, Syrian president Hafez el-Assad. Friedman’s perspective is clear and his intentions even clearer at this point.

One of the best (or perhaps worst) parts of this book is Friedman's (2000) basketball analysis that he uses to demonstrate salary gaps and income discrepancies. He says of Joe Kleine (of the '97 Chicago Bulls):

Sitting on the same bench with Jordan in his final season – sitting in fact just eleven places away from him – was someone whose shooting skills were only marginally less effective than his, whose jump shot was only slightly less accurate, someone whose free-throw shooting was only slightly less consistent, someone whose defensive skills were only slightly less intense (p. 313).

Friedman (2000) wants to compare salaries (Jordan's \$80 million per year including endorsements vs. Kleine's league minimum), but it is hard to forget that Jordan's wealth is a side effect of being one of the greatest basketball players of all time. Scoring titles, defensive player of the years, MVPs, NBA championships are all aspects of Jordan's career, not Kleine's. For Friedman to use this as representational of salary discrepancies is either an oversight, or a demonstration of Friedman's limited knowledge of the admittedly problematic world of professional sports in the U.S. Saying that Joe Kleine is slightly less talented than Michael Jordan is equivalent to not understanding basketball. More problematic, however, is Friedman's choice of a U.S. professional sport as an exemplar of income discrepancies. This is hardly a representative example of the problems experienced by the general public. A more salient example would have been to compare the salary of the CEO of a multi-national corporation to the average mid-level employee of that same organization. But to provide such an example would have conflicted with Friedman's positive spin on the impact of such corporations on both local and global economies.

Friedman's (2000) point about skyrocketing superstar salaries and the effect on team cohesion is well taken, especially in comparison to widening income gaps everywhere. However, his analogy of America as the "Michael Jordan of geopolitics" falls short. Jordan was never involved in point shaving or bribing referees or choking the head coach or paying someone to break a competitor's knee. The U.S. has reneged on treaties, fought secret wars, and dealt in illegal arms and drugs.

Incidentally, Friedman (2000) says, "France and Russia today are the Gary Paytons of geopolitics – the biggest trash talkers in the world, always trying to make up for their weaknesses by giving everyone a lot of lip, particularly Uncle Sam" (p. 394). Friedman says that America's concept of citizenship is based on allegiance to an idea, not a tribe. He suggests that people would not clamor to immigrate to the land of the free if in fact, America did not offer the personal freedom, the opportunities, and an unsurpassed level of comfort and convenience to its residents. That America enjoys the highest standard of comfort and convenience is not an idea; it is a fact, from an economic standpoint. Friedman writes,

Let me share a little secret I've learned. With all due respect to the revolutionary theorists, the "wretched of the earth" want to go to Disney World – not the barricades. They want the Magic Kingdom, not Les Misérables. And if you construct an economic and political environment that gives them half a sense that with hard work and sacrifice they will get to Disney World and enjoy the Magic Kingdom, most of them will stick with the game – for far, far longer than you would ever suspect (p. 344).

Sounds like the bar is getting lower: from the afterlife to Disney World. Is Friedman really suggesting that countries will not resist that influence of global capitalism if it allows them the luxury of going to Disney World? If this is truly the case, I may have to

follow Kenneth Burke's lead and go live in a cabin with no modern conveniences. That surely must be a better option than living in a world where the most important value of the global population is enjoying the Magic Kingdom!

After arguing that the spread of capitalism has the potential to benefit the entire globe (as long as everyone comes on board and plays the game, Friedman (2000) discusses how to go about sustaining the benefits of globalization. He advances a weakly argued and structured plan for sustainable globalization, including the following components:

- Proceed "slowly and humbly."
- Reinforce "safety nets" of Social Security, Medicare, welfare, etc.
- Develop a new social bargain between workers, financiers, and governments that embraces free markets but also benefits as many people as possible: a government-supported venture capital fund to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.
- Stipends for workers displaced by trade or new technology.
- Public works employment for displaced workers
- Tax breaks for severance pay for displaced workers
- Free governmental resume consultation for displaced workers
- Extended health insurance for displaced workers
- Expansion of government job training centers and services

- A campaign to inform people of the Lifelong-Learning Tax Credit (enables people to write off the cost of an education or training program up to \$1000)
- Increase in funding for the International Labor Organization to find alternatives to child labor in developing countries
- Increase in U.S. lending to Asian, African, and Latin American development banks to promote the training of women.
- Microlend to women and small business.
- Clean up the environment in every developing country with which America has significant trade.
- Democratize every political system.
- Developed countries (& IMF) focus on strengthening infrastructure of “bad-borrowing” countries by encouraging budget-cutting, interest rate and currency adjustments to attract foreign investment.
- Rewriting laws to promote foreign ownership of industry.
- Standardizing legal, regulatory practices, especially accounting; Friedman illustrates how developing countries and industry are being shaped by international money. The competition for this money requires adoption of rigorous accounting, tax and legal standards and a weeding out of corruption to make investors feel secure.
- Transform the IMF to maintain minimum social safety nets and provide public works jobs to soak up some of the unemployed (of poor countries).



- Insure a stable power structure – Friedman says that the generation of wealth through trade, financial integration, the internet, and other technology is happening in a world stabilized by a benign superpower and adds that the hidden hand of the market will never work without the hidden fist.
- The most immediate threat today to the United States and the stability of the new system is “super-empowered angry men” (pp. 401-405).  
Friedman says, “There will always be a hard core of Ramzi Yousefs. The only defense is to isolate that hard core from the much-larger society around them” (p. 405).
- Pay U.N. dues. Friedman says that this advances U.S. interests without putting U.S. lives on the line.
- Bring together an internal (U.S.) coalition (software writers, activists, farmers, assembly line workers) to support globalization.
- Develop an activist and generous U.S. foreign policy.

There are numerous problems with the layout of this plan. First the obvious points:

- The U.S. does not pay its U.N. dues.
- Friedman talks about a bargain between workers, financiers, and governments, but that is the last time he mentions financiers.

- A benign superpower that defends capitalist interest to the exclusion of international cooperation does not coalesce with the rest of Friedman's notion of globalization.
- Isolating the hard core is exactly what the U.S. is doing, at home and abroad. This is both an ignorant and dangerous route, and in direct contradiction to Friedman's "activist and generous" foreign policy.

It seems that the IMF is simply a big insurance pool set up by the wealthy countries to protect against the effects of complete economic meltdown and civil unrest in the poor countries. Friedman (2000) proposes that the IMF start to employ people in poor countries. This seems to imply an increase in the dependency of the poor countries on the wealthy ones. This sounds more like a world welfare state. He says that a global central bank, a U.S. Federal Reserve for the World is a wonderful idea, but is not going to happen anytime soon. Friedman is proposing the creation of a socialist state to protect the poor while capitalism rages on high. How is this proceeding "slowly and humbly"?

Friedman's (2000) discussion of God (in the paperback edition) is almost completely lacking in consistency with the rest of his arguments. He talks about raising children in this rapidly changing world (kids often lack the judgment microchip) and whether or not God is in cyberspace (He wants to be, according to Friedman). He quotes Israeli religious philosopher David Hartman, saying that cyberspace is the world that the biblical prophets spoke of, a place where all mankind can be unified and totally free. This is not a well-supported argument, and Friedman fails to acknowledge the fact that the websites that receive the most traffic are likely to be media sites, owned by large

corporations, which are likely disseminating information in line with the corporate values (see chapter three of this essay).

Friedman (2000) concludes his discussion by stating,

Balancing a Lexus with an olive tree is something every society has to work on every day. It is also what America, at its best, is all about. America at its best takes the needs of markets, individuals and communities utterly seriously. And that is why, America, at its best, is not just a country. It's a spiritual value and a role model... A healthy global society is one that can balance the Lexus and the olive tree all the time, and there is no better model for this on earth than America (p. 474).

### **Hardt and Negri's *Empire***

*Empire*, as discussed by Hardt and Negri (2000), is a paradox. An overly long, often abstruse intellectual exercise, *Empire* would appear to be a work destined to obscurity - to be read, at best, by small groups of left-wing intellectuals ensconced in academia. However, the book has attracted enormous attention, not only in the academy, but also in the mainstream press and among anti-capitalist and global justice activists in both the US and Europe.<sup>4</sup>

*Empire's* (2000) appeal has a number of sources. First, its authors are not your average left-wing academics. While Hardt teaches in the Literature Program at Duke University in North Carolina, Toni Negri is an inmate at Rebibbia Prison, Rome-imprisoned for the "crime" of being the "intellectual inspiration" for the Red Brigades in the late 1970s. Negri has long been associated with the "autonomist" current of the Italian revolutionary left, which had significant influence among militant industrial workers in the 1970s and continues to inspire segments of anti-capitalist youth in Italy today.

The second source of the appeal of *Empire* (2000), both in the academy and in the anti-capitalist and global justice movements-is its engagement with “post-modernism.” On one hand, Hardt and Negri embrace the post-modernists' substantive claim that capitalism has been fundamentally transformed in the past half century.<sup>5</sup> In *Empire*, Hardt and Negri argue what has become “common sense” about global capitalism among both academic post-modernists and many global justice and anti-capitalist activists. Empire is a smooth (evenly developed) network without a center, in which social production has become flexible in the use of workers and technology to meet ever changing consumer demand, non-material (decline in manufacturing, rise of information and services), and highly mobile geographically. The nation-state and inter-capitalist competition and rivalry are in decline in this new imperial world order.

On the other hand, Hardt and Negri (2000) reject the political localism and pessimism of post-modernist identity politics. For the post-modernists, the multiplication of contingent local identities and localized “place based” movements and politics “in which the boundaries of place (conceived either as identity or territory) are posted against the undifferentiated and homogeneous space of global networks” (p. 44) are the main, if not sole, form of resistance to global capitalism today. Hardt and Negri argue that such a simple counter-position of local and global easily slides into “a kind of primordialism that fixes and romanticizes social relations and identities” (p. 44). Such notions ignore the reality that: what appear as local identities are not autonomous or self-determining but actually feed into the support and development of the capitalist imperial machine. The enemy, rather, is a specific regime of global relations known as Empire

(pp. 45-46). Hardt and Negri move from this theoretical critique, to a critique of various forms of “subaltern nationalism” that post-modernists promote. They argue that post-modernism's fetish of the local and particular could quite easily elide into a political apologia for *Empire* (p. 105-115, 132-160).

Hardt and Negri's own argument, in brief, is that global capitalism has been transformed in the past half century from an imperialist system (unequal economic development, sharp conflict among the dominant “imperialist” powers organized in nation-states, centrality of industrial workers to social transformation) to a new form – Empire. Specifically, Hardt and Negri's claim that the mobility of transnational corporate investment has produced a “smooth” (evenly developed) world economy based on “immaterial” production. In this new global economy dominated by the transnational corporation and global institutions such as the World Bank, IMF and the like, the nation-state and inter-capitalist competition have declined in importance. Finally, the global working class, as defined by its place in social production, has been displaced by the 'multitude' as the major agency of social transformation.

At the center of Hardt and Negri's (2000) notion of Empire is that they call the “postmodernization, or the informationalization of production” (p. 272). In this schema, the transition from “modernity” and “postmodernity” involves an historic shift from an “economic paradigm” where “industry and the manufacture of durable goods occupied the privileged position” to one where “providing services and manipulating information are at the heart of economic production” (p. 280). Freed from the spatial constraints associated with industrial production, the production of services and

information allows for rapid and easy geographic mobility of capital and the creation of a “smooth,” relatively evenly developed, global economic space.

The reality of the capitalist world economy is quite different. It is true that percentage of workers employed in industry - the production of material goods and services - has declined continuously for over a century. As Braverman (1974) argued , this is the inevitable result of capitalism's continuous mechanization of production and the resultant reduction in the percentage of workers needed to produce goods. However, the number of industrial workers, in most industrialized societies, has remained stable or grown slightly. Even more important, the proportion of total output industrial workers produce has increased over the past fifty years.<sup>6</sup>

Hardt and Negri's *Empire* is best understood as a turn within the ideological/political current known as "post-Marxism". Although this movement has been closely identified with protests against globalization - albeit not within classical Marxist parameters - Hardt and Negri will have nothing to do with any movement that makes concessions to the idea that "local differences preexist the present scene and must be defended or protected against the intrusion of globalization" ( p. 45).

Before turning to part one of *Empire*, it would be useful to say a few words about the emergence of post-Marxism. As a theory, it tries to reconcile Marx with postmodernism. From Marx it borrows the idea that capitalism is an unjust system. From postmodernism it borrows the idea that "grand narratives" lead to disaster. While postmodernism had been around since the mid-80s (Lyotard's "Postmodern Condition" was published in 1984), the disenchantment with the traditional Marxist project reached

a crescendo after 1990, when the Soviet bloc began to collapse and after the Central American revolution had been defeated.

Since a large part of the postmodernist turn within Marxism had to do with the futility of organizing socialism on the basis of the nation-state, the collapse of existing socialism - based on such states - would necessarily deepen the conviction that old-school Marxism was passé. However, what deepened this pessimism even more was the belief that a “globalized” economy made the nation-state itself a dying species, like the brontosaurus. What good what it do to make a socialist revolution if multinational corporations and international lending institutions violated porous real or virtual borders?

Perhaps no other leftwing figure expressed these moods better than Roger Burbach, a Berkeley Latin American studies professor who had been heavily invested in the Sandinista revolution. In 1997, he wrote "Globalization and its Discontents: The Rise of Postmodernist Socialisms" with Orlando Núñez and Boris Kagarlitsky (Kargalitsky would eventually disown the book). Burbach writes:

The left has to accept the fact that the Marxist project for revolution launched by the Communist Manifesto is dead. There will certainly be revolutions (the Iranian Revolution is probably a harbinger of what to expect in the short term), but they will not be explicitly socialist ones that follow in the Marxist tradition begun by the First International (p. 142.).

Socialists would have to lower their expectations. Instead of proletarian revolution, they should shoot for "radical reforms", especially those that have modest geographical and economic ambitions (this argument resonates with those of the German progressive socialists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). On the high end of the scale, you have a

struggle like Chiapas, which has tended to function iconically for the post-Marxists as 1917 Russia functioned for a generation of classical Marxists. At the low end, you have soup kitchens, housing squats, and even homeless men selling "street newspapers" in order to raise the funds for their next meal or a night's stay at a flophouse. Burbach's program comes across as a leftist version of George Bush's "thousand points of light":

In both the developed and underdeveloped countries, a wide variety of critical needs and interests are being neglected at the local level, including the building, or rebuilding, of roads, schools and social services. A new spirit of volunteerism and community participation, backed by a campaign to secure complimentary resources from local and national governments, can open up entirely new job markets and areas of work to deal with these basic needs (ibid, p. 164).

Although Hardt and Negri share many of Burbach's (1997) assumptions, which I will detail momentarily, they could care less about community participation, either in Chiapas or northern urban neighborhoods. For them, what is key is the very process that Burbach was reacting against, namely globalization or what old-school Marxists have called imperialism. They have their own word for it: Empire.

Part of the problem in coming to terms with *Empire* (2000) is the lack of an economic analysis, which is surprising given the self-conscious attempt by the authors to position the book as a Communist Manifesto for the 21st century. Not only had Marx written a seminal economics treatise to anchor his political program, so had Lenin a generation later. When Lenin was gathering together the forces that would eventually constitute the 3rd International, he already had *Imperialism, the Final Stage of Capitalism* under his belt. This work not only was dense with detail about the emergence of corporate trusts, it was written only after Lenin had familiarized himself with



hundreds of books and articles on economics, especially those written by J.A. Hobson and Rudolf Hilferding. Going through the notes of *Empire* you find abundant references to Baudrillard, Celine, Arendt, Polybius et al., but very few to economics studies.

This failure leads the authors to make bald assertions that beg for substantiation, which is not forthcoming. For example, Hardt and Negri (2000, p. xiv) state that "The United States does indeed occupy a privileged position in Empire, but this privilege derives not from its similarities to the old European imperialist powers, but from its differences." Those who expect those differences to revolve around investment patterns, etc. will be disappointed, for in fact Hardt and Negri are referring to the United States constitution which was inspired by an imperial (but not imperialist) idea going back to the Roman Empire.

In the absence of hard economic facts, indeed much of *Empire* (2000) devolves into discussion of the role of ideas in shaping history. Of particular note is their definition of Empire itself. While "imperialisms" were very much defined by place and time (an extension of the sovereignty of the European nation-states beyond their borders, as Hardt and Negri put it), Empire is timeless and omnipresent. "It is a 'decentered' and 'deterritorializing' apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers" (p. xii). While to some, this comes across as nothing more than a fancy description of U.S. imperialism's new world order, let us accept this definition on its own terms for the time being.

Even after Hardt and Negri (2000) admit that globalizing tendencies involve a lot of "oppression and exploitation," they still maintain that the process must continue. They explain why this occurs as,

Despite recognizing all this [negativity], we insist on asserting that the construction of Empire is a step forward in order to do away with any nostalgia for the power structures that preceded it and refuse any political strategy that involves returning to the old arrangement, such as trying to resurrect the nation-state against capital (p. 40).

Leaving no doubt whatsoever about their intentions, Hardt and Negri (2000) declare, "Today we should all clearly recognize that the time of such proletarian revolution is over" (p. 50). With this declaration, they stand side-by-side with Roger Burbach who, as cited above, believes: "The left has to accept the fact that the Marxist project for revolution launched by the Communist Manifesto is dead" (1997 p. 16).

Unlike Burbach (1997), Hardt and Negri (2000) have little interest in or sympathy for local struggles against the ravages of globalization:

We are well aware that in affirming this thesis we are swimming against the current of our friends and comrades on the Left. In the long decades of the current crisis of the communist, socialist, and liberal Left that has followed the 1960s, a large portion of critical thought, both in the dominant countries of capitalist development and in the subordinated ones, has sought to recompose sites of resistance that are founded on the identities of social subjects or national and regional groups, often grounding political analysis on the "localization of struggles" (p. 44).

Hardt and Negri now regard such local struggles as they would tainted meat on a supermarket shelf because they "can easily devolve into a kind of primordialism that fixes and romanticizes social relations and identities" (p. 45).

Although their prose hovers ethereally above real people and real events, it is not too hard to figure out what they are referring to. They obviously have in mind struggles involving the Mayan people of Chiapas or, before them, the Mayans of Guatemala who looked to Rigoberta Menchu for inspiration and guidance. Starting out as a simple Mayan peasant with a desire to defend local communal lands against the onslaughts of agri-business and the Guatemalan army and death squads, she transformed herself into a global figure connected to indigenous movements everywhere as well as somebody committed to progressive social transformation.

What Hardt and Negri (2000) miss entirely is how socialist consciousness is formed. It is not on the basis of abstract socialist propaganda but rather the dialectical interaction between experiences based on local struggles, either at the plant-gate or the rural farming village, and ideas transmitted to fighters by Marxist activists, the "vanguard" in Lenin's terms. The construction of such a vanguard remains as urgent a task as it was in Lenin's days, a period not unlike our own which faced thinkers not unlike Hardt and Negri. Part two of Hardt and Negri's *Empire* is a rather lofty defense of an argument that has been around on the left for a long time. It states that all nationalism is reactionary, both that of oppressor and oppressed nations. While the argumentation is studded with references to obscure and not so obscure political theorists going back to

the Roman Empire, there is a complete absence of the one criterion that distinguishes Marxism from competitive schools of thought, namely class.

Key to their stratagem is a reliance on the Karl Marx India articles that appeared in the New York Tribune in 1853. Putting this defense of British colonialism into the foreground helps shroud their arguments in Marxist orthodoxy. In effect, the Karl Marx of the Tribune articles becomes a kind of St. John the Baptist to their messianic arrival: "In the nineteenth century Karl Marx...recognized the utopian potential of the ever-increasing processes of global interaction and communication" (p. 118). In contrast to the bioregionalist pleas of anti-globalization activist Vandana Shiva, perhaps the best thing that could have happen to India is deeper penetration by the WTO, based on this citation from Marx that appears in *Empire*:

Sickening as it must be to human feeling to witness, we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, and they restrained the human mind, within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath the traditional rules depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. (Marx, 1973, p. 306).

Hardt and Negri (2000) seem content to rest on this version of Marx even though they have to admit that he "was limited by his scant knowledge of India's past and present" (p. 120). This does not appear to be a concern, however, since "his lack of information...is not the point" (p. 120). In other words, this Marx of scanty knowledge fits perfectly into the schema being constructed in *Empire* since it too is generally characterized by a lack of concrete economic and historical data.

Using arguments similar to Hardt and Negri's (2000), Bernstein (1898) said that colonialism was basically a good thing since it would hasten the process of drawing savages into capitalist civilization, a necessary first step to building communism. It makes sense that arguments found in Bernstein are now making a re-appearance in *Empire* a little bit over a century later. We have been going through a fifty-year economic expansion in the imperialist world that tends to cast a shadow over the project of proletarian revolution. From a class perspective, it is not too difficult to understand why the new challenge to Marxism - in the name of Marxism- emerges out of the academy just as it arose out of the top rungs of the party bureaucracy in the 1880s. From a relatively privileged social position in the bowels of the most privileged nations on earth, it is easy to succumb to defeatist moods. It may be that the point here is that this leads us to something similar to what befell the progressive socialists. They may become so gradualist that they are pushed aside by more action-oriented views informed by a more polarizing rhetoric such as that of Lenin.

Hardt and Negri (2000) dispense with this tradition altogether. They take sides with Rosa Luxemburg (1976) who "argued vehemently (and futilely) against nationalism in the debates in the Third International in the years before the First World War" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 96). In their eyes, Luxemburg's "most powerful argument...was that nation means dictatorship and is thus profoundly incompatible with any attempt at democratic organization" (ibid.).

Not only would Hardt and Negri (2000) have been opposed to struggles for formal independence from colonialism, they are just as unrelenting in their opposition to

any struggle against neocolonialism that would rely on defensive measures by the nation-state of the oppressed group. For example, while Cuba achieved formal independence after the Spanish-American war, the July 26th movement was organized around many of the nationalist themes found in José Martí's writings. Even if the Cuban flag flew over Havana in the late 1950s, the guerrilla movement quite rightly saw sovereignty as resting in the American embassy.

Hardt and Negri (2000) would have been both opposed to any movement that sought to achieve formal independence like the Portuguese colonies in Africa in the 1970s and 80s and they would have also condemned efforts to achieve genuine economic independence in Sandinista Nicaragua in the same period. As anti-nationalist purists, the only political entity worth struggling to take over is that which exists on a global basis even though the forces of repression exist within the borders of the nation-state. They write:

The perils of national liberation are even clear when viewed externally, in terms of the world economic system in which the "liberated" nation finds itself. Indeed, the equation nationalism equals political and economic modernization, which has been heralded by leaders of numerous anticolonial and anti-imperialist struggles from Gandhi and Ho Chi Minh to Nelson Mandela, really ends up being a perverse trick...The very concept of a liberatory national sovereignty is ambiguous if not completely contradictory. While this nationalism seeks to liberate the multitude from foreign domination, it erects domestic structures of domination that are equally severe (p. 132-133).

As is the case throughout *Empire*, there is a scarcity of historical data to support Hardt and Negri's (2000) arguments. If you read the above paragraph, you would be left with the conclusion that the problem is mainly theoretical in nature. By embracing nation-state solutions rather than global solutions, national liberation movements have

been suckered into accommodation to the status quo. Not only that, the new boss is just as bad as the old boss.

Furthermore, if Marx's main contribution was a dialectical approach to history and society, Hardt and Negri's (2000) binary opposition between "foreign domination" and "domestic structures of domination" leads one to wonder whether they have read the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, which states that people make history but not of their own choosing. In the recent past, the failure of national liberation movements has less to do with the bad faith of leaders, personal greed or theoretical error. It has much more to do with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of low-intensity warfare, two key factors that are conspicuously absent from their discussion.

Hardt and Negri (2000) provide a cursory analysis of the global pandemic of AIDS in Foucauldian terms:

The contemporary processes of globalization have torn down many of the boundaries of the colonial world. Along with the common celebrations of the unbounded flows in our new global village, one can still sense also an anxiety about increased contact and a certain nostalgia for colonialist hygiene. The dark side of the consciousness of globalization is the fear of contagion. If we break down global boundaries and open universal contact in our global village, how will we prevent the spread of disease and corruption? This anxiety is most clearly revealed with respect to the AIDS pandemic. (p. 136)

This self-conscious postmodernist prose addresses everything except that which matters most to socialists, namely the problem of the intersection of class and public health. We are not only facing a pandemic of AIDS but other diseases that represent the consequences of an assault on public health that occur under the neo-liberal regime.

Part three of *Empire* is devoted to an explanation of the new realities facing the radical movement, which they dub postmodernist. They also explain the crownpiece of autonomic-Marxism strategy, a clever and powerful form of proletarian resistance called "refusal to work". Postmodernism replaced modernism. According to Hardt and Negri (2000), modernism is made up of three characteristics:

1. Fordism: this refers to the wage regime of such as the kind that existed in Detroit auto factories; Henry Ford's in particular, who combined relatively higher pay with brutal anti-union policies.

2. Taylorism: this refers to Frederic Taylor, the father of time-motion studies, whose views on efficiency found support not only in Detroit auto factories but in Lenin's USSR.

3. Keynesianism: Once you have the first two planks nailed down, you create deficit spending techniques, welfare state legislation, etc. in order to maintain relatively low levels of unemployment and high levels of class peace.

In their definition of modernism, Hardt and Negri (2000) take note of the transformation of family farms into corporate industrial farms, a sign that "society became a factory." But, in reality, the penetration of capital into agriculture took a much different form than that of the classic case of industrial production such as textiles in the 18th and 19th century, according to Richard Lewontin (1998). Not only are there still about 1.8 million independent farms in the U.S. today, with over 100,000 separate enterprises producing more than half of all the value of the output. "Furthermore,



roughly 55 percent of farmland is now operated by owner-renters who are for the most part small producers" (ibid.).

Broadly speaking, for many people operating within the Marxist framework (except for the sectarian Marxist-Leninist left), the question of the industrial working class in the advanced capitalist countries remains problematic. Except for some outbursts in the late 1960s in Western Europe, the period following WWII has been characterized by the sort of class peace that existed in the long expansionary period leading up to WWI. That period, of course, gave birth to revisionism in the social democracy while today's long expansion has generated its own kind of responses, ranging from Marcuse's Frankfurt school inspired New Leftism to the radical democracy of Laclau-Mouffe. In general, this involves looking to other forces besides the industrial working class, ranging from the social movements to the lumpen proletariat.

Hardt and Negri (2000) have their own unique take on this question. Rather than seeing a weakened labor movement co-opted by bourgeois parties and making ideological concessions to imperialism of the sort noted by Engels in the British labor movement of his day, they see an internationalist working class on the offensive putting capital on the ropes. They state:

We can get a first hint of this determinant role of the proletariat by asking ourselves how throughout the crisis the United States was able to maintain its hegemony. The answer lies in large part, perhaps paradoxically, not in the genius of U.S. politicians or capitalists, but in the power and creativity of the U.S. proletariat. Whereas earlier, from another perspective, we posed the Vietnamese resistance as the symbolic center of the struggles, now, in terms of the paradigm shift of international capitalist command, the U.S. proletariat appears as the subjective figure that expressed most fully the desires and needs of international or multinational workers. Against the common wisdom that

the U.S. proletariat is weak because of its low party and union representation with respect to Europe and elsewhere, perhaps we should see it as strong for precisely these reasons. Working-class power resides not in the representative institutions but in the antagonisms and autonomy of the workers themselves (p. 268-269).

What Hardt and Negri (2000) call antagonism and autonomy reside not in trade union struggles, but in a phenomenon they call refusal to work. These seemingly personal gestures of refusal to work were actually expressions of subjectivity that embodied profound economic power that mounted a serious challenge to the stability of the system.

Part four of *Empire* (2000) moves into the arena of metaphysical speculation divorced from the material world more than the preceding three parts. There are extensive references to ontology and the ontological, such as:

In *Empire*, no subjectivity is outside, and all places have been subsumed in a general 'non-place.' The transcendental fiction of politics can no longer stand up and has no argumentative utility because we all exist entirely within the realm of the social and the political. When we recognize this radical determination of postmodernity, political philosophy forces us to enter the terrain of ontology (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 353-354).

Every effort to expand on their definition of ontology only leads to more confusion. Supposedly postmodern capitalism is distinguished from plain old capitalism by its tendency to create surplus value all over the world rather than a single country like in the good old days. Because capital is now everywhere (and implicitly nowhere), the creation of value takes place beyond measure. In other words, we lack the epistemological basis to quantify prices, wages, interest rates, inflation, etc. Perhaps this explains the lack of economic data in *Empire* (2000). By supplying something as

mundane as a graph illustrating capital flows between the core and the periphery, they would be guilty of failing to comply with the postmodernist rule against trying to know the unknowable.

To clarify the “beyond measure” notion, Hardt and Negri (2000) state:

Beyond measure refers to ‘the new place in the non-place’, the place defined by the productive activity that is synonymous from any external regime of measure. Beyond measure refers to a ‘virtuality’ that invests the entire biopolitical fabric of imperial globalization (p. 357).

With regard to practical politics, Hardt and Negri (2000) have little to say. They write,

The multitude’s resistance to bondage, the struggle against the slavery of belonging to a nation, an identity, and a people, and thus the desertion from sovereignty and the limits it places on subjectivity, is entirely positive (p. 409).

Hardt and Negri (2000) also defend nomadism and miscegenation. Nomadism, as in Mexican workers being smuggled across the border, is contrasted to the regressive and fascistic desire to reinforce the walls of nation, race, people, etc. So implicitly, the best thing would be for everybody in the world to jump in bed with everybody else so to end up with a mixed race population that can go anywhere in the world and take part in the global capitalist informational economy.

Obviously class criteria appear to be missing from this schema. For oppressed nationalities like the American Indian or the East Timorese, the desire for sovereignty is progressive. We must be able to distinguish the desire for Blackfoot Indians to transmit knowledge of their endangered language to their children from the desire of U.S. corporations to make English a lingua franca.

In contrast to modernist thinkers who fretted about the crisis and decay of Europe (Nietzsche, Thomas Mann, Ortega y Gasset, et al), postmodernists like Hardt and Negri (2000) regard the replacement of the old imperialist systems based on the nation-state by Empire to be a good thing basically:

From our standpoint, however, the fact that against the old powers of Europe a new Empire has formed is only good news. Who wants to see any more of that pallid and parasitic European ruling class that led directly from the ancient regime to nationalism, from populism to fascism, and now pushes for a generalized neoliberalism? Who wants to see more of those ideologies and those bureaucratic apparatuses that have nourished and abetted the rotting European elites? And those who still stand those systems of labor organization and those corporations that have stripped away every vital spirit (p. 376).

So the ultimate question is how Hardt and Negri (2000) resolve the tensions between the fact that Empire is something that begs for the multitude to resist, and yet is better than previous structures and regimes. In the final pages of *Empire* Hardt and Negri (2000) lay out a series of demands that the mass movement is urged to adopt. These include:

1. The general right [of the multitude, meant to indicate the new working class and its allies] to control its own movement through global citizenship.
2. A social wage and a guaranteed income for all.
3. The right to reappropriation. This means the right of workers to have free access to and control the means of production of knowledge, communication, information, etc.

Of course, the problem with these demands is that they are only meaningful when made on the government of a nation-state, particularly the demand for a

guaranteed income. One cannot simultaneously dismiss the nation-state as an arena of struggle and prioritize a demand that can only be realized through legislation at a national level. But the only real agency that Hardt and Negri (2000) allow for is the power of the multitude, and even this potential power is discussed within the context of an abstract structure that fails to allow for a true understanding of how Empire could possibly be resisted.

### **Analysis**

Both Friedman's (2000) *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, and Hardt and Negri's (2000) *Empire* attempt to lay out extensive analyses of both what globalization means to the world. The two books, although differing radically in both style and authors' perspectives, have a common theme in that they both suggest that the world is in a period of significant change (as mentioned in the first chapter, this point is often argued by other authors). These two books are interesting representative examples of the various arguments that circulate throughout not only the U.S., but also in numerous other parts of the world where the consequences of a more interconnected world are being felt perhaps even stronger than they are here in the West.

Friedman's pro-capitalism stance suggests that the market will ultimately balance out the inequities associated with globalization and that it is a positive, productive force in the world that everyone should embrace, while Hardt and Negri's neo-Marxist vision of a coming world order warns that globalization is a powerful new form of Empire encompassing all of modern life and this emerging world order is something to be defeated. The characterizations, ideographs, and narratives used by the authors of these

two books show both how their conceptualizations of globalization differ, but also demonstrate what the dominant values of the authors.

*The Lexus and the Olive Tree* and *Empire* both suggest that there are problems associated with the changing world. Global changes in technology, communications, and economic networks have the potential, according to Friedman (2000) to lead to economic inequities and cultural disparity, but he argues that the market will ultimately resolve these problems. Hardt and Negri (2000) view global changes much more skeptically. They suggest that Empire is not merely a metaphor, but is a “concept...characterized fundamentally by a lack of boundaries: Empire’s rule has no limits (p. xiv). They call for resistance to Empire, in contrast to Friedman, and this resistance will come from a subjugated and exploited multitude rising up against the regime of power. Ironically, what both books fail to do is to allow for any concrete “method” of resolving the inherent, often unintended, and unavoidable problems associated with globalization. For Friedman, the answer lies in faith the free-market system and its continued expansion. For Hardt and Negri, the answer lies in the power of the multitude.

#### *Friedman’s use of metaphor and narrative*

Friedman’s (2000) narrative style is heavily peppered with stories and metaphors that attempt to provide support for his argument that the world is now much more complex than the simplistic Cold War world that his predecessors enjoyed. Friedman’s premise is that the driving idea behind globalization is free-market capitalism: the more you let market forces rule and the more you open your economy to free trade and

competition, the more efficient and flourishing your economy will be. Globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world. Globalization also has its own set of economic rules: rules that revolve around opening, deregulating and privatizing your economy.

*The Lexus versus the olive tree*

The dominant metaphor for Friedman (2000) is obvious as it is the title of the book. The olive tree represents traditional culture while the Lexus represents globalization. Traditionally speaking, olive trees are “essential to our very being, but can lead us to forge identities at the exclusion of others (Friedman uses the Nazis in Germany and the Serbs in Yugoslavia as extreme examples of such exclusion that led to the extermination of others). In contrast, the Lexus is the fundamental drive for sustenance, improvement, prosperity and modernization. It is clear that Friedman privileges the Lexus over the olive tree and he argues that the Lexus is a system that is here to stay and will overpower the strength of the olive tree. When discussing India’s negative economy, he says,

So yes, the olive tree had had its day in India. But when it pushes out like that in the system of globalization, there is always a price to pay. You can’t escape the system. Sooner or later the Lexus always catches up with you (p. 39).

It is interesting that Friedman (2000) did not call his work “The Lexus vs. The Olive Tree,” as it is apparent that he is describing these two metaphors as existing in tension with one another, and the Lexus, in Friedman’s view, must ultimately replace the olive tree. Although he acknowledges that is important for individual cultures to have the opportunity to maintain their identity, he clearly advocates that people (and

countries) and going to have to be able to accept the Lexus (globalization) and either let go of the olive tree or find a way of integrating it with the Lexus (a possibility which he does not elaborate on and does not provide a method for achieving).

### *Economies as computers*

In addition to the Lexus and olive tree metaphors, Friedman (2000) uses the computer as a metaphor for the way that different countries deal with their financial structures. This computer metaphor serves to demonstrate Friedman's assertion that free-market capitalism is the best system and that countries operating within that system have the most advantages. According to Friedman's metaphor, each country is an actual machine. First they have "the hardware," the basic shell around the economy. They also have an "operating system" for the hardware, which Friedman compares to the macroeconomic policies of any country. Finally, there is also the "software" a country needs to get the most out of both the hardware and the operating system. The software, according to Friedman, refers to a country's legal and regulatory systems and the degree to which its officials and citizens understand and embrace them.

"DOScapital" (the operating system) is the term Friedman (2000) uses to depict the varying levels of sophistication of the market in various countries. In the communist countries, there was no free market. Friedman calls the communist economic operating system DOScapital 0.0 (p. 151). He upgrades the hybrid states where the operating systems were various combinations of "socialism, free markets, state-directed economics and crony capitalism, in which government bureaucrats, businesses and banks were all ties to one another" (ibid.) to DOScapital 1.0 to 4.0, depending on the degree of



government involvement and the sophistication of the economy. The big industrial capitalist systems that are based on free markets but still have significant welfare-state components have operating systems Friedman calls DOSCapital 5.0. Finally, the countries with liberalized economies have DOSCapital 6.0. Such countries include the United States, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom. These countries “have put on the full Golden Straightjacket” (p. 151).

*The electronic herd*

Friedman's thesis is that globalization is replacing the bipolar Cold War internationally. Globalization includes the diffusion of Western values and culture worldwide, but its main component is the global financial community (The Electronic Herd). Friedman argues that real power rests with the metaphorical Herd, which imposes its values upon countries which are the recipients of investment.

The technological ingredient is the innovation in computers and communication exemplified by the World Wide Web. This technology enables the Herd to be in constant communication; the feedback caused by global connection can cause an instant panic in which the Herd stampedes, selling the bonds of a particular country en masse. Indeed, sometimes unrelated events can result in large fluctuations in markets when losses in one area necessitate selling another area to raise the money to cover losses.

Friedman's comparison of a global economy to a stampeding herd (of, what, cattle?) is difficult to reconcile with the argument that he is ultimately making. If he is proposing the spread of free market capitalism is good, the Herd is described as the ultimate policing system to force individual countries to fall in line with the demands of

the global market. It seems as if Friedman is almost warning those opposed to globalization that the threat of a stampeding Herd should scare them into embracing the free market system and to let go of their olive trees.

*The golden arches theory of conflict prevention*

Friedman (2000) uses the McDonald's restaurant as a metaphor for avoiding conflict between countries. He states,

...as I Quarter-Pounded my way around the world in recent years, I began to notice something intriguing. I don't know when the insight struck me. It was a bolt out of the blue that must have hit somewhere between the McDonald's in Tiananmen Square in Beijing, the McDonald's in Tahrir Square in Cairo and the McDonald's off Zion Square in Jerusalem. And it was this: No two countries that both had a McDonald's had fought a war against each other since each got its McDonald's. I'm not kidding. (p. 248).

Although Friedman acknowledges that many have attempted to prove his McDonald's theory wrong, the only validity to such claims comes in the "olive-tree-hugging nationalist regimes, such as Kosovo. But Friedman continues to use the metaphor of McDonald's as a metaphor for conflict resolution when he claims that neither the NATO soldiers in Kosovo nor the Serbs of Belgrade wanted to die for Kosovo. "They wanted to stand in line for burgers, much more than they wanted to stand in line for Kosovo" (p. 253). The McDonald's metaphor is yet another of Friedman's methods of demonstrating the popularity and positive outcomes of the spread of free market capitalism throughout the world. Given the choice between the Lexus and their olive trees, most countries would take the Lexus because they would ultimately rather just be able to get a cheeseburger than fight for ideologies or independence.

Overall, Friedman's (2000) extensive use of metaphor appears to be a way of engaging the reader and proving that countries who have accepted free market capitalism as a way of life have citizens who are happier, more economically successful, and are not interested in fighting wars. I'm not sure how the McDonald's on almost every street corner in the U.S. fits with this metaphor, considering that although we may enjoy a higher material standard of living, there are enough citizens here who still support military action, even when we have little stake in the outcome of whatever conflict we decide to become involved in or even begin ourselves.

It would be nearly impossible to describe all of the various metaphors that Friedman (2000) uses in his discussion of globalization. The book is peppered with either real or imaginary situations that Friedman uses to demonstrate the positive aspects of globalization from an economic standpoint or to argue against those that disagree with him. The major metaphor discussed previously (the Lexus and the olive tree, economies as computers, and the Electronic Herd) seem the most significant while most of Friedman's lesser, but almost constant, metaphors, almost make it difficult to take his analysis seriously.

*Hardt and Negri's use of metaphor and narrative*

Hardt and Negri's (2000) use of metaphor is distinctly different from Friedman's (2000). They use metaphor much less frequently and even state numerous times that their conception of Empire is NOT a metaphor for globalization or for a new imperialism, which would "require demonstration of the resemblances between today's world order and the Empires of Rome, China, etc. (p. xiv) . It is instead a concept

characterized fundamentally by a lack of boundaries. Empire is not a positive reality in that, as soon as it rises, it falls. Hardt and Negri compare today's struggles to slithering snakes moving across superficial, imperial landscapes. But some probing shows that Hardt and Negri are not Marx and Engels. They instead fall into the same trap as Foucault did when the Shah of Iran fell. After the shah fell, "Foucault fumbled" (Cohen, 2002, p. 1). The Iranians, it turned out, were to be governed again. There were "summary trials," "hasty executions," and these were "alarming," he said in an open letter to Mehdi Bazargan, once an oppositionist with whom he conversed about revolutionary events, and now prime minister, thanks to Khomeini's designation. Did the fact of Iran's new repression "condemn" the "intoxication" of its revolution, Foucault asked aloud? And he wondered: "In the expression 'Islamic government,' why cast suspicion on the adjective 'Islamic'? The word 'government' by itself is enough to awaken vigilance."<sup>7</sup>

Foucault did what postmodernist theorists (like himself) often warned against. He crammed particular developments into his own intellectual macrocosm and then pronounced on them. It turned out that Khomeini was more than the point of fixation of a collective will. And the alternative, if there was one, would still have been some sort of "government." It is difficult to imagine how anyone who followed the Iranian events of 1978-1979 could have envisioned anything but a religious panopticon as their likely result. But a good number of people (Foucault was not alone) did imagine otherwise. Hardt and Negri (2000) appear to have similar problems in that they rely on a macro theory but use specific instances to defend that theory. It is difficult to call the cases

discussed in *Empire* metaphorical in any direct way, but it may be possible to draw some conclusions about their narrative.

Hardt and Negri (2000) situate the new Empire within a series of historical events in an effort to demonstrate that this new world order (which seems amorphous and difficult to identify as reality, as mentioned previously) is different from those that have existed in the past. They use historical events in a postmodern fashion, much like Foucault has done, to demonstrate what Empire is NOT.

One such event is the Iranian revolution, which Hardt and Negri argue was the first postmodernist revolution. It rejected both modernity and the world market, the authors explain. The anti-modern thrust that defines fundamentalisms might be better understood not as a premodern but as a postmodern project.

While it is true that the victorious Iranian clerics rejected the shah's "modernity," there is more to the story (Halliday, 1979). Khomeini rose to political prominence as a foe of the shah's White (bloodless) Revolution in the early 1960s. This modernizing program called, among other things, for land redistribution, administrative reform, a literacy campaign, nationalization of forests, privatization of state-owned industry along with plans for profit-sharing, and the enfranchisement of women. Had the shah been a megalomaniacal left-wing (and anti-American) dictator rather than a megalomaniacal royal authoritarian, part of the Western left would have cheered these measures. For these measures threatened the most conservative interests in Iranian society, especially large estate owners, the Shi'i clergy (who stood to lose considerable land holdings along

with educational and juridical prerogatives), and bazaar merchants: a configuration of social forces much like that which would one day spearhead the shah's overthrow.

Social and economic "modernization" also produced considerable dislocation, with few peasants actually getting land and large numbers flocking into the cities. By 1978-1979, the shah's plans floundered, along with his regime, which was deeply corrupt and sustained by a nasty, American-supported security apparatus. In the meantime, bazaar merchants, principal backers of the country's 180,000 mullahs and 80,000 mosques, paid more in religious than state taxes in the 1970s thanks to the global oil market (Halliday, 1979). Although the revolution was undoubtedly against the shah's rule and its benefactors, it becomes a postmodern revolt against "the world market" only by postmodern splicing. Decline in oil revenues helped to precipitate the upheaval, but those revenues greased the revolution no less than the faltering state. One can, on the other hand, link readily the 1963 demonstrations against the White Revolution to Khomeini's republic. Mullahs fomented the demonstrations to protest (among other things) the emancipation of women; in power, seventeen years later, mullahs veiled them. "Postmodernism" explains the Iranian Revolution in the manner of Foucault's fumble (Cohen, 2000).

The situation in Iran is merely one example of Hardt and Negri's (2000) use (or misuse) of historical narratives as a method of proving the existence of Empire. But, like Foucault, their telos appears to be their prejudgment. By showing that anything bad that happens in the third world (or the postmodern, globalized version of what we used to call the third world) must really be the fault of "the West" or the "global market," it is

possible to show that anything Palestinians do is the fault of Israelis. Complex considerations of right and wrong in Western or third world (or Israeli or Palestinian) politics crumble, along with the integrity of anything that might be called a "left" appraisal of them.

Generally, Hardt and Negri (2000), dismiss rationales for the Gulf War. For them, recent debate about just and unjust wars functions as so much ideology. But they have a higher estimation of the function of what they refer to as "so-called fundamentalisms." They appear to focus on Islamic fundamentalism as a metaphor for schools of thought around the world in that it is defined by what it opposes. Contemporary Islamic fundamentalism, they write, should not be understood as a return to past social forms and values, but as a new invention. For Hardt and Negri (2000), fundamentalism lies in what it opposes, or in what Hardt and Negri imagine it opposes. Islamic modernism was over coded as assimilation or submission to Euro-American hegemony. But the Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928. It was anti-imperialist and espoused Salafiyah (the idea that Islam's "early generations" provide the model for contemporary life). Was the attempted assassination of Nasser in 1954 by one of its members a postmodern transgression? Was Sayyid Qutb, the major intellectual figure of the Brotherhood in the 1950s and 1960s, postmodern when he compared Arab nationalist, or "modern," according to Hardt and Negri, regimes to the Jahiliyya (the Quran's term for the pre-Muhammad era of "ignorance") and wanted them replaced by a globalizing Islamic state like the original caliphate? If we accept Hardt and Negri, a new caliphate would then be postmodern. (Qutb, whom Nasser executed in 1966, had an

enormous influence on fundamentalists throughout the Middle East in the last quarter of the twentieth century.)

Some time before postmodernity (over a dozen centuries) ascendant, expanding Islam posited world struggle between the "Camp of Islam" and the "Camp of War." This millenarianism always remained a potent tendency within Islam. Applying it to the end of the twentieth century may well have been "new," but then the end of the twentieth century had not previously occurred. The stripes of fundamentalists (including Muslim, Christian, Jewish, liberal, Marxist, nationalist, postmodern, and others) may vary, but they share a similar mental structure, a commitment to some system of "eternal" basics that they would impose on the present, and that they always seek to interpret from within. Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful), the Jewish settler movement in the West Bank, combines "modern" religious orthodoxy and nationalism, and finds its "constitution" in the Torah. The Muslim Brotherhood has long declared its "constitution" to be the Quran. Fundamentalist thinking usually draws on some mix of writ and an imagined, distant past-which is why it can appear "radical" when applied to the contemporary world.

Thus it is easy for Hardt and Negri (2000) to speak interchangeably of Islamic "fundamentalism" and Islamic "radicalism" without branding the radicalism reactionary. The meaning of Islamic "modernism" is fungible for them. But Islamic modernism is much more complicated and diverse than overcoded compliance with "Euro-American hegemony," and it has ambiguous ties to fundamentalism. Leading Islamic reformers of the liberal age, thinkers like al-Tahtawi or al-Afghani or Muhammad Abduh, were



advocates of an Islamic revival based on fundamentals along with reform, all while having critical but multitextured understandings of their faith's relation to the "modernity," rationality, and "the West" (Tibi, 2001, p. 15). The Muslim Brotherhood itself designated its own fundamentalism as Muslim "modernity."

Contemporary Islamic radicalisms, according to Hardt and Negri (2000), are based primarily on "ijtihad. They explain that this Arabic phrase means "original thought" and that Islamic radicals are engaged in the invention of original values and practices, which perhaps echo those of other periods but are really directed in reaction to the present social order. Looking closely, it is possible to argue that Hardt and Negri on ijtihad are much like Foucault on Islamic government. This term actually comes from eighth- and ninth-century Islamic jurisprudence. It means an individualized effort at legal reasoning in the interpretation and application of religious law. A mujtahid ("one who exerts") does not invent original values; he deduces rules of behavior from holy sources.

In short, everything about this term, and about the relation between fundamentalism and modernism, is more complex, both historically and conceptually, than allowed by Hardt and Negri's (2000) binary oppositions. The discourses of postmoderns and fundamentalists are antithetical in most respects, according to Hardt and Negri, yet postmoderns and the current wave of fundamentalists have arisen not only at the same time but also in response to the same situation, only at opposite poles of the global hierarchy.

The problem is not just that Hardt and Negri (2000) draw as they please from textual sources and contemporary history. The problem is the politics they aim to embellish by doing so. Compare their linkage of postmoderns to fundamentalists with comments Georg Lukács made in a letter to Paul Ernst. Both men had been romantic anticapitalists before World War I, and then parted political ways. Lukács, critic and philosopher, became a Bolshevik; Ernst, playwright and poet, became a nationalist conservative. The former believed that he had found the messiah class, the vehicle through which life and history-Life and History-would be made whole. The latter remained an anti-capitalist and longed for an imaginary world-Golden and Organic-that was uncontaminated by the rise of commercial barbarism. "However much our ideas may differ," Lukács wrote to him in the 1920s, "discussion is possible so long as our judgments of capitalism are similar. I believe that you are mistaken on nearly every question, but you are not on the other side of the barricades (Lowy and Lukács, 1979).

As Leninists and conservative nationalists were, despite their differing ideas, on the same side of the barricades against capitalism, so, it seems, postmoderns and fundamentalists respond in concert, despite antithetical discourses, to what Hardt and Negri call Empire. Empire is for them a new paradigm that issues from modernity's transfiguration into postmodernity. It leaves behind sovereign states, nations, and imperialism, and has no center. So it is not American, even if the United States retains a privileged position within it. Yet it is a systemic totality.

Deleuze advocated systematic metaphysical thinking, in contrast to most postmodernists, who oppose grand narratives and speak of a fragmented universe. But a

Deleuzian system has no essence, no grounding principle. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) insisted that our lives are machines. If you link Deleuze's vision to Luhmann's notion of "autopoiesis," that is, of a self-producing and self-referential system of communication, then the fundamental principle of the Hardt and Negri (2000) totality begins to take its somewhat indeterminate shape: in *Empire*, power has no actual and localizable terrain or center. Imperial power is distributed in networks through mobilized and articulated mechanisms of control. And so revolt will have to be through those mechanisms, decentered, everywhere.

What Foucault called disciplinary society, a product of modernity, becomes, according to Hardt and Negri (2000), a society of control, of "biopower" (p. 23) in postmodern *Empire*. In disciplinary society, social apparatuses, ranging from prisons to asylums to clinics, impose standards of normality and deviance. Yet the *Empire* in which we live, as Hardt and Negri characterize it, is in significant ways a postmodern 1984. It is a world of doublethink, a society of control in which the mechanisms of command pretend to be democratic when they actually generalize disciplinarity throughout our brains and bodies. Biopower regulates social life from its interior. Instead of Big Brother's party, a globalized machine that is economic-industrial-communicative commands the entire life of the population. They conclude, and surely Orwell's O'Brien would concur, that "truth will not make us free, but taking control of the production of truth will" (p. 156).

For Hardt and Negri (2000), the important truth is what You Are Against. Or perhaps, the important truth is simply that You Are Against, because they don't seem to

appreciate that nobody is more foundationalist than a fundamentalist. As long as You Are Against, the basis doesn't seem to matter. It doesn't matter that contemporary Muslim fundamentalists believe, in Tibi's words, that "modern knowledge ought to be Islamicized" or, more properly, re-Islamicized, because they imagine that all science comes, finally, from Islam (Tibi, 2001, pp. 11-13). What matters for Hardt and Negri is "Being-against." It is the essential key to every active political position in the world. The lived experience of the global multitude is animated by it at the most basic and elemental level.

"Being-against" allows Hardt and Negri (2000) to bring together under the same rubric Chiapas, fundamentalism, and Tiananmen Square. Participants in the Los Angeles riots of 1992 and the intifada may not realize it (one might say that they may have only local focus rather than decentered global consciousness) but they are all refusing the post-Fordist regime of social control. These risings, regardless of their content, are postmodern and potentially liberating.

In *Empire* we learn that Bad Postmodernity can be replaced by Good Postmodernity thanks to Being-against. Globalization must be met with counterglobalization, Empire with counter-Empire. This is possible because "the body of the multitude can configure itself as a telos" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 395). This telos is theurgical, meaning that divine agency is at work. In their quest for counter-Empire, which they also call "the earthly city of the multitude" (p. 396), Hardt and Negri seem to enter their own realm of political spirituality. "The poor is god on earth," they tell us,

"there is World Poverty, but there is above all World Possibility, and only the poor is capable of this" (pp. 156-157).

In our times Being-against will release the multitude's desire so that technologies and production may be directed towards the multitudes own increase in power. The Internet is one such technology because it is a nonhierarchical and noncentered network structure, or a "rhizome" in Deleuzese. Because they see human beings as "desiring" machines, mechanical and organic images always seem to merge for Hardt and Negri (2000). In a telling metaphor, they provide what might be called "the capillary theory" of postmodern change. Capillaries are small vessels between the terminations of arteries and the starts of veins, that is, between the blood channels from and to the heart. Hardt and Negri, having described nongovernmental organizations as moral police early in *Empire*, go on, later in the book, to characterize them as the capillary ends of the contemporary networks of power. In other words, the universal moral call of these NGOs might, dialectically, usher along a reversal of biopower's direction.

This reversal is reminiscent of the most precarious moment in Marx's political thought when he imagined that a proletarian state that centralized dominion over economic life (in the first phase of communism) would lead dialectically to a stateless society (in the second, classless phase of communism). The goal of postmodern dialectical reversal is a world of deterritorialized movements, rhizomes, and Hardt and Negri (2000) believe it is inscribed in the present. Postmodern *Empire* presents us with an alternative: the set of all the exploited and subjugated, a multitude that is directly opposed to *Empire*, with no mediation between them.

But what if a thousand machines of life, art, solidarity, and action don't work in unison? What if no General Strike of the multitude makes the Earthly City divine? This was, after all, Lenin's problem. He solved it by placing the Vanguard Party, with its scientific grasp of history, between the two cities. Hardt and Negri (2000) slide into postmodern Bolshevism. They want "Being-against" to become, dialectically, politically spiritual immanence, but they must know that only postmodern intellectuals will digest their discourse. After all, their theory of revolutionary communication explains that the theurgical telos of the desirous multitude of decentered Empire will be realized joyously as its Being-against is configured rhizomatically. If you are one of the multitude and this doesn't quite explain your world to you, well, not everyone grasped Lenin's Materialism and Empiriocriticism.

#### *Friedman versus Hardt and Negri*

In addition to their use of historical narratives to provide a framework for what Empire is and what is required to "be against" it, Hardt and Negri's (2000) work has some interesting similarities to Friedman's (2000) work. Primarily, the similarity is in the voice of the authors. When reading Friedman, it is easy to hear his disdain for antiglobalization thinkers and political leaders. He clearly calls himself a globalist, so there is no doubt as to the stance he is taking toward the changing world (this is the case with Hardt and Negri, as well). What is interesting is that his narratives (either real events or made-up conversations) have a strong voice meant to further demonstrate to positive possibilities or embracing the global free market. In Friedman's view, you either play the game or you just lose.

Hardt and Negri think that something has been wrong on the left, and you find it not just in what they write; you hear it in their voice. It is an understanding, even empathetic voice when they discuss fundamentalists, however antithetical the discourse is to their own. But it is contemptuous when they speak of noncommunist socialists. Liberal and socialist big government brought great repression and destruction of humanity. Liberalism and socialism were the two great "ideologies" of modernity's "mature phase," when "immanence" first lost out to "transcendence" (p. 326). Hardt and Negri suggest that imperial command needs an inclusive moment. By blinding us to differences, a veil of ignorance prepares a universal acceptance of Empire's totality, which runs on its own logic like a high tech machine. This system must also obliterate challenges; this is why there are Gulf Wars. And nongovernmental organizations, especially human rights groups like Amnesty International, Médecins Sans Frontières, or Oxfam, are moral police whose moral interventionism often prepares the stage for military intervention.

Although it is not easy, it is possible to see how Hardt and Negri's (2000) narrative conveys their hostility to liberalism and socialism and promotes the power of the multitude. It is much easier to see how Friedman's narrative conveys his desire to embrace the spread of free market capitalism as his voice is much clearer and more consistent than Hardt and Negri's. Ultimately, it appears as if Hardt and Negri's *Empire* and Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* could be mirror images of each other. Friedman promotes acceptance while Hardt and Negri promote resistance. Also, agency becomes a key issue when comparing the two works as Friedman almost completely

ignores human agency and, instead, privileges faith in the market. The market will solve and problems associated with globalization. In contrast, Hardt and Negri suggest that the multitude has power (and, therefore agency) if it engages in specific steps to resist Empire. But that agency is described in ways that make it difficult to imagine actually happening in the way that Hardt and Negri seems to think it can. Overall, it could be argued that both of these works attempt to define the nature of the change world, one describing the changes as positive, one describing them as more negative. But the radical differences in more the suggestions of the authors, as well as their underlying assumptions, provides good evidence for why it is important to further engage in analysis of this discourse that is so widely circulated and, one may assume, has the potential to be widely influential.



## CHAPTER III

### GLOBALIZATION AND THE MEDIA

“Are you a Zaptista?” asked Jagdish Bhagwati, one of the world’s preeminent trade economists, of a young protester wearing a mask. The sixty-six-year-old Columbia professor and free-trade advocate laughs as he recounts his adventures amid the steelworkers, topless lesbians, and papier-mâché puppets at the protests against the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle. Recalling the demonstrator’s response, he is still a bit puzzled. ‘She said, ‘No, I’m just an anarchist.’” He giggles. “I didn’t know if she’d read Bakunin!”

“I wanted to see where they were coming from,” Bhagwati says of his foray into the November 1999 street protest. “I talked to a lot of the kids, and some of the turtles as well, and asked, ‘What’s agitating you?’” (Some of the protesters were dressed as turtles to dramatize a WTO ruling that failed to protect turtles from commercial fishnets.) To his dismay, “They just assumed that the WTO was anti-turtle.” (Featherstone, 2001)

In conventional parlance, the current era in history is generally characterized as one of globalization, technological revolution, and democratization. In all three of these areas, media and communication play a central and, perhaps, even a defining role. Economic and cultural globalization arguably would be impossible without a global commercial media system to promote global markets and to encourage consumer values. The very essence of the technological revolution is the radical development in digital communication and computing. The argument that the bad old days of police states and authoritarian regimes are unlikely to return is premised on the claims that new communication technologies along with global markets undermine, even eliminate, the capacity for maximum leaders to rule with impunity.

#### **Mass media theories**

There are several different views on how the media functions within political, governmental, corporate, and cultural constraints. Seibert’s (1963) four theories of the

press probably constitute the most well-known attempt to clarify the link between mass media and the political society in modern world. Since the theory was presented by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm (1963), it has been widely accepted and utilized by media scholars. Nevertheless, a critical evaluation shows that Siebert's theories are outdated and too simplistic to be useful in today's media research. The four theories proposed by Siebert and the authoritarian theory, the libertarian theory, the social responsibility theory, and the soviet communist theory.

#### *The authoritarian theory*

According to Siebert, the authoritarian state system requires direct governmental control of the mass media. This system is especially easy to recognize in pre-democratic societies, where the government consists of a very limited and small ruling-class. The media in an authoritarian system are not allowed to print or broadcast anything which could undermine the established authority, and any offense to the existing political values is avoided. The authoritarian government may go to the step of punishing anyone who questions the state's ideology.

The fundamental assumption of the authoritarian system is that the government is infallible. Media professionals are therefore not allowed to have any independence within the media organization. Also foreign media are subordinate to the established authority, in that all imported media products are controlled by the state.

One may think that there is an inevitable parallel between the authoritarian media system and a totalitarian society. This is true for the most part, but a government may enforce an authoritarian profile without being openly totalitarian.

### *The libertarian theory*

Siebert (1963) goes on to explain the libertarian theory, which is also called the free press theory. In contrast to the authoritarian theory, the libertarian view rests on the idea that the individual should be free to publish whatever he or she likes. Its history traces back to the 17th century's thinker John Milton, who asserted that human beings inevitably choose the best ideas and values. In the libertarian system, attacks on the government's policies are fully accepted and even encouraged. Moreover, there should be no restrictions on import or export of media messages across the national frontiers. Moreover, journalists and media professionals ought to have full autonomy within the media organization.

It is hard to find intact examples of libertarian media systems in today's world. The U.S. will in many aspects come close, but as we will see later, this country's media system has have tendencies of authoritarianism as well.

### *The social responsibility theory*

An American initiative in the late forties brought forth the *social responsibility* theory. Realizing that the market had failed to fulfill the promise that press freedom would reveal the truth, The Commission on Freedom of the Press provided a model in which the media had certain obligations to society. These obligations were expressed in the words informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance. Siebert (1963) writes that the goal of the social responsibility system is that media as a whole is pluralized, indicating a reflection of the diversity of society as well as access to various points of view.

As opposed to the libertarian theory, the social responsibility principle is to provide an entrance to different mass media to minority groups. The journalist is accountable to his audience as well as to the government. Most media systems in Western Europe today come close to the social responsibility theory.

*The Soviet communist theory*

Apparent from its name, the Soviet theory is closely tied to a specific ideology; the communist. Siebert traces the roots of this theory back to the 1917 Russian Revolution based on the postulates of Marx and Engels. The media organizations in this system were not intended to be privately owned and were to serve the interests of the working class. An illustration of the Soviet system would appear to be the same as the authoritarian model, in that both theories acknowledge the government as superior to the media institutions.

Mass media scholars McLeod and Blumler (1989) point out that it is important to notice that Siebert's theories were intended to be normative, meaning that "they do not attempt to stipulate how social systems do operate, but rather with specification of how they should or could work according to some preexisting set of criteria" (p. 271). An evaluation of the theories should, therefore, not find out if they provide perfect descriptions of the various political systems, but rather if the approach leads to a valuable understanding of the mass media's position in society. For instance, it would be a mistake to judge Siebert's theories as dysfunctional solely on the basis of a study that shows that the Soviet model does not entirely tell how the current Russian media operate.

With regard to this, two notes need to be made: First, the ideal system is not synonymous with the best system as ascribed to the author. Secondly, one must not mistake Siebert's theories as being a representation of how the mass media system actually work. However, it is legitimate to expect that theories concerning mass media and society to a large degree correspond to actual political systems. If not, the contemporary usefulness of such theories would be low.

Numerous studies have been done to evaluate the four media systems in order to point out the most successful. Unfortunately, these studies tend to overlook that there might be weaknesses in Siebert's theories from their starting-point. The question remains: How can we best understand the relationship between mass media and society?

#### *Liberal pluralism*

Liberal pluralism is yet another approach to understanding the role of the mass media in society. The general assumptions of the liberal pluralism approach included the notion that society is composed of diverse groups who come together to lobby for and represent their interests before government. This diversity of interests gives balance and strength to the overall society. And all voices can potentially be heard. Also, the power of groups to represent their interests is roughly equal. No one group can dominate any particular issue all of the time. With regard to the government, liberal pluralism assumes that the government acts as an impartial referee on behalf of the general good, helping to achieve fair and just compromises to competing claims. Additionally, political life (at the level of the citizen and at the institutional level) is independent from

economic life. Rich and poor are equal in the face of government and law. And, finally, the exercise of power is visible. Hall (1982) sums up liberal pluralism as such:

Thus the democratic enfranchisement of all citizens within political society; and the economic enfranchisement of all consumers within the free-enterprise economy, would rapidly be paralleled by the cultural absorption of all groups into the culture of the centre. Pluralism rested on these three mutually reinforcing supports. In its purest form, pluralism assured that no structural barriers or limits of class would obstruct this process of cultural absorption: for as we all 'knew,' America was no longer a class society (p. 26).

### *The propaganda model*

Herman and Chomsky (1988) argue that the mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. They state,

It is their function [mass media] function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfill this role requires systematic propaganda (p.1).

A propaganda model focuses on the inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices. Herman and Chomsky suggest that this model traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news fit to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public. The set of "filters" in the propaganda model fall under five headings. First is the size, ownership, and profit orientation of the mass media. Second is the notion of advertising as the primary income source of the mass media. Third is the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and experts funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power.

The fourth filter is “flak” (referring to negative responses to a media statement or program) as a means of disciplining the media and the fifth is “anticommunism” (this fifth filter has been eliminated by most scholars as Herman and Chomsky were writing in 1988 before large communist countries eliminated that form of government) (p.2).

According to Herman and Chomsky (1988), these elements interact with and reinforce one another. The raw material of news must pass through successive filters, resulting in “cleansed” news that is fit to print. Although Chomsky, in particular, has been repeatedly criticized for his anti-theoretical and overly class-based view of the media, this approach is the one that most closely fits my analysis that follows. This essay focuses on globalization and there have been numerous events (primarily protests) that have bolstered the propaganda model. The WTO protests (referenced in the quote at the beginning of this chapter) are just one example of how it appears that the mainstream mass media is “cleansing” the news and silencing dissenting voices by either framing protestors as ignorant or violent, or not providing coverage of protests at all. Although I do not address the September 11<sup>th</sup> World Trade Center bombings in this essay, it may be argued that the media coverage after the attacks also fits the propaganda model. I do not attempt to systematically demonstrate particular news events being filtered, but rather argue that the mainstream media has filtered coverage of globalization protests, most likely because much of the mass media has an economic stake in the success of the spread of free market

capitalism. Most of the major news networks are owned by large corporations. Additionally, even those that are not may be forced to cover the “right” stories with the “correct” frame in order to compete with more popular media outlets.

For capitalism’s promoters, like Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, this suggests that the human race may be entering a new Golden Age. All people need to do is sit back, shut up, and shop, and let markets and technologies work their magical wonders. From a socialist perspective, these claims are often regarded with the utmost skepticism (McChesney, 2001). The notion of globalization as it is commonly used to describe some natural and inexorable force, the telos of capitalism, is misleading and ideologically loaded. Many argue that a superior term would be neoliberalism, referring to the set of national and international policies that call for business domination of all social affairs with minimal countervailing force (McChesney, 2001; de Larrinaga, 2000; Grainge, 2001). Governments are to remain large so as to better serve the corporate interests, while minimizing any activities that might undermine the rule of business and the wealthy. Neoliberalism is almost always intertwined with a deep belief in the ability of markets to use new technologies to solve social problems far better than any alternative course. The centerpiece of neoliberal policies is invariably a call for commercial media and communication markets to be deregulated. What this mean in practice is that they are “re-regulated” to serve corporate interests (McChesney, 2001). Understood as one of neoliberalism rather than simply globalization, the current era seems less the result of uncontrollable natural forces and more as the newest stage of class struggle under capitalism (Scholte, 2000). The anti-democratic implications, rather



than being swept under the carpet as they are in conventional parlance, move to the forefront.

Chomsky (1997) argues that understanding the impact of the media is central to the whole intellectual culture. The media have a daily influence in both the private and the public sectors and it is possible to conduct a systematic investigation of media messages. You can compare yesterday's version to today's version. There is a lot of evidence about what is played up and what isn't and the way things are structured.

Chomsky states,

My impression is the media aren't very different from scholarship or from, say, journals of intellectual opinion - there are some extra constraints - but it's not radically different. They interact, which is why people go up and back quite easily among them. You look at the media, or at any institution you want to understand. You ask questions about its internal institutional structure. You want to know something about their setting in the broader society. How do they relate to other systems of power and authority? If you're lucky, there is an internal record from leading people in the information system which tells you what they are up to (it is sort of a doctrinal system). That doesn't mean the public relations handouts but what they say to each other about what they are up to. There is quite a lot of interesting documentation (from a talk at Z Media Institute, June 1997).

Chomsky's (1997) view of the media suggests that there are underlying power structures that influence what events are discussed in the media and how those events are portrayed, implying that the public's understanding and opinions of such events are a product of the way the mainstream media choose to present them. Those are three major sources of information about the nature of the media. It is possible to study them the way a scientist would study a complex molecule. You take a look at the structure and then make a hypothesis based on the structure as to what the media product is likely to look

like. Then you investigate the media product and see how well it conforms to the hypotheses. Virtually all work in media analysis is this last part—trying to study carefully just what the media product is and whether it conforms to obvious assumptions about the nature and structure of the media.

What is found as a result of such investigation, according to Chomsky (1997) is that there are different media which do different things, like entertainment/Hollywood, soap operas, and so on, or even most of the newspapers in the country (the overwhelming majority of them). Chomsky tells us that they are directing the mass audience.

There is another sector of the media, the elite media, sometimes called the agenda-setting media because they are the ones with the largest amount of resources, that set the framework within which everyone else operates. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the major television networks (now beginning to include several cable networks) participate in creating such a framework. Their audience is primarily privileged people. The people who read the *New York Times*, people who are reasonably wealthy or part of what is sometimes called the political class are actually involved in the political system in an ongoing fashion. They are basically managers of one sort or another. They can be political managers, business managers (like corporate executives or that sort of thing), doctoral managers (like university professors), or other journalists who are involved in organizing the way people think and look at things (Chomsky, 1997).

The elite media set a framework within which others operate. If you are watching the Associated Press, who create constant flow of news, you will notice that in the mid-afternoon it breaks and there is something that comes along every day that says "Notice to Editors: Tomorrow's *New York Times* is going to have the following stories on the front page." The point of that is, if you're an editor of a newspaper in Cincinnati, Ohio, and you don't have the resources to figure out what the news is, or you don't want to think about it anyway, this tells you what the news is. These are the stories for the quarter page that you are going to devote to something other than local affairs or diverting your audience. These are the stories that you put there because that's what the *New York Times* tells us is what you are supposed to care about tomorrow. If you are an editor in Cincinnati, Ohio, you would almost have to do that, because you have limited resources compared to the large news sources. That framework works pretty well, and it is understandable that it is a reflection of obvious power structures.

The real mass media are basically trying to divert people (Chomsky, 1997; McChesney, 2001). One argument for why it is possible for them to accomplish this task is that they are major, very profitable, corporations. Furthermore, most of them are either linked to, or outright owned by, much bigger corporations, such as General Electric, Westinghouse, and so on. They are at the top of the power structure of the private, global economy, which may be argued is a tyrannical structure. Most large national and global corporations are basically tyrannies, hierarchically structured, and therefore controlled from above.

Chomsky provides an interesting response to those who would argue that the press is truly free and writers are not influenced by outside sources.

When you critique the media and you say, look, here is what Anthony Lewis or somebody else is writing, they get very angry. They say, quite correctly, "Nobody ever tells me what to write. I write anything I like. All this business about pressures and constraints is nonsense because I'm never under any pressure." Which is completely true, but the point is that they wouldn't be there unless they had already demonstrated that nobody has to tell them what to write because they are going say the right thing. If they had started off at the Metro desk, or something, and had pursued the wrong kind of stories, they never would have made it to the positions where they can now say anything they like. The same is mostly true of university faculty in the more ideological disciplines. They have been through the socialization system (from a talk at Z Media Institute, June 1997).

Most of the mainstream media are part of one or more corporations and sell a product. The product is audiences. They do not make money when you buy the newspaper. They are happy to put it on the worldwide web for free. They actually lose money when you buy the newspaper. But the audience is the product. The product is privileged people, top-level decision-making people in society. You have to sell a product to a market, and the market is, of course, advertisers (that is, other businesses). Whether it is television or newspapers, or whatever, they are selling audiences. Corporations sell audiences to other corporations. In the case of the elite media, this is big businesses.

An argument suggesting that the media shapes not only what IS news, but how we should THINK about that news is particularly salient with respect to the public understanding of globalization. Globalization has been discussed by the mainstream media in primarily business or economic terms. A media analysis in order to determine

both the ways in which globalization is discussed by different media outlets and the types of outlets that are most likely to discuss the phenomenon. Findings show that, since 1986, references to globalization have steadily increased only in business sections of major news outlets, and such references tend to portray globalization as a positive phenomenon (a pro-capitalism bias). Events that have occurred that demonstrate resistance to some of the potential outcomes of the globalization process typically portray arguments or protests against the process as reactionary, irrational, or even ignorant. Such events include the globalization protests, directed at the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank, the FTAA and the G8 respectively.

I will focus this analysis on the media coverage surrounding these events and some other lesser known events in order to demonstrate how the mainstream media plays a complicit role in reinforcing the values and goals of pro-capitalist views of globalization, ultimately stemming from the large, multinational corporations that benefit the most from economic globalization. I will also consider the extent to which the U.S. “consents” to being given misinformation as a way of lending support to the arguments that I make regarding the media-bias on the issue of globalization. There are certainly other elements of media coverage of globalization that could be analyzed, but they appear to primarily boil down to economic issues. The most potent representation of the hegemonic power of the mainstream media with regard to globalization is the coverage of protests both within the U.S. and across the globe.

## **Protests**

Mass protests throughout history have come at a time when enough of the population has been affected by policies of the rulers and elite. They have often been met with brutal, efficient crackdown by the guardians of the elite - the local police, militias, national militaries, or even another nation's military forces. The large protests at the WTO meetings, the IMF, World Bank, G8 and other such summits that are seen today have typically been against the current forms of globalization and the marginalization it is causing, as well as the increasing disparities between the rich and the poor that it has predictably led to already. These issues have motivated people all over the world to protest in many ways (George, 2001).

The mainstream media has concentrated on only a few of these global protests, such as Seattle in 1999, Washington, D.C. in 2000 and 2002, Quebec in 2001, and Genoa in 2001. These were just some of the more mainstream and reported ones because two of them were in the home nation of the current superpower, the United States and the Quebec summit was a Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) that involved the U.S. directly. Genoa was a G8 summit that involved the 7 richest nations plus Russia.

These protests, directed at the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF)/World Bank, the FTAA and the G8 respectively, were all protests at the effects of the current forms of globalization which go along the lines of a neoliberal/corporate capitalism ideology (which, as suggested elsewhere in this

essay, is more of the mercantilist/imperialist policy of wealth appropriation that has continued throughout history.)

While protests have been aimed at different international bodies and blocs, the underlying themes are similar, while the actual themes of the protests have been different. For example, the WTO protest of Seattle was about the trade policies being drawn up in undemocratic ways yet affecting people all around the world. Here too, the elite's front guard was mobilized to protect the image of the multinational corporations and institutions that support their rights. The police crackdown was often violent and unprovoked.

The IMF and World Bank protests in Washington, D.C. were about the policies of the IMF and World Bank towards developing countries. Their methods of assistance have been criticized for a long time, for things such as increasing dependencies on the richer nations, promoting a form of development whereby developing nations continue to provide cheap resources and labor to the richer nations to continue to remain in servitude for the west, etc. These policies are a precursor and basic framework to allow trade policies discussed at the WTO to be effective; they go hand in hand. The protests seen at various G8 summits have included issues such as debt relief.

It is ironic, then, that in many countries leaders, elected through processes of democracy, have been turning against protestors, via pressure from the aristocracy (often meaning corporations) of that nation and from international (primarily western) financial institutions that are the target of the protests and criticisms. As protests increase, it is

harder for elected leaders to hide behind their claims of being elected, if they are not fulfilling their promises, or turning out not to support their people via their policies.

When the G8 leaders were besieged and publicly upstaged by upwards of 200,000 demonstrators, they had a single line of defense which they repeated to whoever wanted to hear it: "We are democratically elected." But democratic election does not justify presidents when they betray their electoral promises and the public interest, or embark on wholesale privatization and liberalization. Nor does it entitle them to service the demands of the companies that financed their electoral campaigns. As we know, at least two of the G8 heads, George W. Bush and Silvio Berlusconi, represent big business to a far greater extent than they represent ordinary people (Ramonet, 2001).

#### *Mainstream media portrayal*

The mainstream media portrayal by many western nations, notably the U.S., has been very biased. Being primarily corporate-owned nations, and because protestors are voicing concerns over the current form of globalization, which is seen as overly corporate-friendly without appropriate considerations for people, this bias can be seen as quite obvious. However, most people get their views and news from mainstream media, from what are regarded as respectable news sources and, hence, it makes it difficult for additional views and perspectives to be heard, thereby contributing to the ongoing process.

This 'new movement', portrayed by the media as students and anarchists from the rich and prosperous global north, is just the tip of the iceberg. In the global south, a far deeper and wide-ranging movement has been developing for years, largely ignored by the media (Woodroffe and Ellis-Jones, 2001, p. 13).



Some mainstream media representation may leave the impression that the recent public protests in D.C., Seattle, Prague and other western cities are recent issues, or that these are the only protests, and that only a few are protesting. In fact, Seattle and D.C. protests were international protests in their composition. The mainstream avoided in-depth issues of developing nations in Seattle, for example, while they concentrated on sensationalism. Both before (long before in many cases, especially if we include the centuries and decades of opposition to imperialist and colonial globalization) and since Seattle, millions of people around the world have turned up in waves of protests at various IMF, World Bank, WTO meetings or policies in various nations. Repression has been equally brutal and sometimes worse. For example there have been protests in countries ranging from Angola to Ecuador to India and South Africa, in addition to the more well-publicized protests in the U.S., Quebec, and Genoa.

#### *Recent G8 summits*

The June 18 campaign in the U.K., in 1999, was another highly publicized event, with biased media reporting. This was another international protest, where many major cities in the world on the same day saw large protests. In fact, as Table 1 shows, the June 18 protests occurred all over the world. May Day, in 2001, saw many May Day protests around the world, as shown in Table 2.

Table 1: June 18 Protests Worldwide in 1999

Argentina	Colombia	Malaysia	South Africa
Australia	Czech republic	Malta	South Korea
Austria	Finland	Mexico	Spain
Bangladesh	France	Netherlands	Sweden
Basque country	Germany	Nepal	Switzerland
Belarus	Greece	Nigeria	Thailand
Brazil	India	Pakistan	UK
Canada	Indonesia	Poland	Uruguay
Catalonia	Israel	Portugal	U.S.
Chile	Italy	Romania	Zimbabwe
		Senegal	

Table 2: May Day Protests Worldwide in 2001

Australia	Poland
Canada	Portugal
China	Russia
Cuba	South Korea
France	Spain
Germany	Sweden
Indonesia	Switzerland
Italy	U.S.
New Zealand	

With the 2001 WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, where new rounds of neoliberal free trade talks were negotiated, there were protests around the world. In Doha itself there were limited protests because of repressive laws. Summarizing from Protest.net, protests have occurred in at least the places listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Protests Against the WTO Ministerial Conference Worldwide

Australia	Qatar	Russia
Austria	Hong Kong	Slovakia
Bangladesh	India	Slovenia
Belgium	Italy	Spain
Bolivia	Japan	Sweden
Brazil	Lebanon	Switzerland
Canada	Netherlands	Thailand
Czech Republic	Nigeria	Tunisia
Denmark	Norway	Turkey
Finland	Philippines	UK
France	South Korea	U.S.
Germany	Portugal	

As Global Exchange reports,

Since 1976, at least 100 protests against [International Monetary] Fund and [World] Bank policies have occurred in dozens of countries around the world ... Clearly, ordinary citizens are outraged with the institutions' policies. The continued adoption of those policies reveals the democracy disconnect fostered by the IMF and the World Bank (2001).

They further provide just a partial list of some of those countries in alphabetical order, where protests have occurred since 1976. That list is reproduced in Table 4.

Table 4: Protests Against IMF and World Bank Policies Since 1976

Argentina
Egypt
Ghana
Jamaica
Liberia
Morocco
Peru
Philippines
Sierra Leone
Sudan
Turkey
Zaire

These are just a small number of examples. It is not a complete list. Protests are likely going to continue around the globe if policies continue along the way they are. And suppressions or crackdowns are equally likely, ironically by the policing forces that are meant to uphold people's rights, who instead are and will be upholding and protecting the rights of the elite and power holders. The mainstream media, too, is likely to continue its negative portrayal of the protests, as it affects them directly as well.

The mainstream media in western nations have hardly provided any coverage of such protests. Or, if they have in some cases, they have usually been in an isolated context, without deeper discussions that may also see similarities with other protests around the world. Because many policies around the world are in some ways a result of the influence and ability of more powerful nations to affect economic and political decisions, the people of these more powerful nations do not get to see the impacts their

leaders have around the world, and the faceless majority of humanity continue to live in poverty and misery while the fortunate few in the wealthier parts of the world are unwittingly supporting such policies.

Amongst other places, there have been police crackdowns in Davos, Switzerland, at the beginning of 2001 at the annual World Economic Forum, and soon after that it was mentioned that the next WTO meeting would be held in Qatar so that protestors would not have a chance of voicing their concerns (because Qatar has oppressive laws about such things). Indeed, the next round did take place and developing countries lost out a lot. It appears as if this pattern is likely to continue.

With the September 11, 2001 tragedy, the aftermath and resulting war on terror has also muted the anti-corporate globalization protests somewhat and it appears as if globalization, itself, has taken a backseat to media discussions of terrorism (although it may be argued that the two issues are inextricably linked). Furthermore, some politicians have tried to equate being critical of free trade (which is not really "free") as amounting to being against freedom and, hence, being pro-terrorist. This approach was especially prominent during the Doha WTO meeting. As another example, while the European Union has repeatedly attempted to allay fears that the increasing measures against terrorism will not be used as an excuse to crack down on political activism, Spain seems to be suggesting a proposal to do just that, trying to indirectly equate anti-corporate globalization activism with terrorism.

*Protestors are labeled as anti-poor*

With such a growing movement world-wide, especially in the most powerful nations, the mainstream media and politicians that are supportive of current globalization policies are trying to discredit the protestors in various ways. One way has been to actually turn the protestor's arguments against themselves. That is, while the protestors argue that the policies of the powerful and of pushing globalization in its current form is deepening poverty, the politicians, business leaders, and media commentators instead are saying that instead it is the protestors who want the poor to remain poor.

There has been a serious ideological backlash from the protests. How can the powers regroup after a fiasco like Seattle? According to George (2001), the first ploy is to accuse opponents of being enemies of the poor, a tactic employed by several U.S. newspapers and by Mike Moore, director-general of the World Trade Organization, who said in Geneva "these protesters make me want to vomit." Paul Krugman, economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a strong voice in the media, added: "The anti-globalization movement already has a remarkable track record of hurting the very people and causes it claims to champion." Of the demonstrators in Geneva, he said: "Whatever their intentions, they were doing their best to make the poor even poorer." The theme was taken up on the eve of Genoa by President George W. Bush, in a statement to *Le Monde*: "The demonstrators are condemning people to poverty."

Susan George, director of the Dutch organization, Transnational Institute, quoted previously, is a prominent activist and political scientist. She goes on to point out that other ploys to discredit opponents include attempting to discredit the protesting

organizations and attacking their legitimacy, to repeat that the protesters do not know what they are talking about, and to label them and their organizations opportunist or alarmist.

On the point above about attacking the legitimacy of protestors, one of the main concerns about the current forms of globalization that has led to so many protests has been the lack of citizen's democratic participation in decisions of international economics and trade policy. As a result, many are protesting. Some have formed groups and organizations for this purpose, while others have just supported various groups. Suggesting that such people have no right to represent people is akin to saying that people should not be allowed to protest any feelings of injustice. Essentially, at least in the U.S., the same First Amendment protections that allow the media the freedom to express their views is being taken away from the protestors by the media themselves.

George (2001) also points out that government and business organizations have gone through incredible means to prevent or handle protests, including surveillance, trying to disrupt the funding chain, planning to hold future meetings in locations that are even more remote or secure, violent crackdown, etc. She suggests,

This proves that the opponents of corporate-led globalization are making a real impact - why otherwise would the masters of the universe bother with them? But that is to underestimate the importance international capital attaches to this battle. Its hatred of democracy has never been so clearly displayed. It must, by fair means or foul, establish the legitimacy of its domination before any more shocks. From this point of view, the elections of Bush and of Silvio Berlusconi are heaven-sent. Social movements have to watch their step now, especially since Genoa. They are entering a minefield (2001, p. 21).

Just a month or so after Susan George wrote the above, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S. resulted in a "War on Terrorism", where terrorism seems to have been loosely defined, to the extent that the global movements against corporate globalization have also been quieted.

Listed previously were just a few examples of places around the world where protests have occurred. Yet, for example, at the G8 Summit in Genoa, political and business leaders tried to additionally taint the image of protestors from wealthier nations through statements to the media. The media has primarily focused on those statements rather than allowing for equal coverage of the perspectives of the protestors.

Both George W. Bush and Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* appear to have misrepresented the protestors (such as claiming the protestors are ignorant) and their aims (such as claiming the protestors wanted the poor to remain poor), but, more importantly, have not legitimized what the current form of globalization is doing to the world's poor. Indeed, the global elite would not be making even the modest gestures they have offered to the poor if it were not for the pressures from the protestors in the rich countries, where at least some media coverage, even if it has a negative slant, seeps into the mainstream (and since they find it easier to ignore, or shoot, protestors in the poor countries).

The protestors (regardless of their tactics) were not fooled by the G-8 leaders' protestations at the G8 summit in Genoa of concerns for the poor. "One hundred thousand people don't get upset unless there is a problem in their hearts and spirits," French president Jacques Chirac said after hearing of the police killing of protester Carlo



Giuliani, the son of an Italian labor union leader. More than 100,000 people are upset, and the problem is not just in their hearts and minds but in the system of corporate globalization that has delivered so much to the world's rich and so little to the poor (Moberg, 2001).

The current mainstream economic and political ideology is so engrained into the system that many leaders are likely to honestly feel that the system is the best way to alleviate poverty and improve standards. J.W. Smith, who has done immense research in how wasteful and violent this historic system has been, points out that similar achievements in standards could have been met for all the world with far less waste, environmental degradation, inequality etc, and is worth quoting here for that deeper perspective:

Although in the early years the power brokers knew they were destroying others' tools of production (industrial capital) in the ongoing battle for economic territory, trade has now become so complex that few of today's powerful are aware of the waste and destruction created by the continuation of this neo-mercantilist struggle for markets. Instead, they feel that it is they who are responsible for the world's improving standards of living and that they are defending not only their rights but everybody's rights. This illusion is possible because in the battle to monopolize society's productive tools and the wealth they produce. Industrial capital has become so productive that even as capital, resources, and labor are indiscriminately consumed, living standards in the over-capitalized nations have continued to improve. And societies are so accustomed to long struggles for improved living standards that to think it could be done much faster seems irrational (Smith, 1994, p. 158).

#### *Protestors as anti-trade and anti-international*

The largely corporate-owned or influenced mainstream media have often criticized the protestors for being anti-trade or against international cooperation and hence anti-people, or against giving a chance for the poor to have a decent chance for a

standard living. Yet, protestors are typically crying out for such social justice, for fairer international trade or some sort of internationalism and globalism that is just, democratic, cooperative, and improving social justice and chances for all people. Sometimes such diverse groups of people involved will, of course, mean that there are conflicting suggestions for solutions, while others may not necessarily have suggestions but are outraged or affected so much by the current system that they have come out to voice their concerns.

However, it seems as though the corporate-owned media assume that the current form of globalization (i.e. corporate-led) is the only way (and this may be more anti-people than protestors have ever been). It is already shown that this is increasing disparities, which have been predicted by many over a number of years. Protestors are therefore voicing their concerns to these issues.

Another label often inappropriately applied by the media to this loose global social justice movement is "anti-globalization." That is, it seems correct when globalization is assumed to be corporate globalization, but in terms of globalization per se, it is a little misleading. That is, most are for a form of globalization where different cultures can come together, where people from different regions can exchange, trade, communicate, participate in real democracy, etc. But, this alone implies that there are many different forms of globalization, and, the concerns of these diverse protest movements, is that corporate globalization is not leading to the desired globalization that could benefit most of humanity.

Of course, many that support the current form of globalization will also support the opinion that it improves the chance of poverty for some cultures and countries. While many may genuinely believe it, there is real criticism, and often that reality does not match the rhetoric. As a result, movements demanding more social justice, real accountability, and real poverty alleviation are appearing in many parts of the world.

To the increasing irritation of the people concerned, the media constantly refer to them collectively as "NGOs" or, worse, as "anti-globalization." Some, though by no means all participants, do belong to Non-Governmental Organizations with a single-issue focus, such as Greenpeace, Amnesty, Jubilee, Via Campesina, etc. The movement itself is, however, multi-focused and inclusive. It is concerned with the world: omnipresence of corporate rule, the rampages of financial markets, ecological destruction, maldistribution of wealth and power, international institutions constantly overstepping their mandates and lack of international democracy. The label "anti-globalization" is at best a contradiction, at worst a slander (George, 2001, p. 26).

As has been made clear, these forces call themselves the social or citizens' movement. They are opposed to market-driven corporate globalization but they are not anti-globalization per se, which would be pointless: clearly technology and travel are bringing us closer together and this is all for a positive aspect of globalization. They are, instead, anti-inequity, anti-poverty, anti-injustice as well as pro-solidarity, pro-environment and pro-democracy. The mainstream media, however, has consistently labeled those opposing globalization in its pro-capitalism form as simply anti-globalization.

These broad coalitions may not agree on every detail of every issue but they share the basics. They refuse the "Washington Consensus" vision of how the world

should work. Often unjustly accused of having nothing to propose, they are, on the contrary, constantly refining their arguments and their counter-proposals (George, 2001).

Globalization is not a simple black and white issue as the mainstream media often like to present. They often imply that you are either FOR the issue or AGAINST that issue. It has many complexities and perspectives. There is an additional aspect the media have concentrated on disproportionately although not realized that it is a concern with the protests. That is, in the U.S. especially, elements of the Right Wing have been also opposing globalization and the progressive protestors risk forming a dangerous alliance with them. The Right Wing voices have a more isolationist agenda that the media attributes to all the protestors. While that is a concern and something most would oppose, the vast majority of protestors in Seattle and D.C. for example, have been progressive people concerned at the social welfare and basic human rights (i.e., economic and social as well as civil and political) for those affected.

In the industrialized countries, there is the additional concern for one's own job moving overseas which has also led to more people voicing their concerns. As globalization in its current form continues, and IMF/World Bank policies continue to open up developing countries and force their wages and resources to become cheaper and cheaper, this puts a downward pressure on wages in the western countries as well (because corporations move to those cheaper areas, where they can take advantage of the exploitation that can be done). Hence, while many in developed nations may have additional reasons to join in the protests, the voices of protestors from developed and

developing countries are at the same concern: the effects of overly corporate-led forms of globalization on the society, on democracy, on the environment and so on.

To developing countries, the effects are much worse as standards are systematically reduced. The chance of improvement for most people around the world, for an equitable share and chance are all becoming less likely as the dependency and influence of outside force take control over their lives, directly or indirectly.

In developing countries especially, many are aware of the geopolitical processes at play, as many have lived through struggles against imperialism and colonialism. However, as the effects of western policies are now also affecting a large number of citizens in their own countries, protests are getting louder. While there may be elements of nationalism and anti-internationalism involved, by far the largest factor is fairness, equity, social justice, environmental, democracy, accountability, and basic rights in international trade as international policies affects domestic policies.

#### *Media fixation on violence*

The mainstream media, when they have covered such protests in places like Seattle, Washington, D.C., and other venues for international meetings, have often concentrated on the violence that has unfortunately accompanied the protestors, who, by the far majority, are peaceful protestors. The violence detracts attention from the important issues that protestors are raising, and even strengthens the legitimacy of the institutions being criticized.

In some cases, the violence has been thought to have been started by undercover police and others to discredit the protestors. This is not a new tactic, nor should it be a

shocking accusation. However, the fact that some more militant groups protesting against the current forms of globalization have been able to add to this violence has served to promote a more negative image of the purpose of the protests to the wider audience.

In detailing many types of protests and rebellions throughout recent centuries, professor of anthropology, Richard Robbins, suggests that due to the way the world system is structured, protests could unfortunately be considered a "normal" state of affairs.

There has been a tendency for social scientists and others to see protests, riot, or even revolt, as a breakdown of some sort in the social order. So-called functional theories of protest assumed that in the normal workings of society protest is unnecessary and unhealthy. Order, rather than conflict is the normal state of affairs. According to this popular framework, when protest, especially violent protest is present, we will find uprooted, marginal, and disorganized people.... Another perspective, however, suggests that the constant changes inherent in capitalist production, distribution, and consumption, make conflict inevitable. There are always changes taking place in modes of production and organization of labor, in market mechanisms, technological innovation, and so forth. Since all such changes bring some form of social and economic dislocation, we can expect protest to be the "normal" state of affairs. Furthermore, protests are not spontaneous uprisings but movements that bring together in organized fashion people who share certain interests, and who organize to express those interests. Generally, these movements develop from sustained resistance of some sort. Finally, when such movements involve violence, the violence is generally initiated by those against whom the protests is directed. Thus while a labor strike may turn violent, in most cases the violence is initiated by the government, company or private militia, or police (Robbins, 2002, pp. 282-283).

*From direct democratic protests to virtual democracy*

Due to the fear of a large protestor turnout in Barcelona, Spain, the World Bank canceled a June 2001 global meeting there and shifted it to the internet as pointed out by

Norman Solomon. The fears of public protests seem to require a virtual democracy rather than a real one. Solomon states,

Protest organizers are derisive about the Bank's media spin: The representatives of the globalized capitalism feel threatened by the popular movements against globalization. They, who meet in towers surrounded by walls and soldiers in order to stay apart from the people whom they oppress, wish to appear as victims. They, who have at their disposal the resources of the planet, complain that those who have nothing wanted to have their voice heard. In any struggle that concentrates on a battlefield of high-tech communications, the long-term advantages are heavily weighted toward institutions with billions of dollars behind them. Whatever our hopes, no technology can make up for a lack of democracy (2001, p.16).

*Police brutality and civil rights violations ignored*

Imagine having imposed upon you a million dollar bail for walking down the street with a cell phone during a demonstration. Or imagine your passport is taken and political activity forbidden because of a misdemeanor act of civil disobedience. There is growing, worldwide opposition to corporate global pillage. The response, typical of autocratic regimes, is the criminalization of dissent. The media has also ignored the often brutal police and law enforcement crackdowns. Tactics have included torture, physical and sexual violence, detaining suspects without proof, not providing food or water or access to lawyers, absurd bails, raiding protests groups and alternative and independent media centers, and so on. These injustices are not just occurring in countries where civil rights are not as prominent. These are some of the same problems that have occurred in the U.S., where such rights are typically prominent and, supposedly, constitutionally guaranteed.

In January 2003, it was revealed that police in Genoa admitted to "to fabricating evidence against globalization activists in an attempt to justify police brutality during protests at the July 2001 G8 Summit" as revealed by media watch-dog group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR). Yet there has been hardly any media reporting of it at all in the U.S. (and only a small amount in Europe). FAIR points out that:

Police in Genoa, Italy have admitted to fabricating evidence against globalization activists in an attempt to justify police brutality during protests at the July 2001 G8 Summit. In searches of the Nexis database, FAIR has been unable to find a single mention of this development in any major U.S. newspapers or magazines, national television news shows or wire service stories (2003).

In some places, including the U.S. where there has been an expected large turnout in public protests, the local police have often had to quickly increase their numbers that are present. This in itself has often not helped as the hasty increase leads to more armed, yet untrained, police in confrontational situations. The G8 Summit for 2001 in Genoa, Italy saw a protestor killed by Italian police. While not the first death (for example, 4000 were killed in Venezuela in 1989), it was one of the first caught on camera for the world to see.

No action by the G8 summit, no matter how noble in rhetoric or intent, will erase the fact that the economic policies promoted by the leaders of the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan and Russia are now so unpopular that their gatherings must be "protected" with deadly police violence. ... If the croupiers of corporate capital really believe that restructuring the global economy to limit protections for workers, the environment and human rights represents a positive development, why must they employ deadly force to defend the meetings at which they plot their warped vision of "progress"? (Nicols, 2001, p. 9).



Global conglomerates can at times have a progressive impact on culture, especially when they enter nations that had been tightly controlled by corrupt crony media systems (as in much of Latin America) or nations that had significant state censorship over media (as in parts of Asia). The global commercial-media system is radical in that it will respect no tradition or custom, on balance, if it stands in the way of profits. But ultimately it is politically conservative, because the media giants are significant beneficiaries of the current social structure around the world, and any upheaval in property or social relations, particularly to the extent that it reduces the power of business, is not in their interest (McChesney, 1999).

Some nations can influence and control their media greatly. In addition, powerful corporations are becoming major influences on mainstream media. In some places major multinational corporations own media stations and outlets. Moreover, even as numbers of media outlets increase, the ownership is becoming ever more concentrated as mega mergers take hold. At the same time, vertical integration gives the big players even more avenues to cross-sell and cross-market their products for even more amazing profits. An effect of this though is a reduction in diversity and depth of content that the public can get, while increasing the political and economic power of corporations and advertisers. An informed population is a crucial element to a functioning democracy. Having a few huge corporations control our outlets of expression could lead to less aggressive news coverage and a more muted marketplace of ideas, particularly with regard to the issue of globalization.

## **Public consent**

Many cultural critics, such as Michael Parenti, Noam Chomsky, and Ben Bagdikian, have pointed out that in order for American power to carry out the atrocities it has perpetrated abroad, it needs to "manufacture" the consent of the American people. That is because America must at one and the same time carry out the appearance that it is the freest society in the world (true, to a degree, as Chomsky acknowledges) while tyrannizing much of the rest of the world. The democracy of the U.S. is managed, while the democracy of the rest of the world is deterred, as a host of militaristic and authoritarian national governments point to themselves as "allies" of our great nation. Opinion in our society must be carefully shaped and molded within certain careful boundaries: those who transgress those boundaries are liable to wind up "extremists," "ideologues," "fanatics," or "agitators." Now that dissidents in the U.S. can no longer be labeled 'fellow travelers' of the Moscow-run Commie conspiracy, the task has become more urgent. And how is it that consent, that most valuable of social products, is manufactured?

*The "mass" media (talk radio, papers, television stations)*

Numerous organizations like FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), LOOT (Lies of Our Times), and Media Watch routinely scan and critique the various mass media. Numerous conservative organizations like Reed Irvine's Accuracy in Media suggest that the media have a "liberal" bias. That may be true, to a certain extent - in the same way that "liberal" interventionists planned the Vietnam war and "respectable" liberal organizations take consistently pro-establishment positions. But if the mass media

are closely scrutinized, it is conservative editors, publishers, and producers who have the final say on the news, not liberal investigative journalists. The fact is that over 80% mass media are owned by a grand total of 23 multinational corporations - TNCs which also control media outlets in Europe and elsewhere in the world. The media's evident biases (pro-business outlooks are "pragmatist," pro-labor viewpoints are "ideological") betray this fact. These corporations are primarily interested in selling their programming to advertisers, not giving us accurate information.

Time and time again the public affairs programming of the mass media is restricted to a very narrow spectrum of opinion (the right and the far right, as one critic puts it) and a very small cast of characters. Shows like Nightline keep trotting out the same spokesmen. They are typically white male professionals representing the Washington establishment. Soviet dissidents in the 1980s had a better chance of getting on those programs than critics of American policy. Ever since the Spanish American War and the Hearst papers, the mass media have always helped promote war and jingoism in this country. They consistently "spike" stories that they don't want the public to see, such as the S&L scandal and so many others which have made the Project Censored top ten list. Many of the media have descended to the bottom line, imitating the tabloids with tales of lurid scandal, celebrity worship, and sensationalized non-events, because that sells papers and draws advertisers. If we are treated to the colorful but irrelevant charts and graphs of USA Today and mini-sound bites of "infotainment" on network news, it is because that is what the advertisers have decreed.

*Public or private? (PBS, NPR)*

Conservative media watchers have always had a dislike for public television and radio, which they see as far too liberal. But once again, close monitoring of these media shows that this is not necessarily the case. PBS, which is supposed to get its funding from viewers, routinely gets massive donations from corporate foundations and charitable trusts. Not surprisingly, PBS has "killed" documentaries like the anti-GE film "Deadly Deception" produced by INFACT, for being too "controversial." And National Public Radio's line has never been so much pro-liberal as pro-establishment, routinely parroting the official tales of Washington like they were gospel. Both PBS and NPR do run stories and programming critical of American policy, from time to time, but these are often drowned in a sea of talk shows with right-wing pundits, of which more anon. Since both media systems receive a good bit of government funding (taxpayer money), the government can and does exert an influence on their content.

*The punditocracy (Meet the Press, etc.)*

On Sunday mornings (and on other occasions), many of us view talk shows featuring senior journalists. These shows feature many columnists for mass media organs such as George Will, John McLaughlin, Robert Novak, and Pat Buchanan. Not surprisingly, the members of this punditocracy often moved effortlessly in and out of the "spin teams" (media management) of the Reagan and Bush administrations. The punditocracy is excellent at creating media frenzies around distorted issues, such as the so-called "political correctness" wave supposed to be swamping independent thought and free speech on our college campuses. These pundits often fail to point out increasing

corporate and military dominance of these universities may be a far greater threat to academic freedom. And they all relentlessly repeat the same mantras: free market, national interests, insiders & outsiders. Radical columnists like I.F. Stone were often shunted to the side and marginalized, even labeled Communists, for questioning Washington's Cold War policies.

*PR firms (Hill & Knowlton, Burston-Marseiller, etc.)*

Many PR firms create public relations campaigns around the most amazing of things, including giving repressive regimes like Haiti and Turkey a better image, trying to sell the American public on nuclear power as the "environmental" choice, packaging regressive policies as "pragmatic," and "giving a good public face" to some of the worst corporate polluters, union busters, and unsafe product manufacturers. PR managers, often known as "spin doctors" when working in government, are able to carefully craft speeches and advertisements which evoke powerful images in the American psyche, frequently using key words such as freedom, fairness, liberty, justice, and peacekeeping for policies which dominate, discriminate, imprison, exploit, and terrorize much of the rest of the world. Nationalist groups composed of peasants, students, and laborers become "terrorists," while U.S. acts of terror are described as "counterinsurgency" or "creating stability." The PR firms recognize the postmodern fact of the ascendancy of style over substance, and many ways reap the benefit of that situation.

*Polling organizations*

Polling organizations are supposed to be nonpolitical and nonpartisan, in theory, anyway. Yet, as many have recognized, polling is more than just a process for

monitoring public opinion. How the questions are worded shapes opinion as well. People do not often realize that "scientific" polling often uses a very small sample and a narrow set of respondents, in terms of such things as age, social class, residence, and background. Polls often measure "horseraces," or things like candidate preference and presidential approval rather than issues; with approval for candidates assumed to be equivalent to approval for their agenda, despite the knowledge that perception of those candidates is often heavily shaped by "spin doctors" and the "punditocracy." When issues are discussed, people are often asked leading questions which give very narrow ranges of response. Perot's organization once polled people with "Are you tired of Washington control by special interests?" Who will answer no to that? The key is in his definition of special interests. Are they labor unions and consumer groups, or powerful corporate lobby-makers like himself?

*Academic "experts"*

Not surprisingly, many of the conservative cultural critics (culture managers, actually) mentioned above routinely decry the ivory towers of academe as festering grounds for tenured radicals, out to poison the minds of our young. But, as Chomsky has pointed out, the "experts" of academe and the intellectual class are typically trotted out at conferences and colloquia to give seemingly "rational" defenses of establishment policy. These experts are frequently trotted out to decry public concern (over smoking, radiation, EMFs, asbestos, or chemicals) as "unscientific," and to provide the intellectual foundation ("supply-side economics" and "sociobiology") for reactionary government policies. Their "expertise" confers authority to ideas that might otherwise seem silly

("trickle-down economics.") Academic historians routinely gloss over the faults of past figures, concealing Kennedy's role in the escalation of Vietnam under the glitter of Camelot. Increasingly, as academic research turns more and more toward government and corporate control, funding for areas of scientific study such as women's studies and ethnic studies get "frozen" out.

*Advertising: candidates & commodities*

Political campaigns today rely almost exclusively on television advertising, with the 30-second "spot" becoming quite commonplace. Candidates often utilize their "spot" to make mudslinging and character assassinations against their opponents, without defining their qualifications or their position on issues. Their opinions are inevitably reduced to quick and digestible "sound bites" which sound clever but are devoid of substantive specifics. Candidates are now "marketed" like commodities: whatever people are "buying" that year (elitists, populists, insiders, outsiders, kinder and gentler, 'law and order') is what they are "sold." Issue "spots" reduce complex problems to 'slogans' and quick fixes. Political advertising invariably calls upon all the tired and old repository of symbols (flags, bells, torches, etc.) which are manipulated to confer legitimacy to policy decisions which might otherwise be strongly opposed. ("Free trade - it's the American way!," etc.)

The quote at the beginning of this chapter is a perfect depiction of the media quoting an economist, who portrays globalization protestors in Seattle as being ignorant of the issues surrounding their own cause, effectively suppressing the protestors' voice. Perhaps the best way to summarize the media analysis conducted here and the

perspective of this author is to provide an additional quote that speaks not only to problems associated with the corporatization of the mainstream media, but also to the threat of continued attempts to mute the voices in opposition to globalization in its current, capitalist form. Gerald Caplan states,

It is useful to remind ourselves that free expression is threatened not just blatantly by authoritarian governments and all those in the private sector who fear public exposure, but also more subtly by the handful of global media conglomerates that have reduced meaningful diversity of expression in much of the globe (1997).



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

This essay has attempted to critically analyze several sites of discourse on the issues surrounding globalization. The chapter on Friedman (2000) and Hardt and Negri (2002) demonstrated that it appears as if Hardt and Negri's *Empire* and Friedman's *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* could be mirror images of each other. Friedman promotes acceptance while Hardt and Negri promote resistance. Also, the agency is an interesting issue when comparing the two works as Friedman almost completely ignores human agency and, instead, privileges faith in the market. The market will solve and problems associated with globalization. In contrast, Hardt and Negri suggest that the multitude has power (and, therefore agency) if it engages in specific steps to resist Empire. But that agency is described in ways that make it difficult to imagine actually happening in the way that Hardt and Negri seems to think it can. There are certainly several other authors' works that could be analyzed to enhance our understanding of the various arguments made about globalization. Soros' *The Crisis of Global Capitalism* (1998), Stiglitz' *Globalization and its Discontents* (2002), and Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking a World Order* (1996) are just a few of the books that appear to widely read as they appear on best-seller lists. But analyzing such works is part of a larger project, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

The chapter on the media argued that most of the mainstream media are part of one or more corporations and sell a product. An argument suggesting that the media shapes not only what IS news, but how we should THINK about that news is particularly

salient with respect to the public understanding of globalization. This analysis focused heavily on the media coverage of protests that occurred at various globalization-related events (such as the WTO and G8 summits) and demonstrated that the U.S. media either failed to accurately cover the extent of the protests (arguably in an attempt to skew the viewers' opinions in a pro-globalization direction) or framed the coverage of the protests and the protestors in negative manner, thereby making them look uneducated, violent, or simply silly. In doing so, the power of protesting may have been severely limited.

In many ways the emerging global media system is an extension of the U.S. system, and its culture shares many of the attributes of the U.S. hyper-commercial media system. This makes sense, as the firms that dominate U.S. media also dominate the global system, and the system operates on the same profit maximizing logic. But there are also some important distinctions. On the one hand, a number of new firms enter the picture as one turns to the global system. On the other hand, and more important, a number of new political and social factors enter the discussion.

There are scores of governments, and regional and international organizations that have a say in the regulation of media and communication. There are also a myriad of languages and cultures that make establishing a global version of the U.S. system quite difficult. But even if the U.S. media system and culture will not be punch-pressed onto the globe, the trajectory is toward vastly greater integration, based on commercial terms, and dominated by a handful of transnational media conglomerates.

A logical extent of this analysis would be to attempt to analyze more media outlets around the globe and to attempt to discover the extent to which viewing media

coverage on globalization actually does shape viewers' opinions on what globalization means and how they feel about the various issues (particularly if they privilege one definition of globalization over another). Although the U.S. media system may be expanding globally, what does that mean for individual thought on globalization?

**So what do we really know about globalization?**

It appears as if globalization discourse is fairly dialectical in nature. We live at a time when capitalism has become more extreme, and is more than ever presenting itself as a force of nature, which demands such extremes. Globalization is portrayed by its mainly establishment proponents as a process that is unfolding from everywhere at once with no center and no discernible power structure. As the *New York Times* claimed in its July 7, 2001 issue, today's global reality is one of a fluid, infinitely expanding and highly organized system that encompasses the world's entire population, but which lacks any privileged positions or place of power.

Even Marx has been enlisted in support of this view of inexorable global destiny, which seemingly determines everything, but which has no manifest agent of change. Thus the World Bank quoted from *The Communist Manifesto* (1965), arguing that the transition from planned to market economies and the entire thrust of neoliberal globalization was an inescapable, elemental process, lacking any visible hand behind it.

With the constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation, all fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices, and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. Gone were Marx and

Engels' allusions in the same passage to "the bourgeois epoch" and their subsequent reference to how the need for a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe.

It is no doubt largely in response to this atmosphere of inevitability, in which globalization is divorced from all agency, that the movement against the neoliberal global project has chosen to exaggerate the role of the visible instruments of globalization at the expense of any serious consideration of historical capitalism. Dissenters frequently single out the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank and multinational corporations for criticism, while deemphasizing the system, and its seemingly inexorable forces.

These two distorted viewpoints, one generally in support of globalization, the other generally opposed, are mutually reinforcing in their unreality. Those who wish to intervene in these processes are thus left with no real material basis on which to ground their actions. Both perspectives have in common an emphasis on the decline of nation state sovereignty. Adam Smith described capitalism in the late eighteenth century as a system that eliminated all need for a sovereign power in the economic realm, replacing the visible hand of the absolutist or mercantilist state with the invisible hand of the market. "The Sovereign," he wrote, "is completely discharged from a duty" with respect to the market (1776, Book 4, section 9). Now we are told that this invisible hand has been globalized to such an extent that the sovereign power of nation states over their territorial domains themselves has been vastly diminished. For Friedman (2002), globalization is a new technological-economic system based in the microchip and ruled

by an “electronic herd” of financial investors and multinational corporations, free from any nation state or power structure, and beholden to none.

Those seeking to dispel such views might reply that capitalism with all of its contradictions remains. But most current conceptions of capitalism are too lacking in historical specificity and concreteness, and too wrapped up in the notion of unfettered competition to be useful in countering this dominant ideology. The notion of global free market hegemony without the nation state and without discernible centers of power (only highly visible instruments of the market) means a concept of capitalism that has become virtually synonymous with globalization. There is, it is proclaimed, no alternative because there is nothing outside the system, and no center within the system.

The ideological fog that pervades all aspects of the globalization debate is bound to dissipate eventually, as it becomes clear that the contradictions of capitalism, which have never been surmounted, are present in more universal and more destructive forms than ever before.

Baran and Sweezy’s *Monopoly Capital* (1966) dealt with the changing nature of competition, the modifications in accumulation, and the growing militarism and imperialism under monopoly capitalism. It largely ignored, however, a question at the heart of Marx’s critique of capitalism: the labor process itself, and the exploitation of workers. This topic was taken up Braverman in *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (1974). Braverman applied this to the growth of scientific management or Taylorism, which had emerged along with the giant corporation at the beginning of the twentieth century. He showed that the forces directed

at the extraction of ever greater amounts of surplus from the direct producers by means of the relentless division and subdivision of labor, and hence the degradation and dehumanization of work, had only intensified under monopoly capitalism. At the same time, the universalization of the market, to the point that all aspects of social existence became dependent upon it, represented the hidden set of chains behind the celebrated growth of “consumer society.”

The typical international business firm is no longer limited to the giant oil company. It is as likely to be a General Motors or a General Electric with 15 to 20 percent of its operations involved in foreign business, and exercising all efforts to increase this share. It is the professed goal of these international firms to obtain the lowest unit production costs on a worldwide basis. It is also their aim, though not necessarily openly stated, to come out on top in the merger movement in the European Common Market and to control as large a share of the world market as they do of the United States market (Magdoff, 1969, p. 200).

### **The new stage of globalization**

The theory of monopoly capital developed by Sweezy, Baran, Magdoff, and Braverman, on foundations laid by Marx, thus pointed early on to many of the phenomena that are now commonly associated with globalization. But in this perspective, capitalism had been a global system from the start. Although one could refer to a new stage of globalization, it was part of a long historical process, inseparable from imperialism (Magdoff, 1969).

The fact that capitalism has from the beginning had these two poles, which can be variously described by such terms as independent and dependent, dominant and subordinate, developed and underdeveloped, center and periphery, has been crucial for the evolution of its parts. The driving force has always been the accumulation process in the center, with the peripheral societies being molded by a combination of coercion and market forces to conform to the requirements and serve the needs of the center (Sweezy, 1981, p. 73).

Rather than representing the realization of Adam Smith's invisible hand on a global scale, a seemingly inexorable mechanistic reality against which there is no recourse, capitalism is more and more a contested sphere, in which concentration and centralization of production on a world scale and hence increasingly global competition between firms has its counterpart in the globalization of exploitation. Struggles over nation state hegemony have not disappeared in this new stage of globalization, but continually resurface, often in more potent form.

Globalization as the end of history, as the end of nation state sovereignty, as a new world order, as the integration of all peoples, or as a reality for which there is no alternative, are discursive myths carefully cultivated in our time. To see through these establishment myths, along with the progressive myth that we can oppose the instruments of neoliberal globalization without opposing the system itself, it is necessary to understand the historical changes associated with the development of monopoly capital on an increasingly global scale. Neither capitalism's monopolistic tendencies nor its imperialist divisions are in any way surmounted by the new globalization. At most

these contradictions simply assume more universal forms. More than ever before a world of globalized monopoly capital and hegemonic imperialism, led by the United States, presents us with a stark choice: between a deadly barbarism or a humane socialism.

### **Future directions for research**

As mentioned previously, there are several logical extensions of the analyses conducted in this essay. There are also several important implications that occur as a result of these analyses. If, indeed, the U.S. media are biased in their coverage of globalization issues and they are also influencing the ways in which global media outlets function, then it is important that the role of the media be considered on a broader scale in terms of social responsibility. If conflicts are inevitable, can the media play a peacemaking role? In an ideal world, the media could try to slant the story in the direction of peacemaking rather than inflaming the prejudices. But is this the “true” function of journalism? Perhaps not. Perhaps it is also very idealistic to think this could or even should happen. However, it appears as if the consent of the public in continuing to watch programs and read newspapers whose stories are biased is preventing the media from having any interest in at least reaching the level of being “unbiased.” It is not my intent to claim here that conducting research on globalization discourse can directly or even indirectly have any affect on changing the levels of bias toward corporate desires, but it is my intent to continue to search for ways of promoting social responsibility through my research.

One way of doing this is to add to the previous analyses. In addition to the books mentioned earlier, there are other sites of discourse that may illuminate our



understanding of how public talk shapes individual thought. Voices from the margins (including the extreme far Left and Right) may have interesting arguments about globalization, and though probably not heard widespread, these voices may very well influence the way some people think about the issue. Also, analyzing presidential rhetoric on issues surrounding globalization would likely provide even more insight into the ways that people think about it. But determining what globalization discourse is circulating is only half of the ultimate goal.

The most ambitious future goal of this project is to attempt to qualitatively determine which sites of discourse, or arguments within those sites, have the most impact on individual behavior. There are certainly a number of ways in which this could be accomplished, but my intention is to focus on those individuals who are in the position to make decisions based on what they believe about globalization. Much of this essay has discussed the impact of large corporations on the economy and the way the economy is talked about in globalization discourse. Much speculation has been made by referenced scholars, journalists, and economists cited in this essay regarding the reasons why corporations act the way they do. Those reasons usually end up being profit-motive. My intent is to take this project to a different level and attempt to determine how, or if, public discourse influences individual behavior with the hope of better informing both the academic community and the public about the importance of critical listening and having a clear understanding of the rapidly changing world in which we live.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bormann's (1972) idea of the "rhetorical vision" argued that rhetorical innovation, on occasion, begins when one creative person fantasizes a powerful personal consciousness and dramatizes the complete vision so skillfully that it is shared by converts and become the rhetorical vision which forms a community's consciousness. It may be argued that this group-based theory could be applied at a more macro level. In contrast, later in this discussion, I use the term "rhetorical formation," which Condit (1999) uses to "designate the relatively co-occurrent sets of discourse – metaphors, narratives, values, and so on...and because a rhetorical formation is usually not dominated by a unified theory or principle, it is important to investigate the particularities of various parts of the discourse" (p. 14). The reason for using for terms is that various groups may have created a rhetorical vision for the group regarding globalization, but I am also concerned with rhetorical formations as they may provide insight into the public arguments that are more fragmented.

<sup>2</sup> The figure is based on data from three databases that were queried for publications containing the expressions "globalization" or "globalisation" in their titles. Databases used are the International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS) and the Library of Congress databases "World Cat" (for books) and "Article 1<sup>st</sup>" (for articles). The survey was conducted in December 1997.

<sup>3</sup> For additional information on the issue of the "not-said," see various works by Michel Foucault, as well as Wander's (1996) use of the "not-said" as a concept in Marxism, post-colonialism, and rhetorical contextualization. "Quarterly Journal of Speech," 82, (4, November), 402-435.

<sup>4</sup> The use of the term social science within this context pertains to the use of a "scientific" (positivist) approach to the study of society. The understanding of positivism here follows from Connolly's characterization of the term as a "doctrine which either denies that there is an internal relation between belief and action, or treats the beliefs of the human objects of social inquiry as dispositions to behave in specified ways (Connolly, 1981, p. 23).

<sup>5</sup> Alex Callinicos' recent discussion of Negri's work and influence on 'autonomist' currents in Italy ['Toni Negri in Perspective,' *International Socialist Journal (New Series)* 92 (September 2001)] discusses the mainstream press' reaction to 'Empire'. Callinicos' essay provides a very useful review of Negri's theoretical work and political impact, and has shaped my reading of 'Empire'. For a representative sample of the enthusiasm for 'Empire' on the academic left, see 'Dossier on Empire' in *Rethinking Marxism*, 13, 3-4 (Fall-Winter 2001).

<sup>6</sup> For discussions of post-modernism as an intellectual and political current, see Alex Callinicos, 'Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique' (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990); Bryan D. Palmer, 'Descent into Discourse: The Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History' (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); Ellen Meiksins Wood and John Bellamy Foster (eds.), 'In Defense of History' (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Kim Moody's 'The Industrial Working Class Today: Why It Still Matters -- Or Does It?' *Against the Current* 58 (September-October 1995), 25 is the source of these statistics.

<sup>8</sup> On Foucault and Iran in English, see especially, Didier Eribon, Michel Foucault (Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 281-295; James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (Simon and Schuster, 1993), pp. 306-324; and Foucault's essays "Open Letter to Mehdi Bazargan" and "Useless to Revolt?", in Michel Foucault, *Power: Essential Works of Foucault, Vol 3* (The New Press, 2000).

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