

## Dialectics of Globalization: From Theory to Practice

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Globalization continues to be one of the most hotly debated and contested phenomena of the past two decades. A wide and diverse range of social theorists have argued that today's world is organized by accelerating globalization, which is strengthening the dominance of a world capitalist economic system, supplanting the primacy of the nation-state by transnational corporations and organizations, and eroding local cultures and traditions through a global culture. Contemporary theorists from a wide range of political and theoretical positions are converging on the position that globalization is a distinguishing trend of the present moment, but there are hot debates concerning its origins, nature, effects, and future.<sup>1</sup>

For its defenders, globalization marks the triumph of capitalism and its market economy (see apologists such as Fukuyama, 1992; Friedman, 1999 and 2005 who perceive this process as positive), while its critics portray globalization as destructive and negative (see Mander and Goldsmith, 1996; Eisenstein, 1998; Robins and Webster, 1999). Some theorists highlight the emergence of a new transnational ruling elite and the universalization of consumerism (Sklair, 2001), while others stress global fragmentation of "the clash of civilizations" (Huntington, 1996). While some argue for the novelties of globalization and even claim it constitutes a rupture in history, others stress continuities with modernity and play down differences and novelties (see Rossi 2007). Driving "post" discourses into novel realms of theory and politics, Hardt and Negri (2000 & 2004) present the emergence of "Empire" as producing evolving forms of sovereignty, economy, and culture that clash with a "multitude" of disparate groups, unleashing political struggle and an unpredictable flow of novelties, surprises, and upheavals.

Discourses of globalization initially were polarized into pro or con "globophilia" that celebrates globalization contrasted to globophobia that attacks it.<sup>2</sup> For critics, "globophilia" provides a cover concept for global capitalism and imperialism, and is accordingly condemned as another form of the

imposition of the logic of capital and the market on ever more regions of the world and spheres of life. For defenders, globalization is the continuation of modernization and a force of progress, increased wealth, freedom, democracy, and happiness. Its "globophilic" champions thus present globalization as beneficial, generating fresh economic opportunities, political democratization, cultural diversity, and the opening to an exciting new world. Its "globophobic" detractors see globalization as harmful, bringing about increased domination and control by the wealthier overdeveloped nations over the poor underdeveloped countries, thus increasing the hegemony of the "haves" over the "have nots". In addition, supplementing the negative view, globalization critics assert that it produces an undermining of democracy, a cultural homogenization, hyperexploitation of workers, and increased destruction of natural species and the environment.

There was also a tendency in some theorists to exaggerate the novelties of globalization and others to dismiss these claims by arguing that globalization has been going on for centuries and there is not that much that is new and different. Some imagine the globalization project -- whether viewed positively or negatively -- as inevitable and beyond human control and intervention, whereas others view globalization as generating new conflicts and new spaces for struggle, distinguishing between globalization from above and globalization from below (see Brecher, Costello, and Smith 2000).

Engaging the "dialectics of globalization," I sketch aspects of a critical theory of globalization that will undercut the opposing globophobic and globophilia discourses in order to discuss the fundamental transformations in the world economy, politics, and culture in a dialectical framework that distinguishes between progressive and emancipatory features and oppressive and negative attributes. This requires articulations of the contradictions and ambiguities of globalization and the ways that globalization is both imposed from above and yet can be contested and reconfigured from below in ways that promote democracy and social justice. Theorizing globalization critically and dialectically involves theorizing it at once as a product of technological revolution and the global restructuring of capitalism in which economic, technological, political, and cultural features are intertwined (Best and Kellner 2001, Kellner 2002). From this perspective, one should avoid both technological and economic determinism and all one-sided optics of globalization in favor of a view that theorizes globalization as a highly complex, contradictory, and thus ambiguous set of institutions and social relations that takes economic, political, social, and cultural forms. Finally, I focus on the politics of globalization, stressing resistance and oppositional movements to corporate and neo-liberal globalization, and sketch a "cosmopolitan globalization" as an alternative model.

#### Toward a Critical Theory of Globalization

As the ever-proliferating literature on the topic indicates, the term "globalization" is often used as a code word that stands for a tremendous diversity of issues and problems and that serves as a front for a variety of theoretical and political positions. While it can serve as a legitimating ideology to cover over and sanitize ugly realities, a critical globalization theory can inflect the discourse to point precisely to these phenomena and can elucidate a series of contemporary problems and conflicts. In view of the different concepts and functions of globalization discourse, it is important to note that the concept is a theoretical construct that varies according to the assumptions and commitments of the theory in question. Seeing the term globalization as a construct helps rob it of its force of nature, as a sign of an inexorable triumph of market forces and the hegemony of capital, or, as the extreme right fears, of a rapidly encroaching world government. While the term can both describe and legitimate capitalist

transnationalism and supranational government institutions, a critical theory of globalization does not buy into ideological valorizations and affirms difference, resistance, democratic self-determination, and an alternative cosmopolitan globalization against forms of global domination and subordination.

Viewed dialectically, globalization involves both capitalist markets and sets of social relations and flows of commodities, capital, technology, ideas, forms of culture, and people across national boundaries via a global networked society (see Appadurai 1996; Castells 1996, 1997, and 1998; and Held, et al 1999). The transmutations of technology and capital work together to create a new globalized and interconnected world. A technological revolution involving the creation of a computerized network of communication, transportation, and exchange is the presupposition of a globalized economy, along with the extension of a world capitalist market system that is absorbing ever more areas of the world and spheres of production, exchange, and consumption into its orbit. From this perspective, globalization cannot be understood without comprehending the scientific and technological revolutions and global restructuring of capital that are the motor and matrix of globalization. Many theorists of globalization, however, either fail to observe the fundamental importance of scientific and technological revolution and the new technologies that help spawn globalization, or interpret the process in a technological determinist framework that occludes the economic dimensions of the imperatives and institutions of capitalism. Such one-sided optics fail to grasp the co-evolution and co-construction of science, technology, and capitalism, and the complex and highly ambiguous system of globalization that combines capitalism and democracy, technological mutations, and a turbulent mixture of costs and benefits, gains and losses (Best and Kellner 2001).

In order to theorize the global network economy, one therefore needs to avoid the extremes of technological and economic determinism, and to see how technology and capitalism have contradictory effects, creation both immense wealth but also conflict and destruction. In addition, globalization is constituted by a complex interconnection between capitalism and democracy, which involves positive and negative features, that both empowers and disempowers individuals and groups, undermining and yet creating potential for fresh types of democracy. Yet most theories of globalization are either

primarily negative, presenting it as a disaster for the human species, or as positive, bringing a wealth of products, ideas, and economic opportunities to a global arena. Hence, I would advocate development of a critical theory of globalization that would dialectically appraise its positive and negative features. A critical theory is sharply critical of globalization's oppressive effects, skeptical of legitimating ideological discourse, but also recognizes the centrality of the phenomenon in the present age. At the same time, it affirms and promotes globalization's progressive features such as global movements of resistance to corporate and neoliberal globalization, which, as I document below, makes possible a reconstruction of society and more democratic polity.

Consequently, I want to argue that in order to properly theorize globalization one needs to conceptualize several sets of contradictions generated by globalization's combination of technological revolution and restructuring of capital, which in turn generate tensions between capitalism and democracy, and "haves" and "have nots." Within the world economy, globalization involves the proliferation of the logic of capital, but also the spread of democracy in information, finance, investing, and the diffusion of technology (see Friedman 1999 and 2005, and Hardt and Negri 2000 and 2004). On one hand, globalization is a contradictory amalgam of capitalism and democracy, in which the logic of capital and the market system enter ever more arenas of global life, even as democracy spreads and more political regions and spaces of everyday life are being contested by democratic demands and forces. But the overall process is contradictory. Sometimes globalizing forces promote democracy and sometimes inhibit it, thus either equating capitalism and democracy, or simply opposing them, are problematical. These tensions are especially evident, as I will argue, in the domain of the Internet and the expansion of new realms of technologically-mediated communication, information, and politics.

The processes of globalization are highly turbulent and have generated proliferating conflicts throughout the world. Benjamin Barber (1995) describes the strife between McWorld and Jihad, contrasting the homogenizing, commercialized, Americanized tendencies of the global economy and culture with traditional cultures which are often resistant to globalization. Thomas Friedman (1999) makes a more benign distinction between what he calls the "Lexus" and the "Olive Tree." The former is a

symbol of modernization, of affluence and luxury, and of Westernized consumption, contrasted with the Olive Tree that is a symbol of roots, tradition, place, and stable community. Barber (1995), however, is too negative toward McWorld and Jihad, failing to adequately describe the democratic and progressive forces within both. Although Barber recognizes a dialectic of McWorld and Jihad, he opposes both to democracy, failing to perceive how both generate their own democratic forces and tendencies, as well as opposing and undermining democratization. Within the Western democracies, for instance, there is not just top-down homogenization and corporate domination, but also globalization-from-below and oppositional social movements that desire alternatives to capitalist globalization. Thus, it is not only traditionalist, non-Western forces of Jihad that oppose McWorld. Likewise, Jihad has its democratizing forces as well as the reactionary Islamic fundamentalists who are now the most demonized elements of the contemporary era, as I discuss below. Jihad, like McWorld, has its contradictions and its potential for democratization, as well as elements of domination and destruction (see Kellner, 2007).

Friedman (1999, 2005), by contrast, is too uncritical of globalization, caught up in his own Lexus high-consumption lifestyle, failing to perceive the depth of the oppressive features of globalization and breadth and extent of resistance and opposition to it. In particular, he fails to articulate contradictions between capitalism and democracy, and the ways that globalization and its economic logic undermines democracy as well as circulates it. Likewise, he does not grasp the virulence of the premodern and Jihadist tendencies that he blithely identifies with the Olive tree, and the reasons why globalization and the West are so strongly resisted in many parts of the world. In The World is Flat, he focuses on parts of the world that have to some degree benefited from neoliberal globalization, while ignoring regions and groups where it has not negative and destructive effects, documented in cascading stacks of studies and books (Stiglitz 2002; Hayden and el-Ojeili, eds. 2005; Amoore, L. ed. 2005).

Hence, it is important to present globalization as an amalgam of both homogenizing forces of sameness and uniformity, and heterogeneity, difference, and hybridity, as well as a contradictory mixture of democratizing and anti-democratizing tendencies. On one hand, globalization unfolds a process of

standardization in which a globalized mass culture circulates the globe creating sameness and homogeneity everywhere. But globalized culture makes possible unique appropriations and developments all over the world, thus proliferating hybridity, difference, and heterogeneity.<sup>3</sup> Every local context involves its own appropriation and reworking of global products and signifiers, thus proliferating difference, otherness, diversity, and variety (Luke and Luke 2000). Grasping that globalization embodies these contradictory tendencies at once, that it can be both a force of homogenization and heterogeneity, is crucial to articulating the contradictions of globalization and avoiding one-sided and reductive conceptions.

The present conjuncture is thus marked by a conflict between growing centralization and organization of power and wealth in the hands of the few contrasted with opposing processes exhibiting a fragmentation of power that is more plural, multiple, and open to contestation than was previously the case. As the following analysis will suggest, both tendencies are observable and it is up to individuals and groups to find openings for political intervention and social transformation. Thus, rather than just denouncing globalization, or engaging in celebration and legitimation, a critical theory of globalization reproaches those aspects that are oppressive, while seizing upon opportunities to fight domination and exploitation and to promote democratization, justice, and a progressive reconstruction of the polity, society, and culture.

#### Globalization as a Contested Terrain

It is clear from theoretical debates concerning what globalization is and actual struggles in the world for and against neoliberal globalization, that globalization is a highly contested terrain that is conflictual, contradictory and open to resistance and democratic intervention, and is not just as a monolithic juggernaut of progress or domination as in many discourses. The September 11 terror attacks on the U.S. and the subsequent era of Terror War shows that capitalism, technology, and democracy do not work smoothly together to create a harmonious and increasingly affluent social order, as Friedman (1999) and others have argued. The events of September 11 and their aftermath dramatically disclose the downsides of globalization, the ways that global flows of technology, goods, information, ideologies, and people can have destructive as well as productive effects. The disclosure of powerful anti-Western terrorist networks shows that globalization divides the world as

it unifies, that it produces enemies as it incorporates participants. The events disclose explosive contradictions and conflicts at the heart of globalization and that the technologies of information, communication, and transportation that facilitate globalization can also be used to undermine and attack it, and generate instruments of destruction as well as production.<sup>4</sup>

September 11 deflated once and for all the neo-liberal and globophilia celebrations of globalization. It was evident that globalization produced intense conflicts, and many Western states, led by the U.S., created more repressive and authoritarian forms of state-corporate globalization in which the state promoted neoliberalism and the interests of some corporations while repressing its own citizens and generating a police-state and military apparatus. Thus if 1990s globalization was a form of "deterritorialization" in which the state ceded power to global corporations and institutions, as well as the power of an increasingly unregulated market, an authoritarian state returned with a vengeance post-9/11 -- giving rising to another set of conflicts against repressive corporate-state apparatuses.

Seeing globalization as a contested terrain is advanced by distinguishing between "globalization from below" and the "globalization from above" of corporate capitalism and the capitalist state, a distinction that should help us to get a better sense of how globalization does or does not promote democratization. "Globalization from below" refers to the ways in which marginalized individuals and social movements resist globalization and/or use its institutions and instruments to further democratization and social justice. While on one level, globalization significantly increases the supremacy of big corporations and big government, it can also give power to groups and individuals that were previously left out of the democratic dialogue and terrain of political struggle. Such potentially positive effects of globalization include increased access to education for individuals excluded from entry to culture and knowledge and the possibility of oppositional individuals and groups to participate in global culture and politics through gaining access to global communication and media networks and to circulate local struggles and oppositional ideas through these media. The role of new technologies in social movements, political struggle, and everyday life forces social movements to reconsider their political strategies and goals and democratic theory to appraise how new technologies do and do not promote democratization (Best and Kellner 2001 and

Kahn and Kellner 2005).

In their book Empire, Hardt and Negri (2000) present contradictions within globalization in terms of an imperializing logic of "Empire" and an assortment of struggles by the multitude, creating a contradictory and tension-full situation. As in my conception, Hardt and Negri present globalization as a complex process that involves a multidimensional mixture of expansions of the global economy and capitalist market system, information technologies and media, expanded judicial and legal modes of governance, and emergent modes of power, sovereignty, and resistance.<sup>5</sup> Combining poststructuralism with "autonomous Marxism," Hardt and Negri stress political openings and possibilities of struggle within Empire in an optimistic and buoyant text that envisages progressive democratization and self-valorization in the turbulent process of the restructuring of capital.

In Multitude (2004), Hardt and Negri valorize the struggles of masses of people against Empire. Many theorists, by contrast, have argued that one of the trends of globalization is depoliticization of publics, the decline of the nation-state, and end of traditional politics (Boggs, 2000). While I would agree that globalization is promoted by tremendously powerful economic forces and that it often undermines democratic movements and decision-making, one should also note that there are openings and possibilities for both a globalization from below that inflects globalization for positive and progressive ends, and that globalization can thus help promote as well as destabilize democracy.<sup>6</sup> Globalization involves both a disorganization and reorganization of capitalism, a tremendous restructuring process, which creates openings for progressive social change and intervention as well as highly destructive transformative effects. On the positive ledger, in a more fluid and open economic and political system, oppositional forces can gain concessions, win victories, and effect progressive changes. During the 1970s, new social movements, emergent non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and novel forms of struggle and solidarity emerged that have been expanding to create a global opposition to corporate globalization, theorized in Hardt and Negri's concept of multitude and other theories.

Against capitalist globalization from above, there have been a significant eruption of forces and subcultures of resistance that have attempted to preserve specific forms of culture and society against neoliberal and homogenizing

globalization, and to create alternative forces of society and culture, thus exhibiting resistance and globalization from below. Most dramatically, peasant and guerrilla movements in Latin America, labor unions, students, and environmentalists throughout the world, and a variety of other groups and movements have resisted capitalist globalization and attacks on previous rights and benefits.<sup>7</sup> Several dozen people's organizations from around the world have protested World Trade Organization policies and a backlash against globalization is visible everywhere. Politicians who once championed trade agreements like GATT and NAFTA are now often quiet about these arrangements.

Since the protests in Seattle and throughout the world against the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in December 1999, there has been a mushrooming anti-corporate globalization movement. Behind these actions was a global protest movement using the Internet to organize resistance to the WTO and capitalist globalization, while championing democratization. Many web sites contained anti-WTO material and numerous mailing lists used the Internet to distribute critical material and to organize the protest. The result was the mobilization of caravans from throughout the United States to take protestors to Seattle, many of whom had never met and were recruited through the Internet. There were also significant numbers of international participants in Seattle which exhibited labor, environmentalist, feminist, anti-capitalist, animal rights, anarchist, and other groups organized to protest aspects of globalization and form new alliances and solidarities for future struggles. In addition, protests occurred throughout the world, and a proliferation of anti-WTO material against the extremely secret group spread throughout the Internet.

Furthermore, the Internet provided critical coverage of the event, documentation of the various groups' protests, and debate over the WTO and globalization. Whereas the mainstream media presented the protests as "anti-trade," featured the incidents of anarchist violence against property, while minimizing police violence against demonstrators, the Internet provided pictures, eyewitness accounts, and reports of police brutality and the generally peaceful and non-violent nature of the protests. While the mainstream media framed the protests negatively and privileged suspect spokespeople like Patrick Buchanan as critics of globalization, the Internet provided multiple representations of the demonstrations, advanced reflective discussion of the WTO

and globalization, and presented a diversity of critical perspectives.

The Seattle protests had some immediate consequences. The day after the demonstrators made good on their promise to shut down the WTO negotiations, Bill Clinton gave a speech endorsing the concept of labor rights enforceable by trade sanctions, thus effectively making impossible any agreement and consensus during the Seattle meetings. In addition, at the World Economic Forum in Davos a month later there was much discussion of how concessions were necessary on labor and the environment if consensus over globalization and free trade were to be possible. Importantly, the issue of overcoming divisions between the information rich and poor, and improving the lot of the disenfranchised and oppressed, bringing these groups the benefits of globalization, were also seriously discussed at the meeting and in the media.

More importantly, many activists were energized by the new alliances, solidarities, and militancy, and continued to cultivate an anti-globalization movement. The Seattle demonstrations were followed by April 2000 struggles in Washington, D.C., to protest the World Bank and IMF, and later in the year against capitalist globalization in Prague and Melbourne; in April 2001, an extremely large and militant protest erupted against the Free Trade Area of the Americas summit in Quebec City and in summer 2001 a large demonstration took place in Genoa.

Since 9/11, the anti-globalization movement has increasingly become associated with targeting the militarist policies of Bush and Blair administrations as part of a growing anti-war grassroots movement. In May 2002, a surprisingly large demonstration took place in Washington against capitalist globalization and for peace and justice, and it was apparent that a new worldwide movement was in the making that was uniting diverse opponents of capitalist globalization throughout the world. Indeed, on February, 15, 2003, an anti-war/globalization protest was convened that brought together an estimated 15 million people in some 60 countries worldwide, which resulted in media outlets such as the *New York Times* referring to the unprecedented resistance as the "other superpower."

The anti-corporate globalization movement favored globalization-from-below, which would protect the environment, labor rights, national cultures, democratization, and other goods from the ravages of an uncontrolled capitalist

globalization (see Falk 1999; Brecher, Costello, and Smith 2000; and Steger 2002). Initially, the incipient anti-globalization movement was precisely that -- anti-globalization. The movement itself, however, was increasingly global, was linking together a diversity of movements into global solidarity networks, and was using the Internet and instruments of globalization to advance its struggles. Moreover, many opponents of capitalist globalization recognized the need for a global movement to have a positive vision and be for such things as social justice, equality, labor, civil liberties and human rights, and a sustainable environmentalism. Accordingly, the anti-capitalist globalization movement began advocating common values and visions.

In particular, the movement against capitalist globalization used the Internet to organize mass demonstrations and to disseminate information to the world concerning the policies of the institutions of capitalist globalization. The events made clear that protestors were not against globalization per se, but were against neo-liberal and capitalist globalization, opposing specific policies and institutions that produce intensified exploitation of labor, environmental devastation, growing divisions among the social classes, and the undermining of democracy. The emerging anti-globalization-from-above movements are contextualizing these problems in the framework of a restructuring of capitalism on a worldwide basis for maximum profit with zero accountability and have made clear the need for democratization, regulation, rules, and globalization in the interests of people and not profit.

The new movements against corporate globalization have thus placed the issues of global justice and environmental destruction squarely in the center of important political concerns of our time. Hence, whereas the mainstream media had failed to vigorously debate or even report on globalization until the eruption of a vigorous anti-globalization movement, and rarely, if ever, critically discussed the activities of the WTO, World Bank and IMF, there is now a widely circulating critical discourse and controversy over these institutions. Stung by criticisms, representatives of the World Bank, in particular, are pledging reform and pressures are mounting concerning proper and improper roles for the major global institutions, highlighting their limitations and deficiencies, and the need for reforms like debt relief from overburdened developing countries to solve some of their fiscal and social

problems.

To capital's globalization-from-above, members of global social movements and cyberactivists have thus been attempting to carry out globalization-from-below, developing networks of solidarity and propagating oppositional ideas and movements throughout the planet. To the capitalist international of transnational corporate-led globalization, a Fifth International, to use Waterman's phrase (1992), of computer-mediated activism is emerging, that is qualitatively different from the party-based socialist and communist Internationals. Such networking links labor, feminist, ecological, peace, and other anticapitalist groups, providing the basis for a new politics of alliance and solidarity to overcome the limitations of postmodern identity politics (see Dyer-Witheford 1999 and Burbach 2001).

And so, to paraphrase Foucault, wherever there is globalization-from-above, globalization as the imposition of capitalist logic, there can be resistance and struggle. The possibilities of globalization-from-below result from transnational alliances between groups fighting for better wages and working conditions, social and political justice, environmental protection, and more democracy and freedom worldwide. In addition, a renewed emphasis on local and grassroots movements have put dominant economic forces on the defensive in their own backyard and often the broadcasting media or the Internet have called attention to oppressive and destructive corporate policies on the local level, putting national and even transnational pressure upon major corporations for reform. Moreover, proliferating media and the Internet make possible a greater circulation of struggles and the possibilities of new alliances and solidarities that can connect resistant forces who oppose capitalist and corporate-state elite forms of globalization-from-above (Dyer-Witheford 1999).

In a certain sense, the phenomena of globalization replicates the history of the U.S. and most so-called capitalist democracies in which tension between capitalism and democracy has been the defining feature of the conflicts of the past two hundred years. In analyzing the development of education in the United States Bowles and Gintis (1986) and Aronowitz and Giroux (1986) have analyzed the conflicts between corporate logic and democracy in schooling; Robert McChesney (1993 and 2000), myself (Kellner 1990 and 2005), and others have articulated the contradictions between capitalism and democracy in the media and

public sphere; while Joel Cohen and Joel Rogers (1983) and many others are arguing that contradictions between capitalism and democracy are defining features of the U.S. polity and history.

On a global terrain, Hardt and Negri (2000) have stressed the openings and possibilities for democratic transformative struggle within globalization, or what they call Empire. I am arguing that similar arguments can be made in which globalization is not conceived merely as the triumph of capitalism and democracy working together as it was in the classical theories of Milton Friedman or more recently in Francis Fukuyama. Nor should globalization be depicted solely as the triumph of capital as in many despairing anti-globalization theories. Rather, one should see that globalization unleashes conflicts between capitalism and democracy and in its restructuring processes creates new openings for struggle, resistance, and democratic transformation.

I would also suggest that the model of Marx and Engels as deployed in the "Communist Manifesto" could also be usefully employed to analyze the contradictions of globalization (Marx and Engels 1978: 469ff). From the historical materialist optic, capitalism was interpreted as the greatest, most progressive force in history for Marx and Engels, destroying a backward feudalism, authoritarian patriarchy, backwardness and provincialism in favor a market society, global cosmopolitanism, and constant revolutionizing of the forces of production. Yet in the Marxian theory, so too was capitalism presented as a major disaster for the human race, condemning a large part to alienated labor, regions of the world to colonialist exploitation, and generating conflicts between classes and nations, the consequences of which the contemporary era continues to suffer.

Marx deployed a similar dialectical and historical model in his later analyses of imperialism arguing, for instance, in his writings on British imperialism in India, that British colonialism was a great productive and progressive force in India at the same time it was highly destructive (Marx and Engels 1978: 653ff). A similar dialectical and critical model can be used today that articulates the progressive elements of globalization in conjunction with its more oppressive features, deploying the categories of negation and critique, while sublatung (Aufhebung) the positive features. Moreover, a dialectical and transdisciplinary model is necessary to capture the complexity and multidimensionality of globalization today

that brings together in theorizing globalization, the economy, technology, polity, society and culture, articulating the interplay of these elements and avoiding any form of determinism or reductivism.

Theorizing globalization dialectically and critically requires that we both analyze continuities and discontinuities with the past, specifying what is a continuation of past histories and what is new and original in the present moment.<sup>8</sup> To elucidate the later, I believe that the discourse of the postmodern is useful in dramatizing the changes and novelties of the mode of globalization. The concept of the postmodern can signal that which is fresh and original, calling attention to topics and phenomena that require novel theorization, and intense critical thought and inquiry. Hence, although Manuel Castells has the most detailed analysis of new technologies and the rise of what he calls a networked society, by refusing to link his analyses with the problematic of the postmodern, he cuts himself off from theoretical resources that enable theorists to articulate the novelties of the present that are unique and different from the previous mode of social organization.<sup>9</sup>

Consequently, although there is admittedly a lot of mystification in the discourse of the postmodern, it signals emphatically the shifts and ruptures in our era, the novelties and originalities, and dramatizes the mutations in culture, subjectivities, and theory which Castells and other theorists of globalization or the information society gloss over. The discourse of the postmodern in relation to analysis of contemporary culture and society is just jargon, however, unless it is rooted in analysis of the global restructuring of capitalism and analysis of the scientific-technological revolution that is part and parcel of it.<sup>10</sup>

Globalization should thus be seen as a contested terrain with opposing forces attempting to use its institutions, technologies, media, and forms for their own purposes. There are certainly negative aspects to globalization which strengthen elite economic and political forces over and against the underlying population, but, as I suggested above, there are also positive possibilities. Other beneficial openings include the opportunity for greater democratization, increased education and health care, and new opportunities within the global economy that open entry to members of races, regions, and classes previously excluded from mainstream economics, politics, and

culture within the modern corporate order.

### For a Cosmopolitan Globalization

The first stage of the anti-corporate globalization movement was largely negative and against corporate globalization and neoliberalism. But pursuing the need for an alternative vision and an answer to TINA (There Is No Alternative, i.e. to corporate globalization), in the past years the search has been for alter or other globalizations, providing positive visions of what a more democratic, just, ecological, and peaceful globalization could be and how to attain it, or at least move beyond the disastrously flawed and largely failed neo-liberal vision.

A critical theory of globalization and dialectical emancipatory vision thus needs to not only develop a critique of neoliberal or corporate globalization and analyze its contradictions, but needs to project a positive ideal of alternative globalizations. Resistance and struggle against corporate globalization needs to have a positive ideal of what kind of globalization to struggle for since we are fated to live in a global world. Different societies and groups will, of course, have different alternative versions and strategies in mind but in conclusion I want to suggest that corporate and neoliberal globalization could be opposed by alternative globalizations that are multipolar and multilateralist, involving autonomous partners and alliances, and that are radically democratic and ecological. Such a cosmopolitan globalization would include NGOs, social movements, and popular institutions, as well as states and global institutions like the UN. A democratic and multipolar globalization would be grounded philosophically in Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, democratic theory, human rights and ecology, drawing on notions of a cosmos, eikos, global citizenship, and genuine democracy.<sup>11</sup>

The need for cosmopolitan globalization shows the limitations of one-sided anti-globalization positions that dismiss globalization out of hand as a form of capitalist or U.S. domination. Taking this position is admitting defeat before you've started, conceding globalization to corporate capitalism and not articulating contradictions, forms of resistance, and possibilities of democracy grounded in globalization itself. Rather, an U.S.-dominated or corporate globalization represents a form of neoliberal globalization which, interestingly, Wallerstein claims is "just about passé" (2004: 18). The

argument would be that Bush administration unilateralism has united the world against U.S. policies, so that the U.S. can no longer push through whatever trade, economic, or military policies that they wish without serious opposition. Wallerstein points to the widely perceived failures of IMF and WTO policies, the collapse of Cancun and Miami trade meetings that ended with no agreement as strongly united so-called southern countries opposed U.S. trade policy, and, finally, global opposition to the Bush administration Iraq intervention. He also points to the rise of the World Social Forum as a highly influential counterpoint to the Davos World Economic Forum, which has stood as an organizing site for a worldwide anti-neoliberal globalization movement (see Hardt 2002).

A cosmopolitan globalization would overcome the one-sidedness of a nation-state and national interest dominant politics and recognize that in a global world the nation is part of a multilateral, multipolar, multicultural, and transnational system. A cosmopolitan globalization driven by issues of multipolar multilateralism, democratization and globalization from below, would embrace women's, workers', and minority rights, as well as strong ecological perspectives. Such cosmopolitan globalization thus provides a worthy way to confront challenges of the contemporary era ranging from inequalities between haves and have nots to global warming and environmental crisis.

The Bush/Cheney administration intervention in Iraq showed the limitations of militarist unilateralism and that in a complex world it is impossible, despite awesome military power, for one country to rule in a multipolar globe (Kellner 2005). The failures of Bush/Cheney administration policy in Iraq suggest that unilateralist militarism is not the way to fight international terrorism, or to deal with issues such as "weapons of mass destruction," but is rather the road to an Orwellian nightmare and era of perpetual war in which democracy and freedom will be in dire peril and the future of the human species will be in question. The future of the human race thus demands concepts of cosmopolitan globalization and the renunciation of Empire and militarism.

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## Notes

1. This article draws on my previous studies of globalization, especially Cvetkovich and Kellner 1997; Kellner 1998; Best and Kellner 2001; and Kellner 2002 and 2007.

<sup>2</sup> What now appears at the first stage of academic and popular discourses of globalization in the 1990s tended to be dichotomized into celebratory globophilia and dismissive globophobia. There was also a tendency in some theorists to exaggerate the novelties of globalization and others to dismiss these claims by arguing that globalization has been going on for centuries and there is not that much that is new and different. For an excellent delineation and critique of academic discourses on globalization, see Steger 2002.

3. For example, as Ritzer argues (1993 and 1996), McDonald's imposes not only a similar cuisine all over the world, but circulates processes of what he calls "McDonaldization" that involve a production/consumption model of efficiency, technological rationality, calculability, predictability, and control. Yet as Watson et al 1997 argues, McDonald's has various cultural meanings in diverse local contexts, as well as different products, organization, and effects. Yet the latter goes too far toward stressing heterogeneity, downplaying the cultural power of McDonald's as a force of a homogenizing globalization and Western corporate logic and system; see Kellner 1999a and 2003a.

<sup>4</sup> I am not able in the framework of this paper to theorize the alarming expansion of war and militarism in the post-September 11 environment. For my theorizing of war and militarism, see Best and Kellner 2001 and Kellner 2003b, 2005, and 2007.

<sup>5</sup> While I find Empire an impressive and productive text, I am not sure, however, what is gained by using the word "Empire" rather than the concepts of global capital and political economy and "multitude" in place of traditional class and sociological

categories. While Hardt and Negri combine categories of Marxism and critical social theory with poststructuralist discourse derived from Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari, they frequently favor the latter, often mystifying and obscuring the object of analysis. I am not as confident as Hardt and Negri that the "multitude" replaces traditional concepts of the working class and other modern political subjects, movements, and actors, and find the emphasis on nomads, "New Barbarians," and the poor as replacement categories problematical. Nor am I clear on exactly what forms their poststructuralist politics would take. The same problem is evident, I believe, in an earlier decade's provocative and postmarxist text by Laclau and Mouffe (1985), who valorized new social movements, radical democracy, and a postsocialist politics without providing many concrete examples or proposals for struggle in the present conjuncture.

<sup>6</sup> I am thus trying to mediate in this paper between those who claim that globalization simply undermines democracy and those who claim that globalization promotes democratization like Friedman (1999 and 2005). I should also note that in distinguishing between globalization from above and globalization from below, I do not want to say that one is good and the other is bad in relation to democracy. As Friedman shows (1999), capitalist corporations and global forces might very well promote democratization in many arenas of the world, and globalization-from-below might promote special interests or reactionary goals, so I am criticizing theorizing globalization in binary terms as primarily "good" or "bad." While critics of globalization simply see it as the reproduction of capitalism, its champions, like Friedman, do not perceive how globalization undercuts democracy. Likewise, Friedman does not engage the role of new social movements, dissident groups, or the "have nots" in promoting democratization. Nor do concerns for social justice, equality, and participatory democracy play a role in his book.

<sup>7</sup> On resistance to globalization by labor, see Moody 1988 and 1997; on resistance by environmentalists and other social movements, see the studies in Mander and Goldsmith 1996.

<sup>8</sup> On debates over continuity vs. discontinuity in globalization theories, see Rossi 2007. Rossi polemicizes against those who claim that contemporary globalization constitutes a radical rupture with the past and that therefore radically new theories are necessary. I argue for a dialectic of continuity and

discontinuity in theorizing globalization and thus argue that while past theories can be of use in theorizing globalization we also need new theories and concepts to theorize its novelties (see Kellner 2002 and 2007). On the conjunctions between globalization and the postmodern and debates over the latter, see Harvey 1989, Jameson 1991, Kellner 1998, and Best and Kellner 2001.

9. Castells claims that Harvey (1989) and Lash (1990) say about as much about the postmodern as needs to be said (1996: 26f). With due respect to their excellent work, I believe that no two theorists or books exhaust the problematic of the postmodern which involves mutations in theory, culture, society, politics, science, philosophy, and almost every other domain of experience, and is thus inexhaustible (Best and Kellner 1997 and 2001). Yet one should be careful in using postmodern discourse to avoid the mystifying elements, a point made in the books just noted as well as by Hardt and Negri 2000.

10. See Best and Kellner 1997 and 2001.

<sup>11</sup> On cosmopolitanism, see Cheah and Robbins (1998) Cosmopolitics and special issue of Theory, Culture & Society on cosmopolis, Vol. 19, Nrs. 1-2 (February-April 2002).