CHAPTER 1

What's in a Name? Themes, Concepts and Obfuscations

Introduction

Although the genealogy of the term 'globalization' reaches back to the 1920s, it is possible to identify the precursors of contemporary global theory in the writing of luminaries such as Immanuel Kant, G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx and Georg Simmel; while the study of global history has its roots in the historiography of civilizations with considerably less than planetary extent (Spengler, 1918; Toynbee, 1934–61; Robertson and Inglis, 2004; Browning, 2011). Writing about the key concept of globality, Jens Bartelson (2009b, 113) refers to a 'medieval cosmology', perhaps even a scholarship, which entertained the idea of what we now call statelessness. We should also remember that any discussion of global change involves both human biological and social change as well as changes in the natural world. So it could be argued that we have chosen an arbitrary starting point from which to launch this analysis, while being unduly limited about its scope.

But as James Mittelman notes, although globalization is a concept whose early study owed much to developed research on social change under modernity, the rise and spread of capitalism and the origins and development of the state system – in other words, to classical social theory – it is really only towards the end of the 1980s that anything resembling a theoretical and empirical literature explicitly about the global begins to emerge (2004; Sklair, 2007). Some early and popular work on globalization tended to abrogate history and the influence of key historiographies in pursuit of the claim that the last decades of the twentieth century constituted a major rupture with preceding modernity. There may be some empirical weight to this view, but as we shall see the idea of the global cannot, or should not, be bracketed within a scholarship that not only claims globalization's novel ontology, but is cavalier in its treatment of earlier readings of world-making practices (Rosow, 2003; Browning, 2011; Featherstone, 2006).

The search for tight conceptualization and analytical rigour has to be uppermost in the minds of those who study globalization, but its popularity and notoriety have meant that almost any discussion of the concept leaves room for obfuscation and ideological special pleading. We will adopt a more forensic and interrogative stance on the ways in which globalization has been

theorized during its brief period of intellectual and popular celebrity. In that pursuit, we will canvass the breadth of social-scientific scholarship on the theme of the global, since not all reflection can be understood as theory and not all theory is good scholarship (Shaw, 2000; 2003). Threaded through the critical account is the awkward and, for scholars of globalization, enduringly sensitive question of just how much we have learned about the world and how far the social sciences have developed through employing globalization as a descriptive term and a concept that fosters and perhaps transforms social-scientific explanation (Albert, 2007; Leander, 2009).

Scholarship on globalization is driven by both normative considerations and the pursuit of an empirically rigorous and historically informed social science; not always an easy mix. While it is the product of a number of disciplines it is probably no exaggeration to say that today much of it is located within the, admittedly broad, field of international studies, especially international political economy (IPE) – standing as a feature of that field's continuing search for intellectual identity – and, of course, in sociology (Bruff, 2005; Berry, 2008; Mittelman, 2004; Sassen, 2006). Which is not to claim that contributions from other disciplines have not had a significant, even seminal, influence on the canon, or that there is no developed globalization scholarship outside international studies and sociology (Sassen, 2007; Tomlinson, 1999; 2007; Rossi, 2007; Modelski et al., 2008).

Contributions from geography are among the most ambitious and most cited in globalization studies; while anthropology, cultural and communication studies, history and, in considerably smaller measure, mainstream economics all contribute to a rich weave of research on the complex theme of the global. Cross- or non-disciplinary themes such as gender, health, poverty and war have also inflected their research with a global(ization) dimension. In turn the study of globalization has drawn on these themes to produce more fine-grained accounts of, *inter alia*, migration, pandemics, inequalities and violence in the contemporary world. But in the case of economics a word of caution is necessary. While a good deal of globalization scholarship has addressed the economics *of* globalization, or considered globalization *as* an economic phenomenon or ideology, economics as a discipline has not engaged wholeheartedly with the concept (Stiglitz, 2002; Rodrik et al., 2004). The dominant approach from mainstream economics consists of cost–benefit analysis of globalization effects and, from authors like Joseph Stiglitz and Dani Rodrik, quite impassioned critiques of market economics. In these accounts commentary has passed over from the formal scientism of neo-classical economics to the realm of normative engagement.

In work on globalization from IPE the engagement has been much more wholesale around the interplay of states, non-state actors, markets, commodity chains and networks, as well as around the staple antinomy of agency versus structure as the ontological basis for social inquiry. On some accounts, IPE research, especially in the USA, has been depleted by a desire to ape more

scientific, positivist work from mainstream economics at the expense of the investigation of big ideas and grand themes, including globalization (Cohen, 2009; Keohane, 2009; 1986). At the same time, the effects of neo-Gramscian ideas and constructivist thinking on understanding the political economy of the global may have been to soften the analytical cutting edge of mainstream economics unduly. Despite its normative or 'black-letter' approaches to global themes such as human rights and corporate governance, international law has also been less than engaged over globalization, especially from within the academic core of the discipline. Today, synergies between international law and international relations (IR) are receiving much more attention (Cutler, 2005; Noortmann and Ryngaert, 2010). And disciplines aside, there are many authors whose ideas have been extensively borrowed across fields contributing, as Martin Shaw says, to a 'relativisation of . . . historic disciplines' (2003, 42; Giddens, 1990; 1992).

Yet the grail of critical globalization scholarship – *multidimensionality*, by which is meant a systematic account of the analytically separate but interconnected and perhaps mutually constitutive dynamics of economics, politics and culture, delivered through a robust *interdisciplinarity* or *transdisciplinarity* – has proved elusive, approximated only in a small number of studies, achieved in even fewer (Robertson, 1996; Rosenau, 2003; Hay and Marsh, 2000; Appelbaum and Robinson, 2005; Featherstone, 2006; Rosow, 2003; Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009; *International Political Sociology*, 2009). On the face of it this dearth is strange, because as Roland Robertson says (2007a, 406), '[c]ategories for the comprehension of human life are . . . becoming destabilized' mainly as a result of our growing sense of the global. As our consciousness of the world grows, so do our fears about its fate, along with the recognition that we cannot contain many problems and crises at particular scales, or provide understanding of them from within the confines of normal social science (Albert, 2007).

This same awareness conjures its own brands of protectionism, ones not confined to personal and collective coping strategies for a world perceived as unsafe through the threats of planet death, pandemic, global terrorism or economic slump. Within academia the walls between disciplines remain extant to a degree that mocks the ambition to create – Ulrich Beck says 'reframe' – analytical categories for a globalizing world (Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Scholte, 2000; 2005b; Rosenau, 2003; Rosow, 2003; Rosamond, 2006; Robertson, 2007a). Much social science suffers from the propensity to analyse areas of collective life in terms of discrete categories – a besetting weakness – and the study of globalization, a concept that challenges the very idea of boundaries, has not been well served by scholarship largely predicated on their maintenance.

Globalization is no journeyman concept and yet it remains infuriatingly ambiguous and elusive. While sceptical commentary suggests that this is a necessary consequence of an unworkable, perhaps unteachable, idea, in no

small part ambiguity results from a recurring failure to separate 'global' concepts – globalization (process), globalism (ideology) and globality, a notion which musters as consciousness, condition, framework, even system – which share the same root but often reflect different discourses about, and sometimes cleave to diverse theoretical positions on, the 'global' (Harvey, 2000; Shaw, 2003; Caselli, 2008; Meyer, 2007). We will examine these consequential differences later in the chapter.

The study of globalization also triggers powerful normative and ideological sentiments. At their most stark or most facile, these turn on the question of whether globalization is a good or a bad thing. Such accounts sometimes rehearse the case for alternative forms of globalization to subvent progressive and humanitarian goals or else offer prescriptions for different kinds of universality. This empirical-normative agenda has spawned a number of key research questions. First, what is globalization and what is not? Second, does globalization deliver massive and disjunctive social change? Third, are apparently dramatic changes in world politics and economics merely an unfolding of world history as universalizing modernity achieves its denouement? Fourth, can the idea of the world being made into a single place, demonstrating a systematic rather than a jobbing unicity, be taken seriously? Other important questions address the provenance of globalization, asking whether it is a purely contemporary or a historical phenomenon; whether it musters as a progressive or a regressive force (Wallace-Brown, 2008); whose interests are best served (Woods, 2006; Abdelal, 2007); and finally, whether the idea of the world's unity also requires what Jean-François Bayart (2007, 31) rather inelegantly calls its 'uniformization' (see also Guillen, 2001).

Undoubtedly these are important issues, but more challenging for the social sciences is the claim that globalization confounds conventional thinking about the organization and conduct of social life and thus requires a transformation of social scientific knowledge (Scholte, 2000; 2005b; Cameron and Palan, 2004; Rosow, 2003; Shaw, 2003; Bartelson, 2009b). For as Saskia Sassen notes, when discussing globalization, the issues are rarely confinable to the perspectives of one branch of knowledge, even though the tradition in the parvenu fields of social science has been to organize knowledge about different spheres of social life under specific disciplines, each with its preferred epistemologies and methodologies. Instead, good scholarship on globalization requires, at the least, 'operating at the intersection of multiple disciplinary forms of knowledge and techniques for research and interpretation' (Sassen, 2007, 11).

Much scholarship on globalization engages with the concept forearmed by established (Western) intellectual and disciplinary traditions, which can make it hard for scholars to speak to each other across disciplinary boundaries (Cameron and Palan, 2004; Rosamond, 2006; Mittelman, 2010). As a result, the study of globalization occupies a rather uneasy space between disciplines and paradigms; which is a weakness, because its study is often

seen as in some way inauthentic, or merely diversionary; and a strength, because it might hold out the prospect of a social science more in tune with twenty-first-century social and political realities.

Theory and the Scholarship of Globalization

Early claims that globalization had achieved the status of an 'ascendant paradigm' were manifestly overblown (Mittelman, 2004). Yet disputes about globalization's theoretical status are productive because they highlight particular moments of intellectual doubt and excitement as well as reflecting the turbulence and enduring complexity of the real world. Indeed, Martin Shaw has argued that the emergence of globalization scholarship itself reflected the crisis and demise of the old Cold-War system and gave a decidedly geo-political twist to an already advanced crisis of modernity (2000).

When ideas about postmodernity 'first emerged in the 1980s, predominantly in the cultural sciences, they reflected a general sense of [an] emergent crisis that had not yet reached the stage of decisive political change' (Shaw, 2003, 35). Prescriptions for a new 'post-Cold-War' world appeared at the beginning of the 1990s as the Soviet world-empire broke up and a prevailing sense of epochal change also shaped emerging trends in social theory. The idea of 'globalization' became dominant in the mid-1990s, just as that turbulence was partly resolved and new world power relations – driven by liberal economics and new communication technologies – became modal (2003, 35). In Shaw's estimation, our obsession with globalization and our attempts to gloss it as a new theory of the present and paradigm for the future are part of a wider crisis or transformation of world order yet to be resolved fully.

All theories simplify social complexity; while social life is rarely 'cut from whole cloth' (Giddens, 1990, 27). To be convincing, theory – other than normative theory, which expresses values and cannot be disproved by pointing to actual features of the world around us – should permit some existential reference and thus afford a purchase on what is happening in the world. Theory should also be clear about its explanatory limits, and in this respect, as Shaw also reminds us, since the mid-1990s 'the decline in the fashion for naïve globalization-thought enables us to see what is more fundamental and durable in global development' (2003, 35).

Globalization scholarship: Globalization as a proto-paradigm

The scholarship of globalization is riven with disputes, many of them reflecting quarrels within and between disciplines. Within international studies James Mittelman (2004) identifies a robust and continuing battle between those he labels 'para-keepers' and 'para-makers'. The former are protectors of existing paradigms who resist the claim that globalization offers a new way of organizing social life and constituting knowledge about it. Para-keepers,

says Mittelman, are found among realists, including Marxist realists, interdependence theorists, world-systems analysts, some social democrats (often under the anti- or alter-globalization banner and in certain brands of constructivism) and new institutionalists (Wallerstein, 1974; Keohane and Nye, 2000; Hirst et al., 2009). Para-makers claim to have 'shifted to an innovatory paradigm' (Mittelman, 2004, 21) wherein globalization reveals deep flaws in modernist social science. Recent work by sociologists Ulrich Beck, John Urry and Martin Albrow are avatars of such radical approaches (Beck, 2006; Urry, 2003; Albrow, 1996).

The ranks of para-makers include a tranche of theorists conveniently mustered as 'de-territorialists', some apostate or post-Marxist treatments of empire, complexity theorists and a smattering of writers who see modernity as giving way to globality (Scholte, 2005a; Cerny, 1999; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Rosenau, 1997; Albrow, 2007a). What divides proponents within and between camps are mainly questions of epistemology and methodology (what globalization means for our understanding of the world around us and how it should be studied). These intellectual differences have translated into an increasingly dynamic scholarship of globalization where the temper of commentary and the objects of research have changed since the early 1980s. Beck and Sznaider opine that as the distinctions between national and international and local and global have become blurred or dissolve, so have the 'premises and boundaries that define the units of empirical research and theory' (2006, 13).

Robert Holton (2005) suggests that over this period globalization research has come in three overlapping but recognizable waves – hyper-globalist, sceptical and post-sceptical or, as some would have it, 'transformationalist' – each more self-conscious and cautious than its predecessor (Hay and Marsh, 2000; Martell, 2007;Bruff, 2005; Berry, 2008; Rosamond, 2006; Bartelson, 2009a). The wave motif also receives endorsement from Held and McGrew (2007), who identify four such waves: theoretical, historical, institutional and deconstructive. The waves are by no means discrete, but taken together, they describe a shift to a more textured, historical, agent-aware, multi-layered, culturally informed and, arguably, undogmatic scholarship of globalization. Oblique or sweeping statements about global issues give way to 'more middle-range explanations [which] account for the complex manifestation of global processes within particular social realms', including religion, sport, health and sexuality as well as the staples of economics and politics (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2009, xiii; Maliniak and Tierney, 2009; Keohane, 2009).

First wave *globalist* or *hyper-globalist* positions are associated with early globalization theory from the 1980s to the mid-1990s when, often in neo-liberal guise, they enjoyed a vogue far beyond the academy. Post-Washington-consensus and in the wash from the global economic crisis which began in 2007, their appeal in some business and policy-making circles is diminished but not extinguished. Although the gist of such interventions was to treat

globalization primarily as an economic phenomenon, in fact there are important differences of emphasis and diverse normative prescriptions in globalist accounts. Berry (2008) distinguishes between neo-classical and Marxist globalists, who share the view that globalization is a material reality centred on economic processes and the completion of a global economy, but differ in their approbation of such developments. True to their epistemological roots, neo-classical arguments (Ohmae, 1990; 2001; Wolf, 2004) explain global markets as the expression of rational behaviour by individual actors, an assumption at one with the tenets of economic neo-liberalism. Such positions also adopt a realist stance on agency, such that the assumed rationality (self-interest) of all actors is held to engender both dynamic and stabilizing effects in much the same way as the imputed behaviour of states in realist models of the international system, or consumers in the market place.

Marxist globalists treat the making of a global, market-driven economy as the latest twist in the development of capitalism as an exploitative system of wealth creation and uneven development (Callinicos, 2009; 2002; Harris, 2006; McMichael, 2001). In these accounts agents are more red-blooded and certainly more reflective than in neo-classical theory, but still severely constrained by their structural location in the social division of labour in class-divided societies. But eminently materialist and usually structuralist positions are themselves challenged, or perhaps just glossed differently, in work influenced by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1971; Robinson, 2006), which gives more credence to the role of ideas, to contingency, and to agents being active in reproducing or transforming the conditions of their existence.

Gramsci's work has had a considerable influence on some brands of theory, particularly in 'critical' IPE and 'open Marxism' (Cox, 1987; Gill, 2000; Rupert, 1998; Drainville, 1994), where the focus has been on the role of ideas in shaping perceptions of and accommodations to globalization. Critical theory, as it is often labelled, is generally offered as a useful step away from the brute materialism of mainstream Marxist arguments and the simple ontology of realism. But it may do no more than muddy the water around the issue of the dominance of either agency or structure, by seeming to flirt with a more voluntaristic and action-centred interpretation of globalization while still clinging to an implicit theoretical essentialism which privileges capitalist production forces and material factors as (ultimately) determining (Cox, 1987; 1989; Bruff, 2005; Guzzini and Leander, 2006).

This gloss on their arguments will be anathema to neo-Gramscians, but Gramsci himself noted that social theory must always be sensitive to the 'decisive nucleus of economic activity' (1971, 161). In a useful exegesis on this conundrum in IPE literature, Ian Bruff (2005) has recourse to the sophisticated neo-Gramscian arguments of Stuart Hall, doyen of cultural studies in the UK (1996; Hall and Soskice, 2001). Hall paints globalization as a complex, contradictory and above all negotiated process and this, on the face of it, gets him off the hook of economic determinism. In the event the same

obfuscations around the interplay of agency and structures are apparent in his account. In Hall's work, how globalization appears to us is shaped by interpretation, which is socially constructed. But any indeterminacy in outcomes implied by such a view is offset by the sense that material considerations are key to the maintenance and reproduction of the capitalist system. As we shall see, what are often called 'third wave' positions on globalization do battle on the same ground as Hall, and their reliance on the socially constructed or discursive nature of globalization leaves them with unanswered questions.

Second wave or *sceptical* accounts of globalization have little time for any of this. They hold that anything resembling a globalist thesis rests on very thin evidence and that such evidence as exists actually reveals globalization as neither new nor particularly global (Hirst and Thompson, 1996; 2000; Hirst et al., 2009; Krugman, 1996). Moreover, there is little good data to support the claim that the world (economy) is becoming or has become globalized. Unsurprisingly, sceptics retain states and national economies as the key players in what they depict as an inter-national rather than a global system and, on first reading, their views too have a decidedly realist flavour. But neo-institutionalist variants on the sceptical theme are more inclined to see states as institutions with variable power, so that the effects of globalization are not the same on all states and in all parts of the world. Instead of the realist stance that all states are grey in the dark, regardless of circumstance and history, institutionalists prefer to see them as distinct entities, each with its own traditions, cultural practices, policy preferences, legitimacy and capacities (Weiss, 1998; Mann, 1997; Mosley, 2005; Rodrik, 2000). Because of this variability, globalization too is better seen as an uneven process, less inclusive than globalists suggest and contingently detrimental or galvanizing in its impacts on states, economies and cultures (Martell, 2007).

Sceptical positions on globalization are a necessary antidote to zealous hyper-globalism and are capable of generating useful hypotheses about the dynamics of the global economy (Berry, 2008). But they smack too much of unreconstructed realism and are often remiss in their neglect of agency and the importance of ideas in shaping the world and consciousness of it. Because they are troubled by the very idea of globalization as an empirical reality, there is usually very little attempt to accommodate, let alone subscribe to, the globalization hypothesis. But some forms of sceptical thinking do venture beyond a largely economic focus to offer a critique of the hyper-globalist claim that economic globalization is being accompanied and accelerated by the growing cultural homogeneity or cultural hybridization of the world (Barber, 2007). For example, research on the role of new media in trans-nationalizing communication and facilitating the creation of a global civil society or a global public sphere is frequently sceptical of globalist claims to have compressed time and space, thus eliminating what Kai Hafez calls 'the fundamental character of "ego-centric" national media systems' (2007, 3; Inglehart and Norris, 2009; Chandler, 2007).

And in works which achieved recognition well beyond the academy both Benjamin Barber (1995; 2007) and Samuel Huntington (1996) do not so much reject the idea of globalization as point to the vitality of its antithesis in the shape of alternative or anti-globalization ideologies and movements, whose very existence suggests greater cultural fragmentation and political polarization rather than homogeneity or hybridization. Whatever their faults, the real value of positions which stress the contested nature of globalization against bland claims of global convergence is that they qualify the totalizing and probably unsustainable claims of hyper-globalists, without rejecting all evidence of growing interconnection and interdependency. In this respect they are hardly pure globalization sceptics but remain agnostic and/or ambivalent about its progressive nature and possible outcomes.

In this brand of commentary, the set of papers edited by Hay and Marsh, which looks to 'demystify' globalization (2000), serves as a conceptual taster for the shift away from zealous hyper-globalism and the more curmudgeonly treatments of the sceptics, to what is generally understood as the third, post-sceptical or transformative wave of theorizing. At first glance their position is self-consciously sceptical, but it intimates a new wave of thinking determined to rescue globalization scholarship from the excesses of and gaps in the first two waves. In these authors' view, globalization is a discourse which is not itself material in the way hyper-globalists insist, but which has profound material effects when realized through the actions of agents who either subscribe to the discourse or are affected by its adoption in, for example, government policy on regulation of labour conditions. These material effects make globalization 'real' in ways airbrushed out of most sceptical accounts.

Hay and Marsh's volume appeared in 2000 and by the noughties the research emphasis begins to reflect a greater variety of influences, including – *inter alia* – post-Marxist structuralism and constructivism and forms of 'critical scholarship' (Held and McGrew, 2007). These accounts all emphasize the discursive and contingent construction of global social 'reality' while, at least in some versions, looking to retain the idea that globalization is transformative of social relations (Held and McGrew, 2007; Hay and Rosamond, 2002; 2004; Callinicos, 2003; Risse, 2007; Rosamond, 2006). In such interpretations, globalization ceases to be 'out there' in the sense rightly dismissed by Anthony Giddens (1990; 1992) or imposed by dint of irrepressible world-historical forces. Instead, it is what actors perceive it to be and there are no givens, no structural necessities, no historical inevitabilities and no unfolding teleology of human progress or decay (Fukuyama, 1992; 1996). Expressions like 'globalization as discourse', 'tendency' or 'cognitive structure' begin to dominate the literature and, on the face of it, agency and ideas are back in fashion. Arguably, the most significant contribution of such scholarship is that it charts a course between the two poles of globalization theory: the sceptics' insistence that the concept provides no real 'guide to the interpretation of empirical events' and the catch-all claims of hyper-globalists that signs

of globalization are everywhere and that it is unstoppable (Hay and Rosamond, 2002; Risse, 2007; Rosenberg, 2005, 1).

The almost common-sense quality of much third wave theorizing relies on the notion derived from interpretative sociology that all meaning is socially constructed and reproduced through social learning and forms of discourse (ideologies and texts of various sorts, including symbols) rather than through material factors. Of course, the intellectual provenance of social constructionism is pretty mixed. It takes in the 'new science' of Vico in the eighteenth century, some humanistic Marxism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology and linguistic insights into relational practices, as well as the contributions from both micro and macro sociology (Lock and Strong, 2010). Out of such a rich intellectual context, globalization emerges as an (ideological) discourse that frames thought and actions by setting limits for what is desirable and even possible. In other words, the discourses allow actors to simplify and manage the environments within which they act (Hay and Rosamond, 2002; Cameron and Palan, 2004).

The approach is a refreshing contrast to all 'inevitabilist' and many structuralist positions on globalization because it underlines not only the contingent quality of what is often presented as given or else immanent in the 'deep structures' of social formations, but the capacity of agents to reproduce and alter the terms and conditions of their own existence (Chase-Dunn, 1989; 1992; Chase-Dunn and Gills, 2005). Framing globalization in this way is, or ought to be, an important advance in scholarship (Hay and Smith, 2008). Indeed, unless you are a dyed-in-the-wool structuralist, there is at least an intuitive plausibility about constructivist accounts of globalization and about the idea of globalization as a discourse which possesses almost mythological qualities – a conjured 'reality' narrated through the rhetoric of political elites, corporate public relations and even the musings of 'first wave' academics and publicists. Discussion of the international economic order from a purely sceptical and largely material perspective usefully counters the exaggerated claims about globalization as inexorable (Friedman, 1999), but constructivist political economy raises the analytical stakes by pointing out the ideological, political and highly contingent character of that process (Hay and Rosamond, 2002; Woods, 2006; Abdelal, 2007; Cameron and Palan, 2004).

Yet questions about the explanatory value of constructivist accounts remain and they qualify the plausibility of the arguments. First, although not debilitating in itself, as Thomas Risse states, we should be aware that constructivism is not a theory of globalization, more a 'meta theory of social action' (2007, 132). Second (and constructivists understand this), if globalization is a construct, then so is all social life. The logic of the thesis should then dictate that there can be no master or authentic discourse which can 'objectively' construct the best of all possible worlds (Wiener, 2008). The difficulty is that while the research offers useful insights into the workings of social relationships where hegemony is assured through non-material forms and some

controlling interests are well served, even on its own terms much of the literature looks like an apology for a particular normative/ideological position on globalization in which some narratives are infinitely preferable to others. Here, an emergent and at one time almost hegemonic social-democratic or even a modified Marxist discourse is deemed capable of conjuring (and is applauded for prescribing) a more benign world than hyper-globalist or neoliberal ideology translated into policy. All of which gives a conspiratorial gloss to some third wave positions on globalization that is rather at odds with the expressed concern to contribute to a more rigorous empirical science of globality. It is also evident that the emphasis on discourse sometimes masks a conviction that structure is dominant, albeit in the last instance (Hay and Coates, 2002; Berry, 2008).

Third, while it is significant to know that globalization is a discourse, the research task must always be to discern why and how dominance was achieved and with what consequences. Colin Hay, among others, has conducted empirical work on the processes by which globalization discourse becomes dominant, and then reflects on the fallout from that dominance. This is good social science, but from the standpoint of trying to understand the dynamics of power relationships and the process of social change, it triggers the niggling thought that if the social world is being made and reproduced solely through dominant narratives, how does change occur? What are the mechanisms through which marginal discourse becomes dominant and dominant discourses are undone? The danger with constructivist accounts is that if narrative is the one 'reality', change can take place only through the superseding of one dominant narrative by another, with each laying claims to veracity. So the key factor may not be discourse at all, but some other constraint or resource. For constructivist globalization research the main issue is not only whether, or how, such competing claims can be verified empirically (presumably they cannot, despite attempts to uncover the 'facts' about globalization), but how discourses frame and sustain a contested and contestable 'reality'.

Finally, although it appears as a critique of constructivist IPE in general, rather than a counterweight to constructivist treatments of globalization in particular, we should advert the room for confounding purely subjectivist accounts provided by critical realism (Archer, 1988; Bhaskar, 1998; Patomäki, 2010a; 2010b). Critical realists argue that there is a social reality independent of any human conception, and its proponents suggest that there are unobservable events that cause all observable ones. Because of this, the social world can be understood only if analysts identify and understand the structures that generate such unobservable events. Critical realism has some merit as a critique of neo-Gramscian IPE, but we should caution that applying such insights to globalization must not revert to the simple empiricism favoured by sceptics, but afford a middle way between the naive phenomenology of some constructivist accounts and forms of brute structuralism. Of course, it may be that all it achieves is a further dose of theoretical equivocation.

Curiously, third wave commentators on globalization remain sceptics in their depiction of the discourse of (hyper-)globalization as no more than ideological smoke and mirrors, and yet transformationalist in their understanding that a dominant discourse may indeed shape the world and the destinies of those who inhabit it (Berry, 2008; Martell, 2007). This is social theory tailored to our hyper-reflexive times and yet still nostalgic for a particular 'imagined' economy or society. Perhaps justifiably, it is suspicious of grand narratives and sceptical of the universalist claims of early globalism, especially where these can be seen as offshoots of (neo-)liberal theory. As we shall see in later chapters, the upshot is both gain and loss.

What's in a Name?

To reiterate, good social-scientific inquiry relies upon conceptual rigour to produce sound theory. At the same time, all theory must recognize its limitations. By treating globalization as a temporary, derivative and entirely conjunctural phenomenon, Justin Rosenberg challenges globalization theorists to situate the undoubtedly huge changes which occurred globally at the end of the last millennium in a more encompassing theory of social change, the better to weigh their explanatory value (2000; 2005; 2007; Albert, 2009; Axford, 2007a). Because his criticisms of globalization theory have considerable relevance for our discussion to date, and for how the root concept *global* is construed in different branches of theory, they are worth further consideration (Axford, 2007a).

Globalization as a conjuncture: History and happenstance

Rosenberg wants to situate the study of international relations within the broader warp of classical, especially Marxist, social theory. He finds contemporary globalization theory wanting in its duty of care to good social science. Within the genre, attempts to address the core project of how to explain long-term, large-scale social change have been hijacked by the polemical debate between hyper-globalizers and transformationalists; which debate is largely rhetorical since, for him, transformationalists are a sub-set of hyper-globalizers, often devoid of literary panache. Rosenberg also questions the wisdom of taking the 1990s as a seminal decade in the transformation of world politics and in the putative (global) transformation of the social sciences (Shaw, 2003).

Rosenberg's gloss is that observed changes were wrongly interpreted by students of globalization, who mistakenly abstracted the decade from the historical record to concoct an intuitively plausible, but largely unsubstantiated, body of thought called globalization theory. These theorists (Held and his co-authors, Giddens, Scholte and a bevy of neo-liberal hyper-globalizers) allegedly show scant regard for important questions about the nature and

rigour of social scientific inquiry – conceptualization and operationalization – and rely on assertion and ideology to justify their eclectic arguments. Rosenberg offers a way out of this condition, and for him it spells the end of 'globalization theory' as a way of explaining social change.

Rosenberg counsels a historical reinterpretation of the 1990s based on three main tenets. *First*, that the dramatic concentration of 'spatio-temporal dislocations and compressions' in the decade (the end of Fordism as a system of mass production, new digital communications technologies, the erosion of national systems of production and the breakdown of traditional identities linked to territory, along with the particular tensions created by the fall of state socialism and the rise of neo-liberalism) were produced by a process of social change already in train and not vice versa. Thus globalization (if such it is) has to be seen as a dependent variable. *Second*, what might otherwise be taken as a high point in the transformation of social relations and institutions was driven largely by temporary pressures created by a historical 'vacuum' – a unique set of circumstances culminating in the 1990s – rather than reflecting (or being caused by) the epochal emergence of a new form of human society – globality. *Finally*, in order for the real nature of social change in this period to be understood, the 'vacuum' must be reinterpreted as a 'conjunctural' moment in a longer socio-historical process of uneven and combined development set in train by the emergence and continued expansion of capitalist society. Changes attributed by others to contemporary globalization are better understood by reference to pre-existing forces and events that are explainable by the mainstream of existing social theory, especially that of Marx and Trotsky.

This is good polemic and provocative social science. However, the constituency Rosenberg brackets as globalization theorists – those who wish to treat globalization as the *explanans* of social change – is of an altogether more cautious frame of mind than he suggests, although he treats their caution as mere obfuscation. These writers are not only more cautious in their support of a historical, multi-layered and multidimensional process but more agnostic on causality than he allows. Such caution should be applauded. Unless we are willing to specify invariant relationships between notionally independent and notionally dependent variables (and Rosenberg is not), the course of social change is the outcome of reflexive and sometimes recursive relationships between agents and the conditions for action; in other words, agents are influenced by the conditions in which they act. In turn, their actions either reproduce or modify those conditions. Possible outcomes of such relationships include unintended as well as intended consequences. Uncovering complex relationality, not invariant relationships between agents and structures, should be the guiding principle of all social research. The idea of globalization simply being either a cause or an effect is severely qualified by this insight.

Rosenberg's argument tries to rule out the idea of globalization as a structural phenomenon in its own right and treats it more as a contingent feature

of the emergence and contested expansion of capitalist society on a world scale. Writing in 2007, some two years after this argument was published, he opined that while it is entirely permissible to use globalization as a descriptive category which catalogues variable, even intensifying, processes of interconnection, its would-be theorists have failed to meet the three basic intellectual requirements needed to confirm it as an explanatory concept. The first is that, for all the sound and fury around the idea, it lacks clear definition (2007, 417). The second is that any such definition must be able to yield a plausible hypothesis about the causal significance of the empirical phenomena used to 'identify' globalization (for example, the undoing of sovereignty as the organizational principle of the modern world order). Finally, the hypothesis must be tested in actual circumstances and provide 'concrete historical explanation' when set against rival explanations of the same phenomena (Axford, 2007a).

Rosenberg's critique amounts to more than just taking a side-swipe at hyper-globalizers and transformationalists on the way to a Marxist theory of social change. By lambasting globalization theory for being much too ambiguous or elliptical he opens up a proper debate about its definitional status, about what exactly is to be studied and to what ends. Well and good; as John Ruggie notes (1998, 2), what we cannot describe, we cannot hope to explain. And there is no doubt that some globalization scholarship has subsisted on casual definitions of globalization as a process, principally by relying on what Rosenberg calls 'the usual associations' (2007, 417) – interconnectedness, supra-territoriality, space-time compression and, of course, their presumed consequence, the demise or 'transformation' of the territorial state.

Now, imperfect or underspecified concepts are not uncommon in a good deal of social science, so why should this be important? Rosenberg links definitional weakness to what he sees as the major failing of globalization scholarship, namely its inability to generate an 'intelligible hypothesis' (2007, 418) that permits concrete historical examination of the facts. He also claims that if there is a globalization hypothesis that follows from plausible, but loose, conceptualization, it is precisely the one which has caused the most problem for globalization scholarship; namely, the future of the state and state system in the current era. So the problem with globalization theory is that, because of the failure to define the concept more precisely and then operationalize it, pretty much anything can be described *as* globalization or ascribed *to* it.

A Rose by Any Other Name?

For students of globalization Rosenberg's critique is a salutary intervention, but it reduces manifest complexity to something more formulaic. For one thing, it is inappropriate to define a phenomenon in terms of its (presumed) effects rather than its properties; and to say that globalization *is* the demise

of the state does mistake cause for effect. In addition, a focus on the state and its future still reflects the concerns of traditional realist and neo-realist theory. While this focus is echoed in other scholarship and remains crucial to any considered examination of global trends, it is essential to question whether studying globalization need be quite so state-centric. There are many ways to analyse the relationships between states and globalization and only one of these assumes that globalization theory *needs*, indeed has to be defined *as*, the disappearance of the national scale in general and the state in particular (Brenner, 2004, 61; Beck and Sznaider, 2006). But does conceptual permissiveness aid or detract from scholarship on the global? In what follows we will examine the ways in which actual usage even approximates Rosenberg's three requirements for good globalization research.

Globalization, globalism or globality: One out of three or three in one?

If globalization is a 'keyword' (Williams, 1978) then it is one with different connotations for different theorists and activists. So far, so obvious; but the ramifications of this point are important because, as Rosenberg says, if we cannot identify and define what we are studying how can we lay claims to knowledge, let alone construct good theory? A sensible caution; but in one key respect it is not one that informs his own analysis.

At least part of the problem with Rosenberg's critique of globalization theory is that he fails to distinguish between, or else is happy to conflate, three global concepts: *globalization*, *globalism* and *globality*. We have to separate these uses the better to understand the differences between *normative/ideological* engagements with globalization – often through issues such as global justice, global governance and cosmopolitanism, or else as an apology for particular kinds of globalization – and *empirical/analytic* applications, which either use the concept as a simple, geographical term denoting 'world-wide' connection, or cleave to a more systemic and systematic understanding of the global as an 'orienting reference point for the social scientific observer'(Beck and Sznaider, 2006, 4). Too often there is not enough reflection on the tensions between normative and explanatory accounts (Browning, 2005). To guard against any conflation we must elaborate the conceptual terminology in which *globalization* is taken *as* process, *globalism as* ideology and *globality as* state of affairs, condition, consciousness or frame of reference (Keohane and Nye, 2000). Each of the terms has semantic and methodological implications (Schafer, 2007).

Globalization as process

Words ending in the suffix 'ization' denote a process; that is, change over time; but what sort of process? Even an informal conspectus reveals that

'globalization' is employed in different ways. These range from a sense of epochal change in train (Albrow, 1996) or the unfolding of a teleology (Fukuyama, 1992; 1996), through description of a 'series of connected developments unfolding in programmatic coordination' (Modelski et al., 2008, 13), to more middle-range usage on the 'complex manifestation of global processes within particular social realms', including religion, health, sexuality and sport (Giulianotti and Roberston, 2009, xiii).

Wolf Schafer helpfully identifies uses of the concept in which it is either transitive, that is, describing a relation between a subject and an object, or intransitive, where no such relation or action is implied (2007). In globalization research both uses are apparent, particularly the first. Thus globalization can be taken as a process which imposes itself on, or affects, an object; as in 'globalization compresses the world', where globalization is the agent or cause of change; and as a process without a subject or agent, as in 'the world globalized intensively in the 1990s'. It is clear that while both uses require empirical referents, the former implies a causal or at least a subject–object relationship, while the latter does not make globalization the agent of change.

In fact, as Schafer also points out, globalization is ambi-transitive, in that globalization processes, or at least the actors and institutions driving them, possess agency, and can also occur without a subject imposing them (2007, 5). But the second usage gives us no real sense of agency, context or history and its only value may be to defuse ideological or polemical claims about the provenance and effects of globalizing processes, but at the cost of having to rely on an anodyne and agent-less account of social change. Such positions have to be set aside to understand ways in which different forms of globality may, or may not, be linked directly to, or caused by, globalization processes.

But is globalization as process just another, more intense form of internationalization or transnationalization, or can it be subsumed under what George Ritzer calls 'related processes' (2010, 64–106)? If it can, does taking the concept to mean no more than, say, liberalization or Westernization – typically Americanization – dilute or negate its analytical novelty and its explanatory worth (Scholte, 2008)? Certainly the willingness to subsume the concept in, or else conflate it with, cognate processes is a feature of much writing on globalization. Ritzer (2010) identifies six 'related processes' and their seeming antitheses: imperialism, colonialism (and post-colonialism), development (and dependency), Westernization (plus post-Westernization), Easternization and Americanization (along with anti-Americanization). His conclusion is that it is important to distinguish globalization from any and all of these look-alikes, but adds that it remains a messy truth that there are 'strong overlaps among and between them' (2010, 79). Elements of previous periods of imperialism and colonialism survive into the current era of globalization, most obviously in the guise of liberal economic thinking and practices, while Americanization remains a global cultural force for all the talk of hegemonic decline.

At the same time Ritzer talks about getting to grips with the 'fundamental nature of globalization' (2010, 80), which suggests a definitional core. Thus all related processes are deemed part of a larger process of globalization, and being able to subsume them under it turns on the notion that, when compared with any of these other processes, globalization 'consists of multidirectional flows, with no single point of geographic origin' (82). In other words it is a decentred process, not reliant or less 'focused' on the territorial state and transplanetary in scope (Sassen, 2006; 2007; Appadurai, 2006; Scholte, 2005b).

Ritzer's main body of work is hardly a celebration of globalization (2004; 2012) but it adheres to the intuitively plausible, yet allusive definition which critics find so frustrating (Rosenberg, 2000; 2005). With some approbation Ritzer quotes John Tomlinson's statement that globalization is a 'complex, accelerating, integrating process of global connectivity . . . [a] rapidly developing and ever densening network of interconnections and interdependencies' (Tomlinson, 2007, 352). The sense of globalization as intensive and extensive connectivity is widespread and can be found in work with quite different theoretical and ideological pretensions. Scholte's account of globalization as supra-territoriality is a prominent example (2005a; Held et al., 1999), while Hardt and Negri's treatise on 'Empire' (2000) and Manuel Castells' epic trilogy on 'The Information Age' (2000a; 2000b; 2004a) both offer the image of a networked, decentred and de-territorialized world of capitalism as a rejection of orthodox Marxism and state-centric models of IPE.

All these models rely heavily on the notions of connectivity or institutionalization as key processes, depicting globalization as a form of intensified and increasingly extensive exchange and/or a process involving the diffusion of world-wide institutional rules and standards or cultural scripts. In their examination of globalization as an evolutionary process of global change, George Modelski and his colleagues (2008) also trade on the idea that globalization implies the emergence of institutions and networks of planetary scope and which is multidimensional in character. In their scholarship, evolutionary processes take humanity as a whole as the unit of analysis, rather than societies, and social evolution is not a 'unitary phenomenon' but a 'cascade of processes' – economic, political, cultural and so on – which are 'closely and systematically related' (2008, 421).

The same volume draws on scholarship from the social and natural sciences, as well as history as a discipline and in Modelski's own contribution there is a strong flavour of world-systems analysis and Darwinism (2008, ch. 2). He sees globalization as an evolutionary process of the world-system driven by 'Darwinian-type' mechanisms of search and selection that act on all humankind and produce institutional change of global reach. These processes are periodic and not cyclical as is the case in Wallerstein's world-systems analysis, and each period delivers its own social dynamics and trajectories. Because of the variable nature and impact of different kinds of social and

technical innovation, these are not always predicated closely on what happened previously.

The virtue in this still rather abstract account is that it offers a diachronic view of globalization; seeing it as a process in time, a historical process; one which draws on the history of humanity and tries to identify the key factors contributing to change of global proportions, whether via urbanization, technical innovation or political reform. Against it is a formidable array of scholarship which supports the prescription for diachronic analysis and the idea of globalization as a set of processes rather than a singular process, but objects either that globalization does not conform to the requisites of evolutionary theory (Giddens, 1984, 238–9; 1999; by inference, Popper, 2002) or that the whole thing smacks too much of functionalist reasoning applied to the emergence and survival of social systems of global scope (Axford, 1995). In fact, Modelski is critical of older and more ideological theories of modernization as a form of social evolution because they impart a peculiarly functionalist and Western feel to the idea of societal development (see Parsons, 1966; Eisenstadt, 1987; Fukuyama, 1992; 1996). Both modernization theory and Marxism share a theoretical commitment to social and societal evolution (Gouldner, 1978).

But all evolutionary theory, even strong teleology, accommodates some contingency. Francis Fukuyama's (1992) version of Hegelian universal history, mediated through the writings of Alexandre Kojève and Friedrich Nietzsche, is clearly a directional theory of social change. But here too the teleological burden of the argument is moderated, because the march of history displays not smooth, but punctuated evolution. Even when the denouement is the prescribed triumph of liberal democracy on a world scale, progress towards it remains contingent (Gouldner, 1978; Fukuyama, 2011; Wendt, 2003). Fukuyama's picture of the 'end of History' has it as no more than a prolonged interlude that may carry with it the seeds of further change, even degeneration. Meanwhile, complexity models of globalization as process are quite happy to talk about it as being irreversible, but also unpredictable and chaotic (Urry, 2003, 138).

Anthony Giddens' disjunctive theory of global change, which is aggressively non-functionalist, is also very condemnatory of evolutionary theory. In evolutionist accounts, says Giddens, complex histories become simplified stories that can be told only through a grand narrative of historical change (1990, 5; Wright, 1989). Instead, he draws a sharp distinction between traditional and modern societies. This turns, in large measure, on his depiction of modernity as a period of extreme contingency and doubt, the nemesis of pre-existing world-views and social practice. Indeed, a sense of species insecurity stands as the most prominent marker between pre-modern and non-global globality and modern globality.

For Giddens, globalization is a modern phenomenon, producing a 'history [with] a quite different stamp from anything that has gone before' (1984,

238–9). In his account, two key dimensions of modernity appear as synonyms for globalization. The first is the idea of 'space-time distanciation', which refers to the complex relations between embodied co-presence and interactions across distance (the connection of presence and absence) in which immediacy and the conditions for intimacy are transformed. In the modern era, the degree of time-space distanciation is much greater than in any previous period, to the point of extreme disjunction. Accordingly, the relations between local and distant social forms, actors and events become stretched, producing social relationships 'disembedded' from particular contexts, his second feature (Giddens, 1990). The 'stepping out' of time characteristic of space-time distanciation uncouples social relations from local contexts of interaction and 'stretches' them across much larger spans of time and space. The internet and its increasingly routine use in everyday life are a seminal illustration of these features of modernity, even though, as Saskia Sassen has pointed out, digital connectivity also facilitates the reinvention of locality and local or particular identities (2008).

Giddens would strongly disavow that his theory of social change bears any of the hallmarks of evolutionary theory. Unlike the work of Karl Marx, where evolutionary change is always driven by a trans-historical dialectic – the immanent contradiction between forces and relations of production in class-divided societies – the shift from societies characterized by low space-time distanciation to ones displaying a high incidence obeys no general principle of historical change (Wright, 1989). Instead, Giddens insists that the movement from one social form to another is based on factors specific to the transition in question (Wellman, 2008; Axford and Huggins, 2010; Tomlinson, 2007). But the dynamics of change, what others might call the motors of social evolution can manifest in any sphere of life – material, cultural, political – because each is autonomous. As Erik Olin Wright notes of Giddens' argument, ' [w]hile in specific historical cases one might be justified in saying that one or other of these constitutes the central locus of impulses for social change, there is no general priority of one over the other and their interconnection is best characterized as historically specific and contingent' (1989, 98).

Modelski's depiction of globalization as an evolutionary process further distinguishes between institutional and connectivist processes. Institutional processes point up the organizational dynamics of change, while connectivist ones privilege spatio-temporal factors. Modelski favours an institutionalist analysis of evolutionary change and identifies four institutional processes – the evolution of the global economy, global political evolution, the rise of a global community and, somewhat confusingly, globalization itself – whose interaction permits institutional innovation and thus change (2008, 20–8). Connectivist positions could be mistaken for purely descriptive statements about links between actors previously separated and insulated by space and time. But such a disarmingly simple treatment is often just the starting point

for empirical investigations that explore the impact of connectivity on social relations and social forms and thus offer (the beginnings of) a theory of social change.

Of the two approaches, it is connectivist accounts which most inform the treatment of globalization as process, although we can point to evolutionary models of global institutionalization and, of course, world polity models of global cultural structures (Harvey, 1989; Dicken et al., 2001; Wallerstein, 1979; Sassen, 2007; Tomlinson, 2006; Hardt and Negri, 2004; Castells, 2000a). For John Tomlinson globalization is 'quite simply' a description of networks and flows and their implications for social ontology. These implications reside in the various flows of capital, people, images, knowledge, crime, disease, fashions and beliefs that traverse national boundaries. For all its apparent descriptive breadth, this is a quite modest claim, although any explanatory clout is couched in the detail of just how significant such 'implications' can be.

In fact, institutionalization and connectivism are not mutually exclusive. In the sophisticated transformationalist argument deployed by David Held and his colleagues (1999; Held and McGrew, 2007), globalization is revealed as a set of processes that extend, intensify and speed up flows and connections. But to avoid any sense that process somehow floats free of structures and of context, these authors also describe connectivity as grounded in organizational and institutional arrangements – global norms, epistemic communities and governance regimes – which monitor, regulate and otherwise manage the connections, movements and flows. And hard indicators that identify and codify trends and processes are crucial to the social science of globalization as an empirical-analytical enterprise. At the same time, if the science of globalization stops at description it remains a workaday concept, hardly fitted for Rosenberg's explanatory task.

Axial features and types of globalization process The idea of globalization as process usually decants into a consideration of its axial features that, in turn, permits examination of types of globalization. Modelski gives us a glimpse of some of these axial features. He describes a multidimensional process involving the expansion of world commerce and capital movements; political globalization ranging over institutional innovations, from imperial forms of rule to democratic national and inter-/supra-national institutions; the rise of transnational social and political movements; world-wide cultural trends; and the emergence of a sense of world-wide community and public opinion. These processes have not played out over the same historical time span, nor do they move along identical trajectories, but together they provide what Modelski calls a 'process structure' (1990, 14) which is leading to a new 'level' of world organization. With some variations in the sort of timescales envisaged, the same features are rehearsed in most literatures on globalization, so that in principle it should be possible to map historically the emerging

characteristics of a globalized world and to examine its relational, even its systemic qualities (Axford, 1995).

Typologies of globalization are usually attempts to offer a more descriptively fine-grained account of axial features in what might otherwise appear as an amorphous, even a monolithic, process. Leslie Sklair differentiates between three competing approaches to globalization as an intellectual and a strategic project (2007): internationalist, transnationalist and globalist perspectives, with the second preferred both on theoretical/methodological grounds and – because it depicts a contested and pluralistic world-historical project – as a normative position. He further distinguishes between generic globalization, capitalist globalization and alternative globalizations, and these categories display different forms of *transnational practice*, which, for him, is the definitive global process.

Generic globalization should not be conflated with or definitionally subsumed under capitalist globalization. Undoubtedly, says Sklair, capitalist globalization is the 'dominant global system at the start of the 21st century', but generic globalization processes – the revolution in electronic communication, what he calls the 'post-colonial moment', the emergence of transnational social spaces and the beginning of new forms of cosmopolitan practice – have much greater emancipatory potential for excluded or marginalized groups. These generic elements are producing irreversible dynamics that may be a facet of capitalist expansion, but also move to autonomous logics and are susceptible to intervention by counter-cultural and counter-hegemonic forces. The final category of 'alternative globalizations' is a derivative and/or normative trope allowing the author to introduce the possibility of anti- or non-capitalist paths to globality, especially that of socialism (2007). Bearing in mind that it is often hard to separate social-scientific endeavour from the ways in which ideology frames scholarship, it is to the latter accounts that we now turn.

Globalism as ideology

Rosenberg casts most globalization theory as either ideological or normative. While this claim can be challenged, there is no doubt that some of those he brackets as 'globalists' do traffic an ideological/normative stance or worldview which justifies or seeks to undermine the existing world order (Mittelman, 2004; Browning, 2005). Ideology is a type of normative statement, in that norms as prescribed rules can be given focus and direction through an ideology that expresses a coherent vision for how things should be organized (Browning, 2005, 196). Ideologies may claim to be forensic as well as programmatic: the new order will replace the disreputable old order and be measurably better, more efficient, and so on. According to Manfred Steger (2002; 2005a; 2007) globalism is a new ideological configuration, challenging the main categories of thought in use for the past two centuries, including statism and the organizational principle of territoriality.

The truth is that much criticism of contemporary globalism, as well as a modicum of praise, follows from its ideological provenance in the doctrine of economic liberalism and its quotidian successes in the late twentieth century. Some of the most popular globalist beliefs of the twentieth century can be seen in the vibrant apologies for free market capitalism found, for example, in the work of Thomas Friedman (1999; 2005; Ohmae, 1990; 2001; Bhagwati, 2005; Wolf, 2004), of which more later. But globalist views are not confined to the ranks of market liberalizers (including neo-liberals) and neo-conservative libertarians.

In addition to market globalism there is also *justice globalism*, based on egalitarian ideals, global solidarity and distributive justice, and *jihadist globalism*, mobilized in defence of allegedly Islamic virtues seen as under threat from the first two variants (Steger, 2009, 30). Particular values and meanings, as well as prescriptions for different global futures, appear too in the self-styled post-Marxist treatment of empire (globalization) elaborated by Hardt and Negri (2000; 2004; 2009), in Manuel Castells' general approbation of information capitalism (2000a; 2000b; 2008) and in a tranche of writing which musters under the global governance or cosmopolitan motif, including some dalliance with the prospects for and desirability of global society (Beck, 2006; 2005; Held, 2010; Keane, 2003; Falk, 2002; 2005).

These ideologies embrace quite different 'truths' about globalization. James Mittelman notes that, depending where you stand in the hierarchies of power and privilege, 'globalization is ([either] an ideology of freedom for expanding not only the world's bounty, but also human potential', or an ideology of domination (2004, 47), and this is a recurring antinomy in scholarship. Both Hardt and Negri and Castells can be seen as celebrants of globalization. Each account has different theoretical and ideological projects in mind but they share a concern to move beyond orthodox Marxism, without fully jettisoning Marx.

In Hardt and Negri's earliest formulation, empire constitutes a potentially liberating force because it de-territorializes the 'previous structures of exploitation and power' (2000, 52). The rise of a world market and the diffusion of economic and political power into myriad networks also make it easier to mobilize and express the oppositional and emancipatory energy of the 'multitude', which is a look-alike for global civil society. Inevitably, some critics see the idea of a global 'multitude' as a lamentably under-specified concept, a utopian solution to the regressive features of globalization, or just a prime example of wishful thinking. In a review of the third volume in the empire trilogy, entitled *Commonwealth* (2009), John Gray dismisses their intervention as 'radical theory in the idiom of Monty Python' (Gray, 2009; Munck, 2007). But for all their faults, Hardt and Negri offer an intriguing picture of a post-national, post-imperialist and postmodern empire – a smooth, networked world of diffuse power – which is at some conceptual distance from more conventional treatments of imperial power, even

though the coherence of their empire is guaranteed by the continued hegemony of the USA (Gill, 2009; Ferguson, 2004). The theme of hegemonic shift and predictions of new constellations of financial, economic, military and cultural power inform both empirical and ideological accounts of contemporary globalization. The influence of the latter, as Mittelman says, stands as an important register of the still contested agendas of globalization (2004, 48).

At the heart of these contested agendas lie the ideology and practices of neo-liberalism, for some synonymous with late twentieth-century globalization (Mittelman, 2004). Manfred Steger writes that when coupled with markets, neo-liberalism stands as the core ideological concept of globalization (2005a, 16; 2007; Klein, 2007; Callinicos, 2010). And in a critical paper, David Harvey labels neo-liberalism a 'grand narrative', with its intellectual provenance in the doctrines of classical liberalism and writers such as John Locke and Adam Smith (Harvey, 2005a; 2005b) and its practice exemplified by what Naomi Klein calls the 'shock doctrine' (2007) of market economics visited on some African, South American and Asian economies, and on newly independent states spilled from the Soviet world-empire after 1989. Echoes of this shock doctrine can be heard in the rescue package for the Greek, Irish and Portuguese economies put together by Eurozone countries and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2010, 2011 and 2012, although this pattern of intervention is also held up as the end of pristine neo-liberalism (Callinicos, 2010).

The main tenets of the faith combine liberalism's championing of individual liberty with the ideals of free market philosophy and economics. Neoliberalism, often cast as the libertarian version of liberalism, has its immediate intellectual roots in the work of Austrian School theorists such as Friedrich von Hayek (1944) and Ludwig von Mises (1963 [1919]) and North American intellectuals such as James Buchanan (1969) and Robert Nozick (1974). It owed its popularity to the development of this corpus by Chicago School economists such as Milton Friedman. Both Hayek and Friedman looked to free economic theory and policy delivery from what they saw as the stifling impact of Keynesian thought translated into public policy. Following the Great Depression of the 1930s, liberal ideas were deemed in need of resuscitation to combat what was seen as an excessive and stultifying pattern of state interventionism in domestic economies, and to refute the ideology of collectivism that had not only compromised market relations but eroded the boundaries between private and public domains.

By the 1980s, free market principles were being endorsed by such as Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, whose conservative administrations applied neo-liberal tenets – open markets, deregulation of economic activity and faith in the self-regulating market – to many aspects of policy in the core states of Britain and the USA. Economic theory and principle soon became the established political creed and its supporters notable for their

proselytizing zeal. The institutionalization of neo-liberal doctrine as a world economic script then proceeded through the agency of 'global' bodies such as the World Bank and the IMF. Along with the USA, these organizations touted neo-liberalism as the exemplary route to modernization for other countries, particularly those deemed to be in a 'transitional' condition. What emerged was generally bruited as the 'Washington Consensus', a belief in 'unimpeded private market forces [as] the driving engines of growth' (Williamson, 1989, 1243). Thus was fashioned the most controversial globalist dogma, namely that 'there is no alternative' to liberal globalization.

In a rather downbeat classification Mittelman labels these positions as 'centrist neo-liberal thinking' (2004, 50), but the ideological orthodoxy they espoused has been subject to increasing challenge intellectually and, both metaphorically and physically, on the streets. From within the liberal canon, reformist globalizers such as Joseph Stiglitz (2002; 2006), Dani Rodrik (1997), Paul Krugman (2007; 1996) and Jeffrey Sachs (1997) have all pointed to its failures and debilitating impact on those whose economic performance it was meant to burnish. But, while reformist globalizers are acerbic critics of neo-liberal globalization, their concern is often couched in a basically sympathetic critique, counselling less dogmatism, more attention to local conditions and some adjustment of policies – more debt relief, less structural adjustment or conditionality – rather than a wholesale abandonment of the idea of global economic integration through markets. Even quite radical positions sometimes do little more than prescribe humanizing or democratizing economic governance as a way of 'taming' neo-liberal globalization (Khor, 2001). Of course, other critical positions are more inclined to uncouple, rather than just loosen, the path of globalization, even capitalist globalization per se, from the particular engines of neo-liberal ideology and policy. Until recently, these have tended to inhabit activist discourses and inform more strategic interventions (Marcos, 2009).

The neo-liberal heyday, from the early 1980s through the 1990s, represented 'a remarkable ideological achievement' (Steger, 2005b, 41) in that its proponents were able to marry an ostensibly new and progressive idea – globalization – to older prescriptions about free markets and limited states, and have the latter taken as the apogee of the former. For example, in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1999) and *The World Is Flat* (2005), journalist Thomas Friedman set out what 'may be the most comprehensive, widely read defence of neo-liberal globalization' (Antonio, 2007, 67). In summary, he charts and applauds the emergence of a 'flat world', that is, one in which there are fewer and fewer barriers to free trade, communication and pretty much everything else associated with economic exchange across borders, as well as with a good many social and cultural transactions.

Some critics see an ideological continuity rather than a rupture between Friedman's market (neo-liberal) globalization and a new form of 'imperial globalization' that emerged in the early 2000s (Steger, 2005b, 41; see also

Callinicos, 2009). And it is possible to accommodate this view under a broadly functionalist view of social change, whereby American neo-conservatism in foreign policy introduced a more obviously geo-political edge to global liberalism, but still parades as its functional equivalent in the playing out of the basically ideological agenda of capitalist globalization. The neo-conservative moment in US economic and security governance and the fallout from the 2008 financial crisis perhaps muster as increments in the demise, or possibly the transformation, of global neo-liberalism. They certainly underline the increasing importance of military-security, as opposed to purely economic, factors in the debates on globalization. Alternative globalist ideologies out of Marxism or ethical cosmopolitanism attest to the sporadic vitality of different genres, but, arguably, fail to find any real purchase outside the academy.

In the pantheon of globalisms, market liberalism begets imperial globalism, which begets either the trope of empire, some form of countervailing transnationalism or maybe even cosmopolis (Gills, 2005). Admittedly this is a very schematic way to compress the complex processes of globalization and the ideological agendas of globalism referred to above, but it does have the merit of drawing attention to the resilience of ideas and normative prescription as sources of physical and intellectual conflict. As James Mittelman notes: these days as ideological consensus is everywhere contested and weakening, the room for conflict about the ends of all ideological discourse continues to expand (2004, 54).

Globality as consciousness or system

Globalisms tend to utopias by default, and while rival claims may contest whether globalization is progressive or regressive, the denouement is always prefigured either in the dogma itself, or in the implied logic of various empirical processes. Herein lies the difficulty for attempts to build explanatory accounts of global change. By and large, critical globalization scholarship has been trying to disengage from the idea of globalism as teleology, or globality as simply the outcome of one or many linear processes of globalization. Critical treatments of globalization focus instead on the socially constructed nature of globalization and of globality (Bartelson, 2009a) and such an approach certainly avoids the mistake of signalling or prescribing a determinate outcome, but at what analytical cost? At the same time, constructivist research tells us that social constructions can appear immutable and have powerful effects on consciousness and behaviour. But should a theory of globality produce a more robust ontology, one less reliant on the forces of contingency and subjectivity?

This is a pertinent question, since the social ontology of globality is still a relatively uncharted domain. Because of this, various questions arise: is it (or are they, if one concedes the possibility of multiple globalities) *sui generis*, not only distinct, but unencumbered by or ontologically separate from the state

system and territoriality, as well as from modernity (Albrow, 1996)? Does globality reveal systemic qualities, and if so, in what ways do these modify a constructionist stance? Is globality really *glocality*, an imbrication of scales and a negotiated or enacted condition? Finally, does globality subsist only as consciousness or are there harder material indicators?

Words that end in 'ity' refer to a condition, a distinctive mode of existence or state of being. The concept of globality today is commonly used to denote the emergence of a single socio-political space on a planetary scale. While this sounds monolithic, implying universality, systematic integration and worldwide reach, it could be viewed in a more permissive light, with globality seen as a possible outcome, an immanent potential, or just reflecting a less demanding definition of global systemness (Axford, 1995, 86–93). To make empirical sense of the concept, much scholarship on contemporary globalization depicts globality as the outcome of processes that effectively transcend the international system, thus making it ontologically distinct.

Jan Aart Scholte, (2000; 2005a; 2005b) falls into this camp, of course, and offers a strong position on the ontological distinctiveness of globalization, but more 'middle-range' positions have become increasingly popular as the force of grander narratives of globalization decline. For example, John Ruggie (2004) sees the new global public domain not as coterminous with the international system, but existing in 'transnational, non-territorial, spatial formations and anchored in norms and expectations as well as institutional networks and circuits within, across and beyond states' (2004, 519). Similar treatments on the interaction of local and global can be found in the work of Sassen (2006; 2008) and Robertson (1992; 2009) although these accounts, and especially that of Sassen, actually qualify the idea of globality as *sui generis* without ever reducing it to a condition which originates just in the international system.

All this still seems quite elliptical, so what are we talking about? Let's return to what seem to be the key features of globality, which reside in both practices and consciousness (Shaw, 2000) before examining whether it is helpful to talk about it as a system (Bartelson, 2009a). What are the referents? The idea that globality resides in 'thick economic, political and cultural interconnections and global flows that make currently existing political borders and economic barriers irrelevant' is entirely plausible (though why not 'thin' too?) (Steger, 2005a, 13). But that definition seems merely to reprise common descriptors of globalization processes, albeit with the 'social condition(s)' they prefigure being legion. Moreover, Steger wants to eschew any sense that these 'thick' interconnections are precipitating a determinate outcome. Rather, there are many possible outcomes, presumably many potential globalities, which might, for example, secure the completion of global capitalism or a world order built around alternative ideals.

Now, process and change are indelibly linked even if we reject determinism, and, this far into our study, there is less reason to quibble about the

analytical usefulness of some built-in contingency that allows for the possibility of different worlds. However, the emphasis on process and potential variety still does not allow us to distinguish globalization from globality. Scholte essays a distinction when he declares the definitive features of globality to be 'transworld simultaneity and instantaneity' (2003, 88) – in other words the realization of a single world space, by way of supra-territoriality. As he opines, there can be no doubt that this is, or would be, a new 'social geography', most obviously when set against the resolute ontology of the international system.

Martin Shaw (2000; 2003) provides more than just a spatial definition for globality. For him it comprises a 'transformation of the spatial content of social relations'. In other words, global clearly means 'worldwide' and thus is 'primarily a spatial reference to the world as a whole and social processes which intensify worldwide linkages' (2000, 62). But it is more than a simple spatial referent or one entirely reliant on 'mechanical interconnectedness'. Rather, globality has social as well as spatial meaning. Above all, it is a matter of consciousness and constitutes a 'self-consciously common framework of human society worldwide' (2000, 62). As Shaw notes, such views are not unique to his conception of globality. They are prefigured to some extent in the universalist claims of both religious and, in the case of cosmopolitanism, secular world-views. The idea of a 'common framework' is given substance in, for example, the cooperative responses of political elites to the threats of planetary destruction, while a more 'practical consciousness' also resides in the existence of the widespread perception that we are all subject to global constraints as a matter of routine. Of course, for Shaw, military and geopolitical considerations rather than, or as well as, economic factors contributed to a more systematic global consciousness by the end of the twentieth century, and this shift in consciousness has been profound enough to constitute a global social revolution, even if it is unfinished.

Should this increasingly modal global consciousness be seen as a purely contemporary phenomenon? Shaw's idea of a social revolution privileges globality as a break with the immediate past – with modernity – although he is at pains to point out that the 'rupture' still leaves globality 'enmeshed' in older social forms and practices; which may be equivocation. At the same time, Robertson and Inglis argue that notions of globality – 'where the world is taken as a whole, where all parts of the global are seen as increasingly interconnected and where individual experience is connected to worldwide forces and circumstances' (2004, 173) – were extant in the Graeco-Roman world, some two millennia ago, even if the sense of 'worldwide' then did not mean planetary, as it does today. These positions may not be as incompatible as they seem. What they underscore is that different conceptualizations of the global are tied to particular historical moments or periods, so that while the character of *global* as denoting 'worldwide' consciousness and practices remains the same, particular conceptions and configurations of it, as well as

the forces driving them, can change. Thus, global mentality – a sense of the global, if you will – as well as structures, might actually pre-date and even prefigure modernity, while the 'unfinished revolution' bruited by Shaw could still deliver further transformation.

In a sense this is an empirical argument: how much and how fast are things changing, in what direction(s) and with what consequences? But it is also a matter of conceptualization and the inferences that may be drawn from particular conceptualizations. Take the idea of globality as global consciousness. Is this primarily a kind of empathy, whereby all members of the human race have a built-in capacity and predilection for social cooperation, or does it simply refer to an awareness of global constraints, which may trigger quite different sentiments and mobilize very different politics? There is also the core ontology of the concept to consider.

Shaw defines the global as a 'common consciousness of human society on a world scale: an increasing awareness of the totality of human social relations as the largest constitutive framework of all relations' (2003, 146). He argues that society is now constituted by this inclusive human framework, rather than by distinct tribes, civilizations, nations or religious communities, although none of these are (yet) precluded as features of the human social condition. Taken at face value this is clearly a new structure of social relations, and this sense emerges too from studies such as *Global Transformations* (Held et al., 1999) that reveal a tension between an essentialized, one-dimensional notion of globalization and the idea of globality as systematic, perhaps systemic. Of course, one might question any conceit that defines a modal condition (globality) as entirely or largely subjective (a matter of consciousness) – and, in doing so, also query the nature and extent of global systemness – by posing the money question: how is a global system possible?

In any social system it is the relationships between social forces (actors) and systemic properties that express the extent and intensity of systemness, and the way they are linked also provides clues to the dynamics of social change. But specifying exactly what is involved here, at least in the sort of detail that would satisfy Justin Rosenberg, remains highly problematic. At the same time it is clearly possible to specify some content, albeit with a degree of abstraction. Echoing structurationist thinking (Axford, 1995), we might understand the constitution of the global system as follows: global structural rules and resources provide an enabling and constraining framework for action. Under global rules the scope for agency is, or may be, enlarged because of the growing complexity of modern life, in which agents are faced not just with a dominant set of structural properties, but with intersecting, overlapping and sometimes contradictory sets, where institutional scripts (national, local, etc.) cross-cut. While this sometimes leads to a sense of powerlessness or triggers profoundly negative sentiments about globalization, often it will result in actors choosing to engage with contested

rules to try to fashion alternative outcomes. Global systemness now appears less as a neat functional accommodation between parts of a system and between the system and its environment and more as a negotiated and contingent condition. At the same time, what might otherwise appear simply as the conjunctural impact of, say, market rules, cultural trends and geo-strategic factors, on the consciousness and behaviour of actors, is better understood as a form of mutual constitution. The contexts in which consciousness is generated and the intensity of consciousness vary, but the outcomes underscore what are basically integrative tendencies (globalities) in and across politics, economics and culture.

What are the analytical advantages that follow from distinguishing process from ideology and both from globality as condition or system? In much early and especially hyper-globalist discourse on globalization, the global 'level' was taken for granted and globalization depicted as the force through which non- or sub-global actors accommodate or identify with the global (Urry, 2003). The ideological discourses that often accompany such accounts express powerful, if sometimes naive, support for determinate models of globalization. By contrast, as Jonathan Friedman says, an analytical focus on globality or global systems as a constitutive framework for consciousness and action entails 'a theoretical framework within which the institutional structures of the world are themselves generated and reproduced through global processes' (2006, 138). These institutional structures and processes, as well as the consciousness with which they are linked reflexively, possess qualities of systemness because the totality of global flows, networks, interactions and connections triggers a shift in the organization of human affairs and in ways of thinking about, as well as enacting, social relationships. Of course, for students of globalization, precisely when this shift is held to have taken place, why, and with what effects remain the crucial issues.

Rather confusingly, Friedman also says that global processes are structural (immanent) aspects of all social dynamics, which implies that they have been 'operative throughout history' regardless of any 'shifts', as Justin Rosenberg notes (2007, 418). But the difference between studying globality or global systems and globalization processes seems to be that the former are not the result of a few (recent) decades of intense change, a contemporary and largely economic phenomenon, but the outcomes of historical processes of variable intensity and extensivity, moving to economic, cultural and political forces and their imbrication. As Shaw says (2003), globalization is a necessary but not sufficient condition for globality, and one cannot comprehend the latter by paying attention solely to indicators of the former. He goes on, 'the term globalization carries with it connotations of the inexorable, mechanical spread of market relations' (2003, 176). Globality, on the other hand, is all about 'conscious global-oriented action' in all spheres of life, which makes it the biggest constitutive framework within which social relations takes place, but a framework that is mutable.

Conclusion

Would any of this satisfy Justin Rosenberg and answer his three questions about the intellectual authority or unwitting mendacity of globalization theory? One might argue that there is still too much definitional obfuscation around the concept, despite its alluring and enduring plausibility, and that rigorous methodological globalization still needs clearer specification and operationalization. In particular, work on the complex intermingling and dissolution of geographical scales requires attention to the key concepts of connection and consciousness, their intensity and their extensiveness.

For Rosenberg, this would be just a starting point, since the complex intermingling and dissolution of scales is 'actually a feature of all social formations throughout history', not 'the result of any particular substantive process of globalization' (2007, 419). So, establishing 'methodological globalization' is one thing; generating and demonstrating a 'globalization hypothesis' may be quite another, especially where it implies and sometimes demands that globalization is treated as a causal factor. Rosenberg says that if a globalization hypothesis means anything, it must 'entail the end of bounded entities and therefore must fundamentally qualify sovereignty' (2007, 419). If one accepts at least the first part of that limiting claim, the future for globalization scholarship is quite bleak.

But our discussions to date suggest that tying the authority of globalization scholarship solely to the demise of the state is either too parsimonious or too skewed an enterprise. Similarly, recognizing that intermingling and dissolving geographical scales is a feature of all social formations across time should not assume isomorphism of either process or outcomes – how could it? As such, generating a plausible globalization hypothesis does not turn just on the ontological centrality of the state or on the certainty of its demise. While such a strong hypothesis at least has the merit of being unambiguous, it is a straw man. But we are still left with Rosenberg's final caution on the need to find concrete evidence with which to corroborate any globalization hypothesis when set against rival claims. This caution still makes sound analytical and empirical sense. So his concerns have not been dispatched entirely and are still very useful cautions with which to interrogate globalization scholarship. The playing out of these themes and issues in the context of discipline-based research informs the two chapters to follow.