Defining globalization.

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Abstract

Knowledge of globalization is substantially a function of how the concept is defined. After tracing the history of 'global' vocabulary, this paper suggests several principles that should inform the way globality (the condition) and globalization (the trend) are defined. On this basis four common conceptions of the term are rejected in favour of a fifth that identifies globalization as the spread of transplanetary – and in recent times more particularly supraterritorial – connections between people. Half a dozen qualifications are incorporated into this definition to distinguish it from globalist exaggerations.

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Introduction*

Definition is not everything, but everything involves definition. Knowledge of globalization is substantially a function of how the word is defined. The dissection of globalization must include a careful and critical examination of the term itself. A muddled or misguided core concept compromises our overall comprehension of the problem. In contrast, a sharp and revealing definition promotes insightful, interesting and empowering knowledge, an understanding that helps us to shape our destiny in positive directions.

Notions of globalization have grabbed many an intellectual imagination over the past two decades. In academic and lay circles alike, many have pursued an intuition that this concept could provide an analytical lynchpin for understanding continuity and change in contemporary society. 'Globalization' is not the only (or necessarily the best) entry point for such an enquiry, of course, but it has generated a lot of provocative and sometimes highly insightful commentary on present times.

Yet what lies in this word? The present chapter develops a definition in four main steps. The first section below traces the rise of the vocabulary of globalization in academic and lay thinking. The second section identifies several analytical cul-de-sacs with respect to globalization, that is, definitions that generate redundant and in some respects also unhelpful knowledge. The third section sets out a conceptualization of globalization as the spread of transplanetary and, in present times more specifically, supraterritorial social relations. To stress that this analysis does not succumb to globalist exaggerations, the fifth section adds half a dozen key qualifications to this definition, including for example that territorial geography continues to have importance alongside the new supraterritoriality.

Rise of the g-word

Although the term 'globalization' was not coined until the second half of the twentieth century, it has a longer pedigree. In the English language, the noun 'globe' dates from the fifteenth century (derived from the Latin *globus*) and began to denote a spherical representation of the earth several hundred years ago (MWD, 2003; Robertson, 2001: 6254). The adjective 'global' entered

circulation in the late seventeenth century and began to designate 'world scale' in the late nineteenth century, in addition to its earlier meaning of 'spherical' (OED, 1989: VI, 582). The verb 'globalize' appeared in the 1940s, together with the term 'globalism' (Reiser and Davies, 1944: 212, 219). The word 'globalization', as a process, first surfaced in the English language in 1959 and entered a dictionary two years later (Schreiter, 1997: 5; Webster, 1961: 965). Notions of 'globality', as a condition, began to circulate in the 1980s (Robertson, 1983).

The vocabulary of globalization has also spread in other languages over the past several decades. The many examples include the terms *lil 'alam* in Arabic, *quanqiuhua* in Chinese, *mondialisation* in French, *globalizatsia* in Russian, and *globalización* in Spanish. Among the major world languages, only Swahili has not (yet) acquired a globalization concept, and that exception is perhaps largely explained by the widespread use of English in elite circles of the African countries concerned. In minor languages, too, we now find *globalisaatio* in Finnish, *bishwavyapikaran* in Nepalese, *luan bo'ot* in Timorese, and so on.

When new vocabulary gains such wide currency across continents and cultures, can it just be explained away as fad? Or does the novel word highlight a significant change in the world, where new terminology is needed to discuss new conditions? For example, when Jeremy Bentham coined the word 'international' in the 1780s (1789: 326; Suganami, 1978), the concept caught hold because it resonated of a growing trend of his day, namely, the rise of nation-states and cross-border transactions between them. The current proliferation of global talk also seems unlikely to be accidental. The popularity of the terminology arguably reflects a widespread intuition that contemporary social relations have acquired an important new character. The challenge – indeed, the urgent need – is to move beyond the buzzword to a tight concept.

As a deliberately fashioned analytical tool, notions of the global appeared roughly simultaneously and independently in several academic fields around the early 1980s. In Sociology, for example, Roland Robertson began to 'interpret globality' in 1983 (Robertson, 1983). Concurrently, in Business Studies, Theodore Levitt wrote of 'the globalization of markets' (Levitt, 1983). These years also saw some researchers in International Relations shift their focus to 'global interdependence' (Rosenau, 1980). Economists, geographers and others picked up the concept later in the decade.

Since the 1990s globalization has become a major academic growth industry. The problem is now

explored across disciplines, across continents, across theoretical approaches, and across the political spectrum. Countless academics have rushed to claim the cliché of the day. The number of entries for 'globalization' in the United States Library of Congress multiplied from 34 in 1994 to 5,245 in 2005 (Waters, 1995; LoC, 2005). A host of research institutes, degree programmes, course modules, textbooks and websites now focus on the problem. The recent appearance of several anthologies and the preparation of the first *Encyclopedia of Globalization* further attest to the consolidation of a new field of enquiry (cf. Higgott and Payne, 2000; Lechner and Boli, 2000; Held and McGrew, 2003; Robertson and Scholte, 2006). Since 2000 several new professional groups have also emerged: Global Studies Associations in Britain and the USA: and a Globalization Studies Network with worldwide membership. Some theorists have even presented globalization as the focal point for an alternative paradigm of social enquiry (Shaw, 1999; Mittelman, 2002).

Yet ideas of globalization tend to remain as elusive as they are pervasive. We sense that the vocabulary means something – and something significant – but we are far from sure what that something is. Anthony Giddens has observed that 'there are few terms that we use so frequently but which are in fact as poorly conceptualized as globalization' (Giddens, 1996).

Persistent ambiguity and confusion over the term has fed considerable skepticism about 'globaloney', 'global babble' and 'glob-blah-blah'. One critic has pointedly dismissed the idea of lending analytical weight to the notion of globalization as 'folly' (Rosenberg, 2001). True, some of these objectors have had dubious motives, such as vested interests in orthodox theory, or an intellectual laziness that resists rethinking conceptual starting points. However, other doubters have quite rightly demanded clear, precise, explicit, consistent and cogent conceptualization before they will treat globalization as a serious scholarly category.

Redundant concepts of globalization

Much if not most existing analysis of globalization is flawed because it is redundant, failing to generate new understanding that is not attainable with other concepts. Four main definitions have led into this cul-de-sac: globalization as internationalization; globalization as liberalization; globalization as universalization; and globalization as westernization. Arguments that build on these conceptions fail to open insights that are not available through preexistent vocabulary. Commentators who reject the novelty and transformative potential of globalization in

contemporary history have almost invariably defined the term in one or several of these four redundant ways. Moreover, these conceptions can also raise political objections.

Internationalization

When globalization is interpreted as internationalization, the term refers to a growth of transactions and interdependence between countries. From this perspective, a more global world is one where more messages, ideas, merchandise, money, investments, pollutants and people cross borders between national-state-territorial units. For certain authors, like Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, globalization is an especially intense form of internationalization, so that the global is a particular subset of the international (1999: 7-13). Many other analysts are less discriminating and simply regard the words 'global' and 'international' as synonyms to be used interchangeably.

Most attempts to quantify globalization have conceived of the process as internationalization. Thus, for example, Dani Rodrik has measured globalization in terms of the current account as a proportion of GDP (Rodrik, 2001). Similarly, the globalization indexes developed by A.T. Kearney consultants and *Foreign Policy* magazine since 2001 and by the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation since 2005 have been largely calculated with reference to amounts of cross-border activities between countries. That is, the scores mainly relate to foreign direct investment, international travel, membership in international organizations, international telephone traffic, etc. Moreover, the calculation measures and compares the indicators on a territorial basis, so that one country is said to be more, or less, globalized than another (Kearney/FP, 2001; CSGR, 2005).

Ideas of globalization-as-internationalization are attractive insofar as they entail a minimum of intellectual and political adjustments. Global relations of this kind can be examined on the same ontological and methodological grounds as international relations. Global Economics can be the same sort of enquiry as International Economics. The study of Global Politics need not differ substantially from traditional International Politics, global culture is equivalent to international culture, and so on. Globalization-as-internationalization gives the comforting message that the new can be wholly understood in terms of the familiar.

Indeed, most accounts of globalization-as-internationalization stress that contemporary trends are replaying earlier historical scenarios. In particular, these analyses frequently note that, in

proportional terms, levels of cross-border trade, direct investment and permanent migration were as great or greater in the late nineteenth century as they were a hundred years later (Hirst and Thompson, 1999; O'Rourke and Williamson, 1999). The suggestion is that globalization (read international interdependence) is a feature of the modern states-system and world economy that ebbs and flows over time. So today's social researchers can relax and carry on enquiries as previous generations have done.

Yet these very claims of familiarity and historical repetition constitute strong grounds for rejecting the definition of globalization-as-internationalization. If globality is nothing other than internationality – except perhaps larger amounts of it – then why bother with new vocabulary? No one needed a concept of globalization to make sense of earlier experiences of greater international interaction and interdependence, and this notion is similarly redundant today.

Ideas of globalization-as-internationalization can also be politically objectionable. They readily imply that world social relations are – and can only be – organized in terms of country units, state governments and national communities. As such, the vocabulary of internationality tends to ignore, marginalize and silence other modes of organization, governance and identity that exist and are highly valued by, for example, indigenous peoples, regionalists and various kinds of cosmopolitans.

Liberalization

A second common analytical dead-end in discussions of globalization has equated the notion with liberalization. In this case, globalization denotes a process of removing officially imposed restrictions on movements of resources between countries in order to form an 'open' and 'borderless' world economy. On this understanding, globalization occurs as authorities reduce or abolish regulatory measures like trade barriers, foreign-exchange restrictions, capital controls, and visa requirements.

Using this definition, the study of globalization is a debate about contemporary so-called 'neoliberal' macroeconomic policies. On one side of this argument, many academics, business executives and policymakers have supported neoliberal prescriptions that worldwide liberalization, privatization, deregulation and fiscal restraint would in time bring prosperity, freedom, peace and democracy for all. On the other side, critics in the so-called 'anti-globalization' movement have

opposed neoliberal policies, contending that a *laissez-faire* world economy produces greater poverty, inequality, social conflict, cultural destruction, ecological damage and democratic deficits.

To be sure, large-scale globalization and widespread economic liberalization have frequently transpired concurrently in the past quarter-century. For example, average tariff rates for non-agricultural products have fallen to record low levels. Moreover, this wave of neoliberalism has often played a significant (albeit not necessary) facilitating role in respect of contemporary globalization. However, it is quite something else to conflate the two concepts, so that globalization and liberalization become the same thing. Moreover, such an equation can carry the dubious – and potentially harmful – political implication that neoliberalism is the only available policy framework for a more global world.

Indeed, on cross-examination most 'anti-globalization' protesters are seen to reject *neoliberal* globalization rather than globalization per se. True, some of these critics have adopted a rejectionist, mercantilist position that advocates 'de-globalization' to a world of autarkic regional, national or local economies. However, most opponents of neoliberalism have sought different approaches to globalization – or 'alter-globalizations' – that might better advance human security, social justice and democracy. Many in mainstream circles, too, have recently suggested that globalization can be rescued with social, environmental and human rights safeguards. They have thereby also acknowledged that neoliberal policies are not intrinsic to globalization.

In any case, the language of globalization is unnecessary to rehearse arguments for and against *laissez-faire* economics. People have debated theories and practices of 'free' markets for several centuries without invoking talk of globalization. For example, no one needed the concept of globalization when the international economy experienced substantial liberalization in the third quarter of the nineteenth century (Marrison, 1998). Likewise, globalization-as-liberalization opens no new insight today.

Universalization

A third cul-de-sac appears in analyses of globalization when the notion is conceived as universalization. In this case, globalization is taken to describe a process of dispersing various objects and experiences to people at all inhabited parts of the earth. On these lines, 'global' means

'worldwide' and 'everywhere'. Hence there is a 'globalization' of the Gregorian calendar, tobacco, business suits, curry dinners, bungalows, Barbie dolls, shotguns, and so on. Frequently globalization-as-universalization is assumed to entail homogenization with worldwide cultural, economic, legal and political convergence. For example, some economists have assessed globalization in terms of the degree to which prices for particular goods and services become the same across countries (Bradford and Lawrence, 2004).

Yet this third type of conception, too, opens no new and distinctive insight. To be sure, some striking worldwide diffusion has transpired in contemporary history. Moreover, substantial cultural destruction in recent times has appeared to lend credence to the homogenization thesis (although, as is elaborated later in this chapter, the dynamics of globalization are actually more complex). However, universalization is an age-old feature of world history. Indeed, Clive Gamble has written of 'our global prehistory', arguing that the transcontinental spread of the human species – begun a million years ago – constitutes the initial instance of globalization (1994: ix, 8-9). Various aptly named 'world religions' have extended across large expanses of the earth for centuries, and several of these faiths have held explicit universalistic pretensions. Transoceanic trade has distributed various goods over long distances on multiple occasions during the past millennium. No concept of globalization was devised to describe universalization in earlier times, and there is no need to create new vocabulary to analyze this old phenomenon now either.

Moreover, inasmuch as this approach carries misguided assumptions of globalization-as-homogenization, it can have unhappy political consequences. Cultural protectionists can be led to oppose globalization per se, when they are in fact only against one of its possible results. Indeed, globalization can when handled in certain ways promote cultural diversity, revival and innovation.

Westernization

A fourth common conception of globalization has defined it as westernization. As such, globalization is regarded as a particular type of universalization, one in which social structures of modernity (capitalism, industrialism, rationalism, urbanism, etc.) are spread across all of humanity, in the process destroying pre-existent cultures and local self-determination. Globalization understood in this way is often interpreted as colonization, Americanization and (in the vocabulary of the Iranian intellectual, Ale Ahmad) 'westoxification'. For these critics, talk of globalization is a hegemonic discourse, an ideology of supposed progress that masks far-reaching

destruction and subordination (Petras and Veltmeyer, 2001).

To be sure, a cogent case can be made that current large-scale globalization has resulted mainly from forces of modernity like rationalist knowledge, capitalist production, technologies of automation, and nation-states (Giddens, 1990). At the same time, early global consciousness arguably facilitated the onset of modernity, too (Robertson, 1992: 170). In turn, contemporary globalization has often inserted patterns of modern, western social relations more widely and deeply across the planet. Sometimes this westernization has involved violent impositions that could indeed warrant descriptions as imperialism. Moreover, it is true that governance institutions, firms, academics and civil society associations in Western Europe and North America have ranked among the most enthusiastic promoters of contemporary globalization.

Yet it is one thing to assert that globalization and westernization have had interconnections and quite another to equate the two developments. After all, modernity and western civilization have appeared in many other guises besides contemporary globalization. Moreover – and it is politically important to acknowledge this – globalization could in principle take non-western directions: e.g. Buddhist globalization, Confucian globalization, Islamic globalization, or possible future post-modern globalizations. Also, it is by no means clear that globalization is intrinsically imperialist, given that there are emancipatory global social movements as well as exploitative global processes.

In any case, westernization, modernization and colonization have a much longer history than contemporary globalization. Perhaps currently prevailing forms of globality could be analyzed as a particular aspect, phase and type of modernity. On this reading, a definition of globalization would need to specify what makes *global* modernity distinctive. Yet in this approach, too, westernization and globalization are not coterminous.

In sum, then, much talk of globalization has been analytically redundant. The four definitions outlined above between them cover most current academic, corporate, journalistic, official and popular discussions of things global. Critics of 'globaloney' are right to assail the historical illiteracy that marks most claims of novelty associated with these conceptions of globalization.

Of course, this is not to suggest that debates about international interdependence, neoliberalism, universalism-versus-cultural diversity, modernity, and imperialism are unimportant. Indeed, a

well-fashioned concept of globalization could shed significant light on these problems. However, it is not helpful to define globalization as – to treat it as equivalent to – internationalization, liberalization, universalization or westernization. Not only do we thereby merely rehash old knowledge, but we also lose a major opportunity to grasp – and act upon – certain key circumstances of our times.

A way forward

Fortunately, the four definitions critiqued above do not exhaust the possible definitions of globalization. Important new insight into historically relatively new conditions is available from a fifth conception. This approach identifies globalization as the spread of transplanetary – and in recent times also more particularly supraterritorial – connections between people. From this perspective, globalization involves reductions in barriers to transworld social contacts. People become more able – physically, legally, linguistically, culturally, and psychologically – to engage with each other wherever on earth they might be.

In this usage, globalization refers to a shift in the nature of social space. This conception contrasts with the other four notions of globalization discussed above, all of which presume (usually implicitly rather than explicitly) a continuity in the underlying character of social geography. To clarify this crucial point, the following pages first note the general importance of space in social relations and then elaborate on the features of transplanetary and, more specifically, supraterritorial links between persons. The far-reaching methodological implications of this understanding of globalization are also noted, although the final section of the chapter highlights several major qualifications to this definition.

To clarify the vocabulary, in the approach adopted here, the words 'global', 'transplanetary' and 'transworld' are treated as synonyms. They are therefore used interchangeably in the rest of this chapter. References to 'supraterritoriality' are made whenever that particular quality of globality comes into play.

Space

The term globality resonates of spatiality. It says something about the *arena* and the *place* of human action and experience: the *where* of social life. In particular, globality identifies the planet

– the earth as a whole – as a field of social relations in its own right. Talk of the global indicates that people may interact not only in local, provincial, country and macro-regional realms, but also in transplanetary spaces where the earth is a single place.

Why highlight issues of space? Most social analysis takes the spatial aspect as an unexplored given. Yet geography is a defining feature of social life (cf. Lefebvre, 1974; Brenner *et al*., 2003). Relations between people always occur somewhere: in a place, a location, a domain, a site. No description of a social circumstance is complete without a spatial component.

Moreover, no social explanation is complete without a geographical dimension either. Space matters. To take one ready example, geographical differences mean that desert nomads and urban dwellers lead very diverse lives. Space is a core feature – as both cause and effect – of social life. On the one hand, the geographical context shapes the ways that people formulate knowledge, relate to nature, undertake production, experience time, organize governance, construct identities, and form collectivities. Concurrently, culture, ecology, economics, history, politics and psychology also shape the spatial contours of social relations.

Given these dense interconnections, a change of spatial structure affects society as a whole. A reconfiguration of social geography is intimately interlinked with shifts in patterns of production, governance, ecology, identity, and knowledge. So a transformation of social space – like large-scale globalization – is enveloped in larger dynamics of social change.

Globality: transplanetary relations and supraterritoriality

Globality in the conception adopted here has two qualities. The more general feature, transplanetary connectivity, has figured in human history for many centuries. The more specific characteristic, supraterritoriality, is relatively new to contemporary history. Inasmuch as the recent rise of supraterritoriality marks a striking break from the territorialist geography that came before, this trend potentially has major implications for wider social transformation.

Globality in the broader sense of transplanetary ('across the planet') relations refers to social links between people located at points anywhere on earth. The global field is in these cases a social space in its own right. The globe, planet earth, is not simply a collection of smaller geographical units like regions, countries and localities. It is also itself a distinct arena of social life. We can

therefore distinguish between 'international relations' (as exchanges between countries) and 'global relations' (as exchanges within a planetary realm).

Of course, this more general kind of globality – transplanetary connections between people – is by no means new to the past few decades. Long-distance and intercontinental domains have had age-old importance in human history. On the other hand, contemporary transplanetary links are denser than those of any previous epoch. More people, more often, and more intensely engage with the planetary arena as a single social place. Volumes of transworld associations, communications, diseases, finance, investment, travel and trade have never been as great (for detailed indicators see Scholte, 2005: ch 3).

However, the distinctiveness of recent globalization involves more than the quantity, frequency, scope and intensity of transplanetary social links. Qualitatively, too, much of today's global connectivity is different. Unlike earlier times, contemporary globalization has been marked by a large-scale spread of supraterritoriality.

As the word suggests, 'supraterritorial' relations are social connections that substantially transcend territorial geography. They are relatively delinked from territory, that is, spatial domains that are mapped on the land surface of the earth, plus any adjoining waters and air spheres. Territorial space is plotted on the three axes of longitude, latitude and altitude. In territorial geography, place refers to locations situated on this three-dimensional grid; distance refers to the extent of territory separating territorial places; and border refers to a territorial delimitation of sections of the earth's surface.

Yet territorial locations, territorial distances and territorial borders do not define the whole geography of today's transplanetary flows. These global connections often also have qualities of *transworld simultaneity* (that is, they extend anywhere across the planet at the same time) and *transworld instantaneity* (that is, they move anywhere on the planet in no time). Thus, for example, on average 3,000 cups of Nescafé are reputedly drunk around the planet every second (Nescafé, 2003), and telephone links permit immediate communication across the ocean as readily as across the street. Global relations with supraterritorial features are not adequately mapped on a territorial grid.

Supraterritorial forms of globality are evident in countless facets of contemporary life. For

instance, jet airplanes transport passengers and cargo across any distance on the planet within twenty-four hours. Telecommunications networks effect instantaneous links between points all over the earth, so that a call centre or data processing bureau for customers in North America may be located twelve time zones away in India. The global mass media spread messages simultaneously to transworld audiences. The US dollar and the euro are examples of money that has instantaneous transplanetary circulation. In global finance, various types of savings and investment instruments (e.g. offshore bank deposits and eurobonds) flow instantaneously in transworld domains. Ecologically, developments such as climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, certain epidemics, and losses of biological diversity unfold simultaneously on a global scale. Ideationally, many people have a supraterritorial concept of place, for instance, when watching televised moon landings and global sports events simultaneously with hundreds of millions of other people scattered across the planet. Global human rights campaigns do not measure their support for a cause as a function of the territorial distance and territorial borders that lie between advocates and victims.

With these and many more supraterritorial phenomena, current globalization has constituted more than an extension of the compression of time relative to territorial space that has unfolded over a number of past centuries. In this long-term trend, developments in transportation technology like motor ships, railways and early aircraft progressively reduced the time needed to cover a given distance over the earth's surface. Thus, while Marco Polo took years to complete his journey across Eurasia in the thirteenth century, by 1850 a sea voyage from South East Asia to North West Europe could be completed in 59 days (PTT, 1951: 11). In the twentieth century, motorized ships and land vehicles took progressively less time again to link territorial locations. Nevertheless, such transport still required substantial time spans to cross long distances and moreover still faced substantial controls at territorial frontiers.

Whereas this older trend towards a shrinking world occurred *within* territorial geography, the newer spread of transworld simultaneity and instantaneity takes social relations substantially *beyond* territorial space. In cases of supraterritoriality, place is not territorially fixed, territorial distance is covered in no time, and territorial boundaries present no particular impediment. The difference between territorial time-space compression and the rise of supraterritoriality is qualitative and entails a deeper structural change of geography.

A number of social researchers across a range of academic disciplines have discerned this

reconfiguration of space, albeit without invoking the term 'supraterritoriality' to describe the shift. Already half a century ago, for example, the philosopher Martin Heidegger proclaimed the advent of 'distancelessness' and an 'abolition of every possibility of remoteness' (1950: 165-6). Forty years later the geographer David Harvey discussed 'processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves' (1989: 240). The sociologist Manuel Castells has distinguished a 'network society', in which a new 'space of flows' exists alongside the old 'space of places' (1989: 348). The anthropologist Marc Augé has described an instantaneity that puts 'any person into relation with the entire world' (1994: 95 - check). In the field of International Relations, John Ruggie has written of a 'nonterritorial region' in the contemporary world (1993: 172).

Might such a geographical transformation in the longer term prove to be as epochal as the shift to territorialism was at an earlier historical juncture? After all, social relations have not always and everywhere operated with a macro spatial framework that is overridingly territorial. For instance, cultures with a metaphysical cosmology have assigned only secondary if any importance to territorial referents. In fact, a territorial grid to locate points on a map was not introduced anywhere until the second century AD, by Zhang Heng in China (Douglas, 1996: 22). Medieval people in Europe did not have a notion of territory defined by three-dimensional geometry applied to the earth's surface (Zumthor, 1993; Hanawat and Kobialka, 2000). Images of the world showing the continents in anything like the territorial shapes that are commonly recognized today were not drawn before the late fifteenth century. It took a further two hundred years before the first maps depicting country units appeared (Campbell, 1987; Whitfield, 1994). Not until the high tide of colonialism at the end of the nineteenth century did a territorial logic dominate the construction of macro social spaces across the earth.

From then until the third quarter of the twentieth century, social spaces of a macro kind (that is, as opposed to directly perceived micro social spaces like built environments) nearly always took a territorial form. Indeed, one could say that a structure of territorial*ism* governed social geography. In a territorialist situation, people identify their location in the world primarily in relation to territorial position. (In most cases the territorial reference points are fixed, though for nomadic groups the spots may shift.) Moreover, in territorialist social relations the length of territorial distances between places and the presence or absence of territorial (especially state) borders between places heavily influences the frequency and significance of contacts that people at different territorial sites have with each other.

However, like any social structure, territorialism as the prevailing mode of geography was specific to a particular historical and cultural context. True, many people today still use the terms 'geography' and 'territory' interchangeably, as if to exclude the possibility that social space could have other than territorial forms. Yet world geography today is in an important respect not like that of the period to the mid-twentieth century. Following several decades of proliferating and expanding supraterritorial connections, territoriality has lost its monopoly hold. Territorial domains remain very important, but they no longer define the entire macro spatial framework.

Most of the rise of supraterritoriality is recent. As with any development, longer-term antecedents can of course be found. However, supraterritorial connectivity has reached by far its greatest extents during the past half-century. Earlier periods did not know jet travel, intercontinental missiles, transworld migrants with transborder remittances, satellite communications, facsimiles, the Internet, instant transplanetary television broadcasts, intercontinental production chains, transworld retailers, global credit cards, a continuous diet of global sports tournaments, or large-scale transplanetary anthropogenic ecological changes. Contemporary history is supraterritorial to degrees well beyond anything previously known.

True, enthusiasm at discovering something new – a significant reconfiguration of social geography – must not prompt overstatements of its extent. Globalization in the more specific sense of the spread of supraterritoriality has been less extensive than globalization in the more general sense of the growth of transplanetary connections. The supraterritorial aspects of contemporary globalization have far-reaching transformative potentials, but they constitute only part of the larger trend, and assessments of currently unfolding social change need to be correspondingly tempered.

Global, world, international and transnational

Further clarification of the idea of globality that is suggested here may be obtained by comparing the term with cognate concepts such as 'world', 'international' and 'transnational' links. All of these words put the spotlight on social relations beyond society conceived on nation/state/country lines. However, the four notions imply different emphases and should not be conflated.

At first glance, 'world' might seem synonymous with 'global', since in contemporary modern society 'the world' is generally conceived as planet earth. Indeed, the present analysis invokes 'transworld' as a synonym for 'transplanetary'. However, people in other eras and cultures have

identified their 'world' in non-global ways. For example, the ancient Chinese mapped their 'world' in terms of a Middle Kingdom surrounded by peripheries of barbarians. Other ancient civilizations unfolded in a Mediterranean 'world'. Medieval Europeans conceived of the 'world' in terms of relations between humanity, nature and God. Hence 'world' refers to the spatial totality that prevails in a given context. Globality (in the sense of connectivity across the planetary realm) has featured in some social 'worlds' throughout history, but far from all.

Moreover, the contemporary world has multiple spatial dimensions in addition to the global. World social relations today have regional, country, local, household and other geographical aspects alongside the transplanetary facets. Thus 'world' is the social-geographical whole, while 'global' is only one of its spatial qualities.

The distinction between 'global' and 'international' has been stressed already, but it bears reiteration. 'International' exhanges occur between country units, while 'global' transactions occur within a planetary unit. Whereas international relations are *inter*-territorial relations, global relations are *trans*- and sometimes *supra*-territorial relations. Thus global economics is different from international economics, global politics is different from international politics, and so on.

Finally, a number of researchers have since the 1970s adopted a discourse of 'transnational' relations to analyze social interchange beyond the state and national society (Merle 1974; Keohane and Nye, 1977). This conception has the merit of highlighting non-governmental relations between countries and non-national forms of social bonds (e.g. transnational religious and class solidarities). However, ideas of transnationalism offer less when it comes to elaborating a more specific conception of the character of these non-statist and non-nationalist circumstances. In contrast, notions of global relations positively identify the transplanetary and supraterritorial qualities of various social relations.

Another objection to the vocabulary of trans*nationality* is that it still takes the nation-state-country as its reference point and to that extent retains traces of methodological nationalism and statism. Indeed, transnational relations are usually conceived as transactions across state borders. On the other hand, ideas of globality avoid domestic/foreign, internal/external dichotomies and thereby foster a clear and important methodological reorientation.

Methodological implications

If contemporary social geography is no longer territorialist in character, then traditional habits of social research need to be adjusted. Methodological territorialism has exercised a pervasive and deep hold on the conventions of social enquiry. The spread of supraterritoriality requires a major shift of approach.

Methodological territorialism refers to the practice of understanding and investigating social relations through the lens of territorial geography. Territorialist method means formulating concepts, asking questions, constructing hypotheses, gathering and interpreting evidence, and drawing conclusions in a spatial framework that is wholly territorial. These intellectual habits are so engrained that most social researchers reproduce them more or less unconsciously.

Methodological territorialism lies at the heart of currently prevailing commonsense notions of geography, economy, governance, history, literature, culture and society. Thus the vast majority of social and political geographers have conceived of the world in terms of bordered territorial (especially country) units. Likewise, macroeconomists have normally studied production, exchange and consumption in relation to national (read territorial) and international (read inter-territorial) realms. Students of politics have conventionally regarded governance as a territorial question, that is, as a matter of local and country government, with the latter sometimes meeting in 'international' (again, code for inter-territorial) organizations. Similarly, mainstream historians have examined continuity and change over time in respect of territorial contexts such as localities and countries. Literature has generally been classed in terms of national-territorial genres: English literature, Indonesian literature, etc. For their part, anthropologists have almost invariably conceived of culture and community with reference to territorial units, in the sense of local and national peoples. Meanwhile territorialist premises have led sociologists usually to assume that society by definition takes a territorial (usually national) form: hence Albanian society, Bolivian society, Chinese society, etc.

Like any analytical device, methodological territorialism involves simplification. Actual social practice has always been more complicated. Nevertheless, this assumption offered a broadly viable intellectual shortcut for earlier generations of scholars. Methodological territorialism reflected the social conditions of a particular epoch when bordered territorial units, separated by territorial distance, formed far and away the overriding framework for macro social geography.

However, territorialist analysis is not a timeless or universally applicable method. The emergence of the states-system, the growth of mercantile and industrial capitalism, and the rise of national identities all understandably encouraged researchers of earlier times to adopt methodologically territorialist perspectives. Yet today large-scale globalization – including the substantial spread of supraterritoriality – should stimulate a reconstruction of methodology on alternative, nonterritorialist premises.

This call for different intellectual foundations no doubt provokes resistance in some quarters. It is difficult and even painful to change taken-for-granted knowledge, to reassess a cornerstone of understanding of social relations, to endure the disruption and confusion that comes in the transition between abandoning one set of first principles and consolidating another. Moreover, a post-territorialist methodology has political implications that vested interests could oppose. For example, post-territorialist social knowledge would logically undercut the primacy of both state-centric research and state-centric governance.

Yet it can arguably be quite dangerous to give methodological territorialism further lease on life in the contemporary more global world. For example, territorialist assumptions are obviously unsuitable to understand – and address – transplanetary ecological issues. Likewise, if significant parts of capitalism now operate with relative autonomy from territorial space, then old intellectual frameworks cannot adequately address the issues of distributive justice that invariably accompany processes of surplus accumulation. Similarly, a political theory that offers today's world only territorial constructions of community, citizenship and democracy is obsolete. Hence the stakes in the call for post-territorialist enquiry are much more than academic alone.

Manifestations of globality

The character and scale of globalization as the spread of transplanetary connections – including many (mainly recent) links that have a supraterritorial quality – may be further clarified with a survey of transworld activities. Such a review indicates that globality can touch pretty well all aspects of social life. That said, as the final section of this chapter emphasizes, it does not follow that global relations have become anything close to the only feature of social geography, either today or in the foreseeable future.

A great deal of globality is manifested through communications, that is, exchanges of ideas,

information, images, signals, sounds and text. Transworld communication can be effected by means of the book trade, postal services, telegraph, telephone, facsimile, telex, text messaging, videoconference, computer networks, newspaper, magazine, radio, television, video and film. Supraterritoriality comes into global communications when, for example, certain publications (like Harry Potter books) and recordings (like Eminem CDs) are released simultaneously across the planet. In addition, satellite broadcasts and transoceanic cables enable communication to be effected instantaneously between any points on earth, irrespective of the territorial distances and territorial borders that lie between them. Toll-free 1-800 numbers can link up to a call centre on any continent.

The Internet is supraterritorial communication par excellence, instantly relaying a full range of visual and auditory signals anywhere on the planet that terminals exist to send and receive them. Much of today's globality is an 'e-world' of e-commerce, e-friendship, e-government, and e-mail. Indeed, in September 2001 the Internet allowed doctors in New York, USA to perform transoceanic robot-assisted telesurgery on a patient in Strasbourg, France (Pogue, 2001). The notion that the Internet involves new kinds of social geography is conveyed by the term 'cyberspace'.

Other globality occurs in the transplanetary movement of people. Global travel is undertaken by many migrant labourers, professionals, pilgrims, refugees, tourists, adventurers, adopted children and more. Relevant modes of transworld transport include caravans, ships, trains, motor vehicles and aeroplanes. Jet aircraft in particular have introduced something approaching a supraterritorial quality into contemporary global travel, as passengers can be flown between any two locations on the earth within a day. Transworld travel enables the occurrence of large global convocations like the *haj*, professional congresses, tourist resorts, trade fairs, and United Nations (UN) summits. Transplanetary movements of domestics and sex workers have brought globalization into many a household and brothel (Ehrenreich and Hochschild, 2002). Some business travellers have the globe as their office, working from hotels and airport lounges as much as a fixed home base. Conflicts in Afghanistan, Bosnia and Somalia have generated global waves of refugees and asylum seekers. Although state border controls restrict global travel in many cases, millions upon millions of people each year move about the planet as a single place.

Even when people are not travelling, they may be globally connected through organizations, that is, associations that coordinate the activities of individuals spread across the planet. Many of these

organizations pursue mainly commercial purposes as global companies (often imprecisely named 'multinational corporations'). Examples include Inter Press Service, Mitsubishi, Nokia, Novartis, Standard Chartered, and Royal Dutch/Shell. In addition, many businesses have developed various types of transworld coalitions, often termed 'strategic alliances' (for instance, joint ventures, subcontracting arrangements, franchises, and so on). Other transworld organizations have mainly regulatory functions and can suitably be called global governance institutions. For instance, activities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) extend across the planet. Some regionally, nationally and locally based governance bodies like the European Union (EU), the United States government and the Hong Kong municipal authorities also have significant global reach. Along with commercial and governance agencies, many civil society associations also have a global organization. They include faith-based groups like the World Fellowship of Buddhists, labour movements like the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), NGOs like Amnesty International, peasant coalitions like Vía Campesina, and philanthropic bodies like the Ford Foundation. In addition, many localized civil society associations organize globally through coalitions and other networks. For example, the global Oxfam network encompassed nearly 3,000 local associations in some 80 countries in 2000 (Hajnal, 2002: 57, 60). Still other global organizations involve clandestine operations like transworld criminal networks (Berdal and Serrano, 2002).

Some global companies also undertake transworld production. In so-called 'global factories' (Fuentes and Ehrenreich, 1983) or 'global commodity chains' (Gereffi, 1994), different stages of the production of a commodity are sited at several (perhaps very widely scattered) locations on the planet. Thus, in principle, the research centre, design unit, procurement office, fabrication plant, finishing point, assembly line, quality control operation, data processing office, advertising bureau and after-sales service could each be situated in different provinces, countries and regions across the planet. Global production involves intra-firm trade within a transworld company as well as, if not more than, inter-national trade between countries. Through so-called 'global sourcing', a producer draws the required inputs from a transplanetary field, rather than being restricted to a particular country or region. Differences in local costs of labour, raw materials, regulation and taxation often figure more importantly in these business calculations than the costs of transport across distance and borders between the various sites in the global production chain. This type of manufacture has developed especially in respect of textiles, clothing, motor vehicles, leather goods, sports articles, toys, optical products, consumer electronics, semiconductors, aircraft and

construction equipment. A global production process has supraterritorial qualities inasmuch as it occurs simultaneously and with tight coordination across a transworld space.

Globality can be manifested in consumption as well as production. Many commodities are distributed and sold through global markets, sometimes through a tightly coordinated supraterritorial business strategy. In this way consumers dispersed across the planet purchase the same good or service, often under a single brand name like Nike, Pepsi-Cola or Toyota. Already in the 1980s, Howard Perlmutter of the Wharton Business School identified 136 industries where a global marketing strategy had supposedly become vital to commercial success (Main, 1989: 55). The vast range of global products has come to include many raw materials, packaged foods, bottled beverages, cigarettes, designer clothes, household articles and appliances, pharmaceuticals, music recordings, audio-visual productions, printed publications, online information services, financial instruments, office equipment, armaments, transport vehicles, travel services and more. Citicorp has proclaimed itself to be 'your global bank', and Peter Stuyvesant has marketed itself as 'the global cigarette'. Transworld products have come to figure in the everyday lives of much of humanity, whether through actual purchases or through unfulfilled desires evoked by global advertising.

Global communications, global travel, global production and global markets have all promoted, and been facilitated by, global money. That is, some units of account, means of payment, stores of value and mediums of exchange have transplanetary circulation. For example, the 'US' dollar, the 'Japanese' yen, the 'British' pound and other major denominations are much more than national currencies. As supraterritorial monies, they are used anywhere on earth at the same time and move (electronically and via air transport) anywhere on earth in effectively no time. In addition, the Special Drawing Right (SDR) and the euro have emerged through the IMF and the EU, respectively, as suprastate monies with transworld circulation. Many bankcards can extract cash in local currency from the 900,000 automated teller machines (ATMs) in over 120 countries that are today connected to supraterritorial networks like Maestro and Cirrus (MasterCard, 2003). Several credit cards like Visa, MasterCard and American Express can be used for payments at countless establishments in almost every country across the planet. Although not yet in wide usage, digital money can be stored can be stored on certain smart cards (so-called electronic purses) in multiple currencies at once, creating something of a global wallet.

Globality also appears in many areas of finance. For instance, most foreign exchange transactions

today take place through a round-the-globe, round-the-clock market that connects the dealing rooms of New York, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, Hong Kong, Zürich, Frankfurt and London. In global banking, depositors place their savings in a global currency and/or at a global bank and/or at a global branch location such as a so-called 'offshore' financial centre. These practices contrast with territorial banking, in which clients deposit their savings in their national currency at a local or national bank within their country of residence. With transworld payments, migrant workers use global banking networks to remit some of their earnings to relations at another corner of the planet. Meanwhile global bank loans occur when a lender (or syndicate of lenders, perhaps spread across several countries) provides credit in a global currency. Thus, for example, a group of banks based in Austria, the Netherlands and the UK might issue a loan in US dollars to a borrower in the Dominican Republic. The level of interest on such a credit is generally not the prevailing national percentage, but a function of a supraterritorial benchmark like the London InterBank Offered Rate (LIBOR). At the same time, micro-credit schemes in local communities can be linked to global programmes. Similarly, global bonds (often called 'eurobonds') involve a transworld currency as well as borrowers, investors, a syndicate of managers, and securities exchanges that are spread across multiple countries. Global financial transactions also occur on similar lines in respect of medium-term notes and short-term credit instruments like treasury bills and commercial paper. In equity markets, meanwhile, global shares are company stocks that are: (a) listed on several securities exchanges across the earth; and/or (b) held by investors spread across the planet. For their part derivatives have a global character when, for example, the same futures contract is traded simultaneously on the Chicago, Singapore and London markets, as well as through electronic links between them. Insurance policies, too, can have global coverage in a global currency and/or are handled by global companies in global financial centres. In addition, many private and institutional investors maintain global portfolios. That is, they spread their funds across banks, stocks, bonds, money-market tools, derivatives contracts and insurance policies from around the globe. Indeed, with supraterritorial dealing, a broker can buy and sell financial instruments anywhere on the planet instantaneously with a telephone call or the click of a mouse. Several major financial markets like the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotation system (Nasdaq) have no fixed territorial meeting place at all. In sum, then, much of today's foreign exchange, banking, securities, derivatives and insurance business occurs with considerable delinkage from territorial space.

Globality is further manifested in some military activities. Contemporary arsenals include a number of global weapons that can range across pretty well any distance over the earth. Examples

include spy satellites, long-range bomber and surveillance aircraft, and unpiloted intercontinental missiles. Global warfare occurs when a campaign of armed combat is pursued from widely spread points across the planet. For instance, although the battlefields lay in Iraq, the 2003 war against Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath regime involved command headquarters in the USA and Qatar, air bases in Europe and Kuwait, troops and arms from several continents, and satellites in outer space. Likewise, the British military had a global presence with troops in over 80 countries as of 2002 (*FT*, 12 July 2002). So-called 'rapid reaction forces' can be deployed anywhere on the planet within hours. UN peacekeeping operations involve multinational armies deployed anywhere on earth. Certain paramilitary groups like Al-Qaida and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) have also operated as transworld networks. The attacks of 11 September 2001 brought home as never before the potential impact of informal global armies using global communications and global finance.

Ecologically, a planetary life-support system has of course operated from the moment that the first organisms appeared on earth. However, some matters of social ecology can also have global qualities. Several major anthropogenic (i.e. human-induced) environmental changes have had a pronounced transworld dimension. For example, the anthropogenic greenhouse effect is allegedly producing planetary climate change, popularly known as 'global warming'. Neither the causes nor the effects of this trend can be territorially specified and restricted. Similarly, stratospheric ozone depletion (and its reversal) is effectively a distanceless and borderless process. With respect to the biosphere, the contemporary global world is experiencing major reductions in the diversity of ecosystems, in the number of species of life, and in the variety of genes that circulate within individual species. In contemporary genetic engineering, recombinant DNA techniques allow a gene to be taken from one organism anywhere on earth and put in second at any other location. Another headline global ecological issue asks how many people the planet can support at one time. Further environmental conditions with global aspects include radioactive fallout, flows of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide (so-called 'acid rain'), the depletion of tropical moist forests, desertification, changes in sea level, marine pollution, management of ocean fish stocks, big dams, possible future shortages of fresh water and arable soil, and waste disposal in outer space. Although the severity of these various ecological problems can be debated, it is clear that none of them is confined to a particular country or region.

Sometimes closely related with ecological concerns, a number of health matters, too, have global dimensions (WHO, 2001; Pirages, 2006). Since prehistory natural forces of waters and winds

have transported microorganisms across the planet. In addition, people have for many centuries carried a number of communicable diseases across and between continents, including plague, small pox, anthrax, cholera, syphilis, measles, tuberculosis and influenza. Contemporary times have raised the speed and magnitude of global spreads of various human, animal and plant diseases. Examples include HIV/AIDS, SARS, BSE, foot and mouth disease, and gemini viruses. For viruses and bacteria, the planet is one microbial pool in which pathogens don't carry passports. Other questions of human health with clear transplanetary aspects include those related to diet, drug use, occupational conditions, and tobacco consumption. Needless to say, successful strategies to address these issues also require a partly global approach.

Much globality is also found in the area of law. Countless formal rules and regulations have acquired a transworld character. The widely diverse examples include various arms control schemes, criminal laws, environmental agreements, human rights conventions, technical standards, and trade rules. In addition, some law firms have developed transworld networks of offices, while police forces have pursued transplanetary cooperation through the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol). Global suprastate courts include the International Court of Justice (ICJ), ad hoc war crimes tribunals, and the recently established International Criminal Court (ICC). In addition, some national courts hear cases that relate to transworld issues, such as various global intellectual property claims that are brought before US tribunals.

Finally, globality is evident in social relations through global consciousness. In other words, people often think globally. In addition to holding microcosmic conceptions of the social realm as a district or a country, people can also hold macrocosmic notions, where the planet is regarded as a 'global village'. Globally minded people regard the planet as a principal source of their food supplies, their entertainments, their threats and their friends. Some workers like Ghanian traders and Filipina domestics see the whole earth (as opposed to a particular locality or country) as their potential workplace. Transworld consciousness also takes form in certain languages (e.g. English, Esperanto and Spanish), certain icons (e.g. Coca-Cola labels and world heritage sites), certain narratives (e.g. soap operas), certain fashions (e.g. blue jeans), certain rituals (e.g. sending postcards) and other symbols. Awareness of the planet as a single social place is furthermore evident in events like global sports competitions (including global supporters clubs), global exhibitions, global film festivals, global tours by music superstars, global conferences, and global panics. In addition, global consciousness arises when people conceive of their social affiliations in transplanetary, supraterritorial terms, for instance, with transworld solidarities based on class,

gender, generation, profession, race, religion, sexuality and indeed humanity as such. Stories of aliens from outer space seem telling in this regard: the foreign other is conceived not as another nationality from another territory, but as another being from another planet, thereby defining humanity and the earth as one.

The preceding survey of the many instances of globality demonstrates the widespread incidence of transplanetary – including more particularly supraterritorial – circumstances across contemporary social life. Cumulatively, all of this global communication, global travel, global organization, global production, global consumption, global money, global finance, global military, global ecology, global health, global law and global consciousness indicates that contemporary social relations cannot be described without extensive reference to transworld spaces.

Qualifications

The preceding discussion has made a strong case for what globalization *is*, in terms of a change in social space that is both quantitatively and qualitatively significant. However, it is equally important to emphasize what the growth in transplanetary connections and the spread of supraterritoriality do *not* entail. In particular it is crucial to reject the following six non sequiturs: globalism, reification, global/local binaries, cultural homogenization, universality, and political neutrality.

Globalism

First, then, the rise of supraterritoriality in no way means that territorial space has ceased to matter. We should not replace territorialism with a globalist methodology that looks *only* at transplanetary relations and ignores the importance of territorial spaces. We do not live in a 'borderless world' where territory is 'obsolescent' (Ohmae, 1990; Rosecrance, 1995). Although contemporary history has witnessed the end of territorial*ism* (where social space is effectively reducible to territorial grids), we have certainly not seen the end of territorial*ity*. To say that social geography can no longer be understood in terms of territoriality alone is of course not to say that territoriality has become irrelevant.

On the contrary, territorial production, territorial governance mechanisms, territorial ecology and

territorial identities remain highly significant at the start of the twenty-first century, even if they do not monopolize the situation as before. For example, many communications links like airports, roads, railways and shipping lanes remain territorially fixed. Several recent economic studies have suggested that territorial distance remains a strong influence on trade in manufactures as well as – perhaps more surprisingly – financial assets (Portes and Rey, 1999; Aviat and Coeurdacier, 2004). In other words, people are still more likely to do foreign business with countries that are territorially closer. In addition, territorial borders continue to exert strong influences on movements of material goods and people (Helliwell, 1998). It can take months to complete the dozens of official documents required to export legally from India. Meanwhile countless localized products remain bound to particular territorial markets. Largely territorially bound commodities derived from agriculture and mining have persisted at the same time that largely supraterritorial commodities like information and communications have risen to prominence. While US dollars and Visa card payments cross the planet instantly, many other forms of money continue to have restricted circulation within a given territorial domain, and national currencies show no sign of disappearing altogether (Gilbert and Helleiner, 1999). Most people today still hold their bank accounts at a local branch or do no banking at all. Much ecological degradation is linked to specific territorial locations, for instance, of overgrazing, salination, or dumping of toxic wastes. In terms of social affiliations, some observers have suggested that territorially bound identities could even have become more rather than less significant in a world of diminishing territorial barriers (Mlinar, 1992; Harvey, 1993).

So the end of territorialism has not marked the start of globalism. The addition of supraterritorial qualities of geography has not eliminated the territorial aspects (Brenner, 1998, 1999). Indeed, contemporary globalization has been closely connected with certain forms of *re*territorialization like the rise of micro-nationalist politics, urbanization and the growth of globally connected cities, and the proliferation of offshore arrangements.

Perhaps the most striking reterritorialization to accompany recent globalization has been regionalization. Some of this regionalization has occurred within states, in cases like Flanders in Belgium or Siberia in Russia. Other regionalization has had a trans-state character, such as the Basque area across France and Spain or the Kurdish movement across Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey. Still other regionalization has happened between states, in projects like the East African Community and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. And considerable regionalization has had an unofficial character, as in citizen action initiatives like the European Social Forum.

Clearly, social space in today's world is *both* territorial *and* supraterritorial. Indeed, in social practice the two qualities always intersect. Supraterritoriality is only relatively deterritorialized, and contemporary territoriality is only partly supraterritorialized. Territorial relations are no longer purely territorial, and supraterritorial relations are not wholly nonterritorial.

Thus, for example, every Internet user accesses cyberspace from a territorial location. Global products, global finance and global communications always 'touch down' in territorial localities. Supraterritorial military technologies like spy satellites are generally directed at territorial targets. So-called 'global cities' such as London and Tokyo still have a longitude, latitude and altitude. Global ecological changes have territorially specific impacts: for example, rising sea level has different consequences for coastal zones as against uplands.

In short, contemporary society knows no 'pure' globality that exists independently of territorial spaces. The recent accelerated growth of supraterritoriality has brought a relative retreat rather than a complete removal of territoriality. In this sense the term 'deterritorialization' can have misleading connotations and is therefore avoided here. Global relations today substantially rather than wholly transcend territorial space. Although territoriality does not place insurmountable constraints on supraterritoriality, the new flows still have to engage with territorial locations. The present world is globalizing, not totally globalized.

By the same token, however, little if any territoriality today exists independently of supraterritoriality. Most contemporary regional, national, provincial and local conditions coexist with – and are influenced by – global circumstances. Indeed, territoriality is changed by its encounters with supraterritoriality. For example, territorial states act differently in a globalizing world than in a territorialist one. Similarly, territorial identities obtain different dynamics when they are associated with global diasporas (e.g. of Armenians and Sikhs). Territorial environmental issues like local water shortages acquire different significance when they form part of a transworld problem.

In sum, current globalization is not replacing one compact formula (territorialism) with another (globalism). Rather, the rise of supraterritoriality is bringing greater complexity to geography – and by extension to culture, ecology, economics, history, politics and social psychology as well. The relative simplicity of a territorialist-statist-nationalist world is fading.

Reification

The preceding point regarding the interrelation of supraterritorial and territorial spaces points to a second caution, namely, regarding reification. While globality is a discrete concept, it is not a discrete concrete condition. It is helpful, analytically, to distinguish different spheres of social space; however, concretely, the global is not a domain unto itself, separate from the regional, the national, the provincial, the local, and the household. There is no purely global circumstance, divorced from other spaces, just as no household, local, provincial, national or regional domain is sealed off from other geographical arenas.

So social space should not be understood as an assemblage of discrete realms, but as an interrelation of spheres within a whole. Events and developments are not global *or* national *or* local *or* some other scale, but an intersection of global *and* other spatial qualities. The global is a dimension of social geography rather than a space in its own right. It is heuristically helpful to distinguish a global quality of contemporary social space, but we must not turn the global into a 'thing' that is separate from regional, national, local and household 'things'.

For example, a government may be sited at a country 'level', but it is a place where supranational, national and subnational spaces converge. Thus states are involved in transworld law and regional arrangements as well as national regulation and relations with provincial and local authorities. Likewise, firms and other actors in today's globalizing circumstances are meeting points for co-constituting transworld, regional, national, local and household aspects of geography. Hence the vocabulary of interconnected 'scales' is preferable to that of separated 'levels'.

Avoidance of reification is especially important in these early days of global studies. Several centuries of international studies have suffered dearly from a reified distinction between the national and the international, where the 'internal' and 'domestic' was ontologically separated from the 'external' and 'foreign'. In practice, of course, the 'inside' and the 'outside' of countries are deeply intertwined. These old errors of reifying the international must not be carried over into new research of the global.

Global/local binaries

The interrelatedness of dimensions of social space (as opposed to the existence of separate

domains) suggests that it is mistaken – as many have done – to set up oppositions between the global and the local. Such a binary resurrects in new form the misguided domestic/international dichotomy of old. Typically, local/global polarizations have depicted the local as 'here', immediate and intimate, and the global as 'there', distant and isolating. The local is concrete, grounded, authentic, and meaningful, whereas the global is abstract, unconnected, artificial and meaningless. The local purportedly provides security and community, while the global houses danger and violence. The local is innocent, the global manipulative. The local is the arena for autonomy and empowerment, the global the realm of dependence and domination. On such assumptions, some critics have rejected globalization with calls for localization (Hewison, 1999; Hines, 2000).

Yet these binaries do not bear up to closer scrutiny. After all, people can have very immediate and intimate relationships with each other via jet travel, telephone and Internet. In contrast, many next-door neighbors in contemporary cities do not even know each other's names. Supraterritorial communities of people (for example, sharing the same class position, ethnicity, religious faith or sexual orientation) can have far-reaching solidarity, whereas localities can experience deep fear, hatred and intolerance. Indigenous peoples have used transworld networks and laws to promote their self-determination, while many a local elite has exercised arbitrary authoritarian power. Global flows frequently involve ordinary people leading everyday lives (listening to radio and munching brand-name fast food), while various exhibits of local culture are contrived. In short, there is nothing inherently alienating about the global and nothing intrinsically liberating about the local.

Instead, both the local and the global have enabling and disabling potentials. Indeed, as already stressed, the two qualities are inseparable in social practice; so terming one circumstance 'local' and another 'global' is actually arbitrary and confusing. For example, globally mobile companies may follow locally tailored marketing strategies, while locally grounded peasants may be globalized through their televisions and religions. A social condition is not positive or negative according to whether it is local as against global, since the situation is generally both local and global at the same time. It is the particular blend of local and global (and other spatial spheres) that matters, not locality versus globality.

Cultural homogenization

The complexity of multidimensional social space likewise suggests that it is mistaken – as many

observers have done – to link globalization with homogenization. The growth of transplanetary and supraterritorial connectivity does not ipso facto reduce cultural diversity. After all, the global, the regional, the national, the provincial, the local and the household aspects of social space can intertwine in innumerable different combinations. Indeed, by injecting a further dimension into the geographical spectrum – thereby adding to its complexity – globalization could just as well increase cultural pluralism.

True, the contemporary world has experienced considerable cultural destruction. For example, languages have been disappearing at rates as worrying as those for species extinction (Wurm, 1996). Indigenous peoples' heritages have been undercut or erased across the planet. A high tide of consumerism has seemingly imposed cultural levelling across the world, including via a multitude of global agents such as Carrefour, Michael Jackson, Microsoft and Madison Avenue advertisers.

On the other hand, perceptions of cultural homogenization in the context of globalization can be exaggerated. What appears on the surface to be the same transplanetary language can in fact harbour widely varying vocabularies and understandings across different social contexts. So the English of Nairobi markets is not the English of the Scottish Highlands, and the Spanish of East Los Angeles barrios is not the Spanish of Santiago office blocs (Rhedding-Jones, 2002). Likewise, as reception research has shown, different parts of a transworld audience can read hugely different meanings into a Hollywood blockbuster. In this regard it can be questioned how far the diverse viewers actually 'see' the same global film (Tomlinson, 1991). Similarly, global marketers often have to adjust the design and advertisement of transworld products in ways that appeal to diverse cultural contexts. Even an icon of global Americanization like McDonald's varies its menu considerably across the planet in relation to local sensibilities. Globalization is also glocalization (Robertson, 1992: 173-4; Salcedo, 2003).

In any case, decreasing cultural diversity is not intrinsic to globalization as such. On the contrary, transplanetary and supraterritorial relations can host great cultural heterogeneity (cf. Breidenbach and Zukrigl, 1998). Multiple world religions occupy sites on the Internet, and all manner of peoples from ethnic diasporas to sexual minorities have formed transworld associations. Indeed, globalization has offered opportunities to defend cultural diversity, as when indigenous peoples have used UN mechanisms and electronic mass media to promote their particularity (Dowmunt, 1993; Wilmer, 1993). Globality can also foster cultural innovation. To take one specific example,

youth in Frankfurt-am-Main have combined aspects of African-American rap music and hip-hop culture with elements of their North African and Turkish heritages to create novel modes of expression for their hybrid identities in Germany (Bennett, 1999). Some observers take such developments as evidence that contemporary globality is increasingly less westo-centric (Appiah and Gates, 1997: ix; Leclerc, 2000).

In any case, it is clear that globalization can have heterogenizing as well as homogenizing effects. There can be, and are, many globalizations (Berger and Huntington, 2002). The overall balance between cultural divergence and convergence lies not in globality as such, but in contextual circumstances. The social power relations that shape transplanetary connections are particularly important in this regard. Thus, to the extent that cultural imperialism afflicts contemporary history, it is largely a problem of the voracity of western modernity rather than an outcome of globalization per se.

Universality

A further qualification to notions of globalization as increased transworld and supraterritorial connectivity must note that the trend has not touched all of humanity to the same extent. Globality links people *anywhere* on the planet, but it does not follow that it connects people *everywhere*, or to the same degree. To repeat the earlier disclaimer, under the definition suggested here globalization is not universalization. On the contrary, the incidence of contemporary transplanetary connectivity has varied considerably in relation to territorial and social location. Indeed, some people continue to live lives that are relatively untouched by globality.

In terms of territorial position, global networks have generally involved populations of North America, Western Europe and East Asia more than people in other world regions. Variations in the intensity of globality have also occurred among regions within countries. For example, coastal provinces of China have undergone greater globalization than the interior of the country. In the USA, residents of Silicon Valley have been more enveloped in global communications than inhabitants of the Dakotas. Across the world, patterns of contemporary globalization have broadly followed urban-rural lines, with cities and towns generally experiencing more transplanetary connectivity than countrysides.

With regard to social position, wealthy people have on the whole accessed transworld relations

more than the poor. While those with the means rush from their global bank to the airport lounge, hundreds of millions of low-income people alive today have never made a telephone call. With respect to gender, men have generally linked up to the Internet much more than women (UNDP, 1999: 62). Other patterns of uneven entry to, and benefit from, global flows can be discerned in respect of civilization and race.

To be sure, contemporary globality has not been an exclusively Northern, urban, elite, male, western, white preserve. At the territorial margins, for example, transworld links have extended to remote villages in Africa (Piot, 1999; Mendonsa, 2001). At the social margins, the homeless of Rio de Janeiro often request a television even before they demand running water (Mariana, 2002). Yet, although globality may have become pervasive, prevailing cultural frameworks, resource distributions and power relationships have produced a highly uneven spread of transplanetary and supraterritorial relations in today's world.

Political neutrality

The foregoing remarks concerning unequal opportunities to use and shape transworld connections highlight the thoroughly political character of globalization. Human geography is no more politically neutral than any other aspect of social relations like culture or economics. Space always involves politics: processes of acquiring, distributing and exercising social power. A social field is never a level field. Thus transplanetary and supraterritorial connections invariably house power relations and associated power struggles, whether latent or overt. Global links are venues of conflict and cooperation, hierarchy and equality, opportunity and its denial.

Indeed, nothing in globalization is apolitical. Even seemingly tame questions of transplanetary technical harmonization have provoked power struggles. For example, in the nineteenth century the British and French governments competed to have the prime meridian (for the measure of longitudes and universal standard time) pass through their respective capitals, with Greenwich eventually winning out. More recently, different computer operating systems have offered users different degrees of initiative and control (Raymond, 1999). It is illusory to think that anything in globality can be divorced from issues of power – and thus also social justice.

Any analysis of globalization must therefore examine the political aspects involved. On the one hand, these politics involve actors: that is, power relations among individuals, households,

associations, firms and governance organizations. In addition, the politics of globalization involve social structures: that is, power relations between age groups, between civilizations, between classes, between genders, between races, between people holding different sexual orientations, and so on. Like any significant historical trend, the growth of transplanetary and supraterritorial connections empowers some people and disempowers others.

So, as a political process, globalization is about contests between different interests and competing values. The spread of globality is – and cannot but be – normatively laden and politically charged. It is important to determine whose power rises and whose suffers under currently prevailing practices of globalization and to consider whether alternative policies could have better political implications.

Indeed, much of the politics of globalization is about choices. True, powerful forces connected with dominant actors, deep social structures and long-term historical processes have promoted the recent large-scale expansion of transplanetary and supraterritorial connectivity. However, all social actors have opportunities (admittedly unequal) to respond to and mould this trend.

Multiple globalizations are possible. There is nothing inevitable about the scope, speed, direction and consequences of the trend. In particular, as stressed earlier, globalization as a geographical process and neoliberalism as a political project are not the same thing. Alternative paths of globalization might be more desirable than the directions that have prevailed over the past quarter-century. Personal and collective decisions (both active and passive) can make a substantial difference.

These ethical choices and political moves include the way that one defines globalization. As ever, theory and practice are inseparable. Who gets to define globalization, and who benefits (and loses) from the resultant definition? To deal with the challenges of contemporary globality people need a conception that not only provides intellectual clarification, but also helps to make relevant, wise, responsible and empowering decisions about how to engage with globalization. Notions of globality as transplanetary and supraterritorial connectivity can well serve the promotion of human security, social justice and democracy in contemporary history.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that, when defined in a particular geographical fashion, notions of 'globality' and 'globalization' can be valuable additions to the conceptual toolkit for understanding social relations. Yes, much globe-talk of recent years has revealed nothing new. And yes, loose thinking and careless politics has devalued many ideas of 'globalization'. However, these shortcomings do not discredit the concept in every form. After all, widespread sloppy usage of other key ideas – 'class', 'democracy', 'rationality' and 'soul', to name but a few – has not been reason to discard these notions altogether.

On the contrary, a definition of globalization as a respatialization of social life opens up new knowledge and engages key policy challenges of current history in a constructively critical manner. Notions of 'globality' and 'globalization' can capture, as no other vocabulary, the present ongoing large-scale growth of transplanetary – and often also supraterritorial – connectivity. Such an insight offers a highly promising entry point for research and action on contemporary history.

To reiterate, this conception of globalization has a distinctive focus. It is different from ideas of internationalization, liberalization, universalization and westernization. The trans-territorial connections of globality are different from the inter-territorial connections of internationality. The transborder transactions of globality are different from the open-border transactions of liberality. The transplanetary simultaneity and instantaneity of supraterritoriality is different from the worldwideness of universality. The geographical focus of globality is different from the cultural focus of western modernity. Although globalization as defined here has some overlap with, and connections to, internationalization, liberalization, universalization and westernization, it is not equivalent to any of these older concepts and trends.

Of course, the conception of globalization elaborated in this chapter is in no way intended to be the last word about what the term might mean. As stressed earlier, no definition is definitive. The aim is not to issue a final pronouncement, but to offer ever-provisional ideas that provoke further reflection and debate.

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