



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Essentials Readings

Edited by Vandana Pednekar-Magal

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Sneak Preview

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Edited by Vandana Pednekar-Magal



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AT THE END of the 20th century, International Communication Studies began grappling with the rapidly moving landscape of media and communication and the course and intensity of globalization. Intensified cross-border transactions of global finance, contingencies of a deeply global economy involving global business and labor deployment, as well as new political realities triggered by new coalitions, conflict and strife between nations and people are the new determinants of global flows. Making sense of cross-border communication in this rapidly intensifying movement of money, people, information, cultural texts and goods across national borders is a challenge for students of International Communication Studies.

Early scholars of International Communication examined the global communications infrastructure and the asymmetrical media flows. They developed theories about impact of global media content on national cultures seen as perpetuating dependency akin to colonial structures. International Communication research today is rooted in those sensibilities and yet has moved beyond those frames of inquiry. Recent debates study global and regional complexities and consider global media usage of content from new production centers. They consider the multi-directional flows between affluent, technologically advanced nations and culturally diverse, developing nations. Clearly, International Communication Studies has intensified in its scope and scholarship. A wealth of literature exists that has grappled with this multifarious discipline and contributed to our understanding of globalization and communication.

They examine reception of media texts floating across national cultural spaces; and how the readers of these texts situated in unique cultural contexts tend to derive pleasures, identities and meanings in complex and often contradictory ways. They point out other developments such as the rise of active global publics and emergence of a global public sphere on the new media infrastructure.

With this collection I have aimed at bringing together key texts that guide the reader in making sense of this rapidly expanding and shifting terrain of global communication. In their varying modes of explanations, the selections provide an interpretation and criticism of contemporary media communication in its global dimension. I have

selected what I consider critical and engaging texts that will guide the student through this terrain of scholarship. The collection is designed to provide diverse perspectives to enable the reader to get a sense of multiple dimensions of contemporary International Communication as well as to become critically aware of recent debates and issues in the International Communication theory.

Making Sense of Globalization

Part One

THE TWO SELECTIONS in this section explain the dynamics of globalization. The first chapter excerpted from Ulrich Beck's book addresses the question: What is globalization? Beck addresses this by defining "dimensions" of globalization: ecological, economic, work organization, culture and civil society. Earlier models of society were centered on the nation-state so that all social practices are seen as contained in a nation. Beck argues that globalization and globality have shaken this conceptualization. Beck sees contemporary social and political practices unfolding in transnational global spaces where communities and identities are formed and post-international politics are played out. Beck describes the world as globalized and polycentric where organizations, problems, events, communities and structures are increasingly transnational in nature.

Appadurai's essay explains globalization in terms of flows: movement of money, ideas, people—refugees, tourists, immigrants, and media images that intersect in communities in different and contradictory ways. While these global flows homogenize the world to an extent, they are also the source of cultural heterogenization, as forces from new societies become indigenized. Ultimately, he refutes the utility of center-periphery relations as a useful framework and sees flows or "scapes" as cornerstones of a world that is imagined by people and groups of people, often subverting the official minds of business and politics.

The World Horizon Opens Up: On the Sociology of Globalization

Ulrich Beck

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations. [...] In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.¹

THIS QUOTATION IS NOT from some neoliberal manifesto of 1996 but from the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, first published in February 1848. It shows a number of things: first, that the authors of the *Communist Manifesto* already eulogized the revolutionary role of the ‘bourgeoisie’ in world history; second, that the debate on ‘exploitation of the world market’ goes back much further than the short-term memory of public discussions would care to admit; third, that ironically the neoliberal and original Marxist positions share the same basic assumptions; and fourth, but not least, that the national vision which still holds the social sciences captive was already being questioned when it first emerged in the maelstrom of rising industrial capitalism.

Ulrich Beck, “The World Horizon Opens Up: On the Sociology of Globalization,” from *What is Globalization*, pp 17–30. Copyright © 2005 Polity Press. Permission to reprint granted by the publisher.

SOCIOLOGY AS THE POWER TO CREATE INTELLECTUAL ORDER: THE CONTAINER THEORY OF SOCIETY

‘Modern’ sociology is defined in its typical textbooks as the ‘modern’ science of ‘modern’ society. This both conceals and helps to gain acceptance for a classificatory schema that we might call the *container theory of society*.

1. According to this theory, societies both politically and theoretically presuppose ‘state control of space’ (J. Agnew and S. Corbridge), so that sociology here aligns itself with the regulatory authority or power of the national state. This is expressed in a vision of societies as (by definition) subordinate to states, of societies as *state* societies, of social order as state order. Thus, both in everyday life and in scientific discourse, one speaks of ‘French’, ‘American’ or ‘German’ society.
 Furthermore, the concept of the political is associated not with society but with the state—which has not always been the case, as M. Viroli has shown.² Only in this conceptual and institutional framework do ‘modern’ societies become individual societies separate from one another. They really are held in the space controlled by national states *as in a container*. At the same time, it is part of the very concept of ‘modern’ societies that they are unpolitical, whereas political action is located only in the space controlled by the state.
2. This schema applies not only outwardly but also on the inside. The internal space of outwardly separable societies is subdivided into a number of totalities which, on the one hand, are conceptualized and analysed as *collective identities* (classes, status groups, religious and ethnic groups, male and female ways of living) and, on the other hand, are classified according to the organic ‘social system’ metaphor and theoretically inserted into the autonomous worlds of economics, politics, law, science, family, etc., each with its own distinctive ‘logics’ or ‘codes’. Internal homogeneity is essentially a creation of state control. All kinds of social practices—production, culture, language, labour market, capital, education—are stamped and standardized, defined and rationalized, by the national state, but at least are labelled as national economy, national language, literature, public life, history, and so on. The state establishes a territorial unit as a ‘container’, in which statistics are systematically collected about economic and social processes and situations. In this way, the categories of the state’s self-observation become the categories of empirical social science, so that sociological definitions of reality confirm those of bureaucracy.
3. This image of externally and internally differentiated societies, constituted by individual national states, goes together with the *evolutionary self-image* and self-consciousness of modern societies. To be modern means to be superior. This universalist pretension is expressed, in the basic rights and rules of democratic self-regulation, as a claim to ‘human emancipation from the self-incurred

dependence of a minor' (Kant). But the claim to bestow happiness condensed, first, in the violent history of European colonialism and imperialism, and then, after the Second World War, in so-called 'development politics' and the 'theory of developing countries'. It is no accident that the word 'modernization' made its debut in the early fifties, in a book entitled *The Modernization of Developing Countries*. The empirical political and social sciences, seeing themselves as policy doctors or engineers, then worked out 'social indicators' that seemed to make it possible to measure the stages and successes of modernization and, in the case of national states, to monitor and shape the process.

I do not want to make a name for myself by setting up Aunt Sallies. Debates of recent years have severely shaken the axioms of a sociology of the first modernity focused on the national state. But its programmed vision—most of all in organized research and a number of long-standing controversies—remains dominant particularly in Germany. And what this container theory of society permits, or indeed compels, is a return to the origins of sociology in the formative period of the nation-state in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe. The association between sociology and nation-state was so extensive that the image of 'modern', organized individual societies—which became definitive with the national model of political organization—itself became an absolutely necessary concept in and through the founding work of the classical social scientists. Beyond all their differences, such theorists as Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and even Karl Marx shared a territorial definition of modern society;³ and thus a model of society centred on the national state, which has today been shaken by globality and globalization. If a Spenglerian mood of decline can be felt everywhere in people's musings, it surely has something to do with the fact that both society and sociology are caught in the 'territorial trap' (Agnew and Corbridge) of equating society with the national state. But the world is not declining, because—as Max Weber argued against himself, as it were—the light of the great cultural problems moves on and scientists too are forced to revise their thinking, to reorient themselves conceptually in the non-integrated multiplicity of a world without frontiers.

To make this background assumption clear and conscious, nothing is as helpful as to develop and probe *alternatives*. The sociology of globalization may be thought of as involving a loose, motley collection of dissidents from the sociology of national states. In comparison with the mainstream, it has long been a question of theories and research projects or approaches, often indeed no more than promises, which have arisen in quite different cultural and thematic contexts (from research into migration, through international class analysis, international politics and the theory of democracy, to cultural studies and the sociology of big cities), which often contradict one another, yet which somehow or other break through the thought-barrier of the national state—and, we should stress, do so less through criticism than through the working out of

alternative ways of thinking. In other words, the globalization debate in the social sciences may be understood and developed as a fruitful dispute about which basic assumptions and images of society, which units *for analysis*, can *replace* the axiomatics of the national state.

Thought and research that remain trapped in a vision of separate social worlds organized on a national basis can find no place for anything that falls between the inner and the outer. This intermediate category—the category of the ambivalent, the mobile, the volatile, the Here-and-There—first opens up in the context of migration research, in the beginnings of *transnational social spaces*. World-system theory then deepens this perspective to the point that all social action is seen as taking place within *one overarching* framework, the framework of the capitalist world-system, in which an advancing inequality and division of labour install themselves.

But this world-system view has in turn been nuanced by reference to what the political theorist James Rosenau calls ‘the two worlds of world polities’: that is, the idea that there is not a single global society but at least *two* competing ones: the society of (national) states, and the many different transnational organizations, players, groups and individuals who build and consolidate a tissue of social relationships.

In all the analyses mentioned so far, spaces of transnational action arise in one way or another because actors set out to achieve them. In the theory of *world risk society*, however, the category of unintended consequences appears in place of the basic unity of purposive action. It is global risks (their social and political construction), and thus various ecological crises (or definitions of crisis), which bring about new kinds of world disorder and turmoil.

In research associated with ‘cultural theory’, the linearity assumption and the Either-Or of national axiomatics are replaced by Both-And postulates: globalization *and* regionalization, linkage *and* fragmentation, centralization *and* decentralization, are dynamics that belong together as two sides of the same coin.

In considerations on *transnational civil society*, socio-cultural processes, experiences, conflicts and identities become visible which orient themselves by a ‘one-world model’ of transnational social movements, globalization ‘from below’, and a new world citizenship. Here the axiomatics that equates modernity with non-political individual societies breaks down. World society without a world state means a society that is *not politically organized*, where new opportunities for action and power arise for transnational actors that have no democratic legitimation. This means that a new transnational space of the moral and the subpolitical is opening up, as we may see in such phenomena as consumer boycotts but also in questions to do with cross-cultural communication and criticism.

These basic ideas associated with post-national or transnational images of society, and the units that they mark out for investigation, should now be briefly outlined. At the same time, ‘development logics’ will have to be contrasted with the dynamic of

globalization, so that a complex picture (one which includes internal contradictions) is drawn of the globalization debate in the social sciences.

TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL SPACES

The pill to be used against abstractness, including the abstractness of 'the global', is examples. What does 'transnational social space' mean?

Africa Is Not a Continent But a Concept

As Patricia Alleyne-Dettmers shows in her study 'Tribal Arts', Africa is not a fixed geographical magnitude, not a separate place on the globe, but a *transnational idea and the staging of that idea*.⁴ This is intentionally organized at many different places in the world: in the Caribbean, in the ghettos of Manhattan, in the Southern states of the USA, in the *favelas* of Brazil, but also at Europe's largest street carnival in London. Here the masks, music, costumes and dance are carefully selected and designed in accordance with two governing principles. Everything is drawn from the 'African' reservoir of cultural ideas anywhere in the world; and everything must also be adapted to the subcultural peculiarities of London's black districts.

Nothing in the whole of the African continent corresponds to the Africa that is staged on the streets of London. How could it? Where is Africa to be found in a world society with porous frontiers? In the ruins that the colonial masters have left behind in Africa? In the big-city shapes of an only half-modernized Africa? In the African four-star hotels? On organized safaris? In the 'back to the roots' hopes and illusions of Black Americans? In the books about Africa that are written in Western universities? In the Caribbean with its riotous profusion of forms? Or even in the struggle for a national identity in Britain's black subcultures?

In the eyes of those who design the dances and masks of Notting Hill's 'African carnival', Africa has lost its geographical location. For them 'Africa' is a vision, an idea, from which models can be derived for a *black aesthetic*. Not the least aim of this is to ground, create or renew an African national identity for blacks *in Britain*. This Africa, or counter-Africa, is in the strictest sense an 'imagined community'; it serves to break down and overcome the alienation of Afro-Caribbean groups in Britain. We could say that 'there is Africa' in Notting Hill.

Transnational 'communities' really are that paradoxical. What is 'discovered' here, but in reality *invented*, often contradicts what floats around as 'Africa' in the heads of each transnational 'African'. A large part of historical Africa was reduced to slavery and scattered around the world. Its cultures were broken up and destroyed. Hence those people who are called 'African' (often by others) have also shaken off that image of Africa. For many 'Africans', indeed, Africa and being African is the very identity

they oppose and reject. Perhaps they grew up in a pot-pourri of cultures where any clarity about the matter had long been lost, and where the quality of being black had an especially negative value. At any event, the outcome is quite paradoxical. Blacks in the Caribbean and in English cities associate 'Africa' with non-identity and non-progress, with drums, dancing, superstition, naked, uneducated tribesmen, permanent hopelessness.

One can see in this the negative mirror image of a Eurocentric idea of Africa, which blacks have adopted in the Western metropolis. But this only makes the question sharper: what and where is 'Africa' within transnational social space?

American Mexicans and Mexican Americans

Transnational social spaces cancel the local associations of community that are contained in the national concept of society. The figure of thought at issue joins together what cannot be combined: to live and act both here and there. Ludger Pries has illustrated what this means from the field of migration research.⁵

In the imaginative and political world of individual societies organized as national states, migration is broken down into the stages and contexts of dissolution, travel, arrival and (not necessarily successful) integration, each of which requires separate causal investigation. By contrast, the approach centred on transnational social spaces maintains that something new is emerging: social contexts of life and action to which Here-and-There or Both-And applies. Between the separate, organized worlds, what Martin Albrow calls new 'social landscapes' combine and transmute places of departure *and* places of arrival.

In a study of transnational forms of community, life and politics stretching between Mexicans in North America and their places of origin, Robert Smith shows how this everyday link operates.

For some communities of the *Mixteca Poblana*, support committees were organized in New York that collected money among migrant workers for the laying of drinking-water pipes in their community of origin, or for the restoration of churches and village squares. Major decisions and issues were sorted out in tele-conferences with officials in the community of origin. It was not uncommon for the sums of money collected in New York to be greater than the public spending on infrastructure in the Mexican community. One important aspect—and a serious argument for the stability and stabilization of *transnational social spaces*—is the fact that the Mexican state has now recognized not only the huge economic significance of the migrant workers, but also their political significance. Since the presidential elections of 1988, the critical voting power of the Mexican workers abroad (who voted in on above-

average proportion for the ruling PRI party) has become especially apparent, and the Mexican government pursues an active policy of integrating them economically, politically and culturally. Thus, Mexican mayors sometimes travel to New York to put investment proposals for village development before migrant associations. And the Embassy actively supports migrants' sports associations, as well as the development of Guadalupe groups (which are supposed to organize the cult worship of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the main national holy figure in Mexico). At every level of Mexican politics, labour migration is no longer seen just as a (passive) safety-valve for employment problems, but as an important capital and human resource for the country's own economic and social development. As a result of this policy orientation, the Mexico-USA migration system increasingly involves institutional pillars that give a flanking stability to the emergent *transnational social spaces*. [...] The social and economic dovetailing between region of origin and region of arrival is not, however, just a matter of nostalgia or tradition (sticking to village festivals) or of care for an older generation that has stayed behind. Rather, what develop in the *Mixteca* are economic activities that point far beyond purely transitory relations of a migratory character. In Greater New York, for example, there are a *Puebla Food Incorporation* and a clan of tortilla-producing families that has already made millions from the traditional Mexican food. Transnational production and marketing structures thus stretch between the *Mixteca* and New York—structures that imply dimension of 'cumulative causation'. Insofar as the dynamic of migration networks keeps the migratory flow moving, the demand increases for specifically Mexican foods and services, which in turn open up new opportunities for migration-related gain in the regions of origin and arrival.

In New York itself, for example, newly arriving migrant workers can turn not only to relatives and acquaintances, but also to a well-polished network of informal support groups, specialist services and solidarity organizations (legal advice bureaux, committees to help people from special ethnic groups or regions, etc.). Whole streets (e.g. the northern part of Amsterdam Street, or certain neighbourhoods in Queen's) bear witness to this by now very stable infrastructure, on which transnational migrants can build and which is at the same time reproduced by them. There are gainful activities and social groups (of Mexicans and US-Americans) which live entirely on the constant migration and *transmigrants*, and whose vital interest lies in further building up *transnational social spaces*. This also applies to the sports associations, where some of the migrant workers living in New York (perhaps *indocumentados*, without a work or residence permit) come together every Sunday. In the 1996 football season, sixty-five teams were registered for the Mexicans' own league. [...]

In the USA (so far more strongly in California than in New York, for example), various political groupings and organizations (e.g. the *Frente indígena oaxaqueña binacional* or the newspaper *La Mixteca Año 2000*) support the economic interests and human rights of the migrant workers. The political pressure these groups can exert within the USA, but above all on the Mexican side of the border, is quite often greater than the potential influence of local politicians. The director of the Mexican football league in New York put it like this: ‘As simple Mexicans and migrant workers, we don’t count for anything at all. But now we’re suddenly being courted by high-up Mexican politicians.’⁶

To the best of my knowledge, no one has yet investigated whether—as one may suspect—similar transnational social spaces exist between Turkish Germans and German Turks.

Logics, Dimensions and Consequences of Globalization

As we have already intimated, a basic dispute runs like a red thread through the globalization literature.⁷ The question of the impetus behind globalization finds two contrasting answers (each in turn taking a number of different forms). The first group of authors point to the existence of one dominant ‘logic’ of globalization, while others work with theories that suggest a phenomenon with a complex set of causes. This central theoretical controversy, by the way, entails that the word ‘globalization’ does not have a single horizon of meaning, that indeed often *contradictory* meanings are associated with it.

At the same time, we see the sociology of globalization repeating the historical divergence between Marx and Weber; that is, between a view of the dominance of the economic, and a theoretical pluralism involving economic, social and cultural approaches (and for which any analysis that operates with just a single logic therefore excludes a crucial dimension of globalization). The adding together of (apparently) mutually exclusive logics of globalization introduces, or slides into, a view in which different partial logics of globalization compete with one another.

First, we should consider approaches which hold one special dimension or logic of globalization to be central. Here the key authors are Wallerstein, Rosenau, Gilpin, Held, Robertson and Appadurai, in addition to Giddens as the common reference point. Wallerstein—one of the first in the seventies to confront the social sciences with the question of globalization—introduced the concept of a *world-system* and argued that capitalism was the engine of globalization. Rosenau, Gilpin and Held have concerned themselves more with international politics. They challenge the nation-state orthodoxy by stressing the importance both of technological globalization (the

science and information society) and of political-military factors and viewpoints (power politics).

No doubt, the ecological crisis and—following the Rio conference in 1992—its worldwide recognition have had a lasting and devastating impact on ways of thinking and acting that focus on the national state. World society, accused of being a ‘world *risk* society’, has become conscious of itself as sharing a common ecological fate.

Robertson, Appadurai, Albrow, Featherstone, Lash, Urry and many others argue within the tradition of cultural theory. Strongly opposing the widespread notion of a ‘McDonaldization’ of the planet, they insist that *cultural* globalization does not mean the world is becoming culturally homogeneous. Rather, it involves a process of ‘glocalization’, which is highly contradictory both in content and in its multiple consequences. Two of the most problematic effects for the stratification of world society should be briefly examined: the problem of *global wealth, local poverty* (Bauman), and the problem of *capitalism without work*.

Each of the authors mentioned locates the origin and results of the globalization dynamic mainly in *one* sector of institutional action (whether the economy, technology, international politics, ecology, culture or world industry), or else in new social inequalities measured on a world scale. It is in the interplay of these perspectives that a plural sociology of globalization comes into view.

Capitalist World-system: Wallerstein

The conception of transnational social spaces is a medium-range theory. It breaks down the nation-state view of society and its ‘container theory’ of nationally separate social worlds, replacing them with *different* modes of life, transnationally integrated spaces of social action that circumvent or cross over postulated frontiers.

The metaphor of a space or area is here contradictory. For the dominant feature of the ‘spaces’ in question is that they *overcome* distance. ‘Transnational’ implies that forms of life and action emerge whose inner logic comes from the inventiveness with which people create and maintain social lifeworlds and action contexts where distance is not a factor. This raises a number of questions for sociological research. How are transnational lifeworlds transcending distance and frontiers *possible* in the first place? How can they be put together and cultivated at the level of individual action, often in the teeth of resistance from national state bureaucracies? Are they stateless, or perhaps even institutionless, early forms of transnational world societies? Which orientations, resources and institutions favour or hinder them? What political consequences (disintegration or transnational mobilization) are associated with them?

What is clear is that, in these transnational social landscapes, something is (often illegally) blended together which seriously hinders national states in their claim to exercise control and order. The spaces for living and acting which take shape here are

'*impure*'. To analyse them, sociology must stop thinking in Either-Or terms and open itself to specific, *distinguishable* modes of Both-And living.

Wallerstein's radical move replaces the image of separate individual societies with one of a *world-system* in which *everything*—every society, every government, every company, every culture, every class, every household, every individual—must insert and assert itself within a single division of labour. This single world-system, which provides a framework for the measurement of social inequalities on a world scale, imposes itself with the rise of capitalism. For Wallerstein, then, the very logic of capitalism is necessarily global.

Once it had arisen in Europe in the sixteenth century, the capitalist dynamic took hold of, and thoroughly transformed, more and more 'continents', spaces and niches of social life. The whole planet operates within this regulatory mechanism of a *binding* and *constant* division of labour, which we call the capitalist world economy.⁸

According to Wallerstein, a capitalist world economy has three basic elements. First, metaphorically speaking, it consists of a single market governed by the principle of profit maximization. Second, it has a series of state structures whose power varies both internally and externally; these state structures chiefly serve to '*hinder*' the 'free' functioning of the capitalist market, in order to '*improve*' the prospective profits of one or more groups. Third, in a capitalist world economy, the appropriation of surplus labour takes place within a relationship of exploitation not between two classes but among three layers: the *central areas or heartlands*, the *semiperiphery* and the *peripheral countries and regions*. (The question of which countries or regions belong where, and by which criteria, triggers historical-empirical disputes that are hard to resolve.)

Thus, while European capitalism since the collapse of the Eastern bloc has been forming a universal economic space or world market, humanity has remained divided into national states and identities, each with its own conceptions of sovereignty and descendance. At the same time, conflicts are multiplying and intensifying within the world-system, because it produces not only fabulous riches but also terrible poverty. The patterns of global inequality follow the tripartite division of social space into centre, semiperiphery and periphery—a division that integrates the world-system upon a conflictual basis.

Periodically occurring crises lead, in Wallerstein's view, to restructuring which intensifies the division of power and inequality and increases the level of conflict within the world-system. The universalization and deepening of the capitalist logic engenders resistance on a world scale, which includes anti-Western, anti-modern, fundamentalist reactions, as well as the environmental movement or neo-nationalist currents. The inner logic of the capitalist world-system thus engenders both world integration and world decomposition. The question of whether there is a positive side to all this is given no answer. For Wallerstein, the world-system is in the end threatened with collapse.

This line of argument (which we have only been able to outline here) has two striking features: it is both monocausal and economic. Globalization is exclusively defined in terms of institutionalization of the world market.

However, at least three points may be made in criticism of this approach. First, there are obvious difficulties in specifying and testing the historical-empirical content of the theory. Second, globalization is said to have begun with Columbus's discovery and subjugation of the New World, and is thus anything but specific to the late twentieth century. This means that Wallerstein's proposed framework does not enable us to identify what is historically new about the transnational.

Third, for all the dialectics, Wallerstein's is a *linear* argument. It never really considers whether the world market, as Marx and Engels argued in the *Communist Manifesto*, inconspicuously and inadvertently produces *cosmopolitan* conflicts and identities.⁹

Post-international Politics: Rosenau, Gilpin, Held

Rosenau, too, breaks with nationally centred thinking. But he does not replace the anarchy of national states with a world system of the world market; instead, he distinguishes between two phases of international politics. In his schema, globalization means that humanity has left behind the age when national states dominated, or monopolized, the international scene. Now an age of *post*-international politics has begun, in which national players have to share the global arena and global power with international organizations, transnational concerns and transnational social and political movements. Empirically, this may be seen *inter alia* in the sheer number of international organizations, including NGOs such as Greenpeace, which is evidently still increasing.

Asked whether it was wrong to think that US foreign policy was striking out in new directions, Secretary of State Timothy Wirth replied:

The maxim 'Think globally, act locally!' is clearly becoming a reality. We see how international institutions and resolutions are becoming more and more important. There is a growing feeling that nations can also be governed by international institutions, and not just at a national level. The foreign policy establishment is starting to think in different dimensions from those of military and economic power, rifle bullets and dollars. Now there are also global problems such as worldwide human rights and refugee programmes, or containing corruption and environmental disasters. This globality changes our thinking.

And this is how he sees the role of citizens and action groups in relation to globalization:

Alongside internationalization, the growing influence of grassroots initiatives is the second challenge to the previous conception of politics. There is huge pressure for a decentralization of politics, already coming from the new possibilities of communication. Fax and the Internet are more and more part of everyday life. Anyone can talk to anyone at lightning speed, all over the world, without having to rely on government channels or diplomats.¹⁰

For Rosenau, then, the passage from the national to the postnational age has to do, first, with conditions within the international political system and, second, with the fact that the monocentric power structure of rival national states has been and is being replaced by a polycentric distribution of power in which a great variety of transnational and national actors compete or cooperate with one another.

There are thus two arenas of world society: a *community of states*, in which the rules of diplomacy and national power remain the key variables; and a world of *transnational subpolitics*, in which such diverse players as multinational corporations, Greenpeace and Amnesty International, but also the World Bank, NATO or the European Union, stride around.

Polycentric world politics The opposition between world-system theory and this view of a *dual* world society is obvious enough. In place of a single world-market system 'governed' by economics, Rosenau postulates a *polycentric world politics* in which it is not only capital or national governments, nor even the UN, World Bank or Greenpeace, which have the only say, but *all* compete with one another to achieve their aims—even if they do not all have the same power opportunities.

Rosenau also differs from Wallerstein in seeing the *technological* dimension and dynamic of globalization as the root of the passage from a politics dominated by national states to a polycentric politics. His theoretical political studies have taught him again and again that international ties of dependence have acquired a new density and significance. The reason for this, in his view, is the enormous and still continuing upsurge of information and communications technology.

It is technology that has so greatly diminished geographical and social distances through the jet-powered airliner, the computer, the orbiting satellite, and the many other inventions that now move people, ideas, and goods more rapidly and surely across space and time than ever before. [...] It is technology, in short, that has fostered an interdependence of local, national, and international communities that is far greater than any previously experienced.¹¹

Rosenau's argument thus combines two factors: the advent of the information and science society, and its overcoming of distance and frontiers as a result of the

multiplication of transnational players and organizations. This *irreversibly polycentric world politics* defines a situation where:¹²

- *transnational organizations* such as the World Bank, the Catholic Church, the International Association of Sociologists, McDonald's, Volkswagen, drug cartels and the Italian mafia, as well as the new International of NGOs, act alongside, with or against one another;
- *transnational problems* such as climate change, drugs, AIDS, ethnic conflicts and currency crises determine the political agenda;
- *transnational events* such as the World Cup, the Gulf War, the American election campaign or the publication of a Salman Rushdie novel can lead via satellite television to turmoil in quite different countries and continents;
- *transnational 'communities'* develop, for example, around religion (Islam), knowledge (experts), lifestyles (pop, ecology), kinship (the family) or political orientations (environmental movement, consumer boycotts); and
- *transnational structures* such as various forms of work, production and cooperation, banks, financial flows, technical know ledge, and so on, create and stabilize across distances the contexts of action and crisis.

Gilpin's approach to globalization, on the other hand, remains sceptical about all the talk of novelty and takes a position close to the orthodox view of international politics, arguing, as it were, on the basis of its inner logic. Gilpin sees that national states are more than ever linked—not to say, shackled—to one another. Unlike Wallerstein and Rosenau, however, he stresses that globalization comes about only under certain conditions of international politics, that it is the product of a '*permissive*' global order. By this he means an order among states which alone makes it possible for dependence and relationship networks to be established and maintained beyond and among national authorities.

Globalization, understood as the expansion of transnational spaces and actors, is in this view paradoxically still dependent upon national authorities or, to be more precise, upon a *hegemonic power*. Globalization, so to speak, presupposes the tacit *consent* of national states. The openness, or '*permissiveness*', which is necessary for the development of a world market, world churches, world corporations, world banks and worldwide NGOs can survive and spread only in the shadow of a matching concentration of state power.

In Gilpin's approach, then, which asserts the primacy of national politics over all other factors, globalization is necessarily *contingent* and under threat, in the sense that the emergence and development of transnational social spaces and players presupposes a hegemonic power structure and an international political regime. Only this can, if need be, guarantee the openness of the world order.

My position is that a hegemon is necessary to the existence of a liberal international economy. [...] historical experience suggests that, in the absence of a dominant liberal power, international economic cooperation has been extremely difficult to attain or sustain and conflict has been the norm. [...] The expansion and success of the market in integrating modern economic life could not have occurred without the favourable political environment provided by the liberal economic power.¹³

Sovereignty divided and shackled Against the theory of a hegemonic power structure as the precondition of globalization, it can and must be objected that globalization is making obsolete the concept of political sovereignty upon which it is based. This is the argument put forward by David Held. He shows how—as a result of international treaties, the internationalization of political decision-making and the growing interdependence of security policy (including the now far-advanced internationalization of arms production), as well as through the arms trade and the international division of labour—national politics has been losing what used to be the core of its power: namely, its sovereignty. In the wake of globalization, Held writes,

the ‘disjunctures’ reveal a set of forces which combine to restrict the freedom of action of governments and states by blurring the boundaries of domestic politics, transforming the conditions of political decision-making, changing the institutional and organizational context of national politics, altering the legal framework and administrative practices of governments and obscuring the lines of responsibility and accountability of national states themselves. These processes alone warrant the statement that the operation of states in an ever more complex international system both limits their autonomy (in some spheres radically) and impinges increasingly upon their sovereignty. Any conception of sovereignty which interprets it as an illimitable and indivisible form of public power—entrenched securely in individual nation-states—is undermined. Sovereignty itself has to be conceived today as already divided among a number of agencies—national, regional and international—and limited by the very nature of this plurality.¹⁴

World Risk Society: Economic Globalization as Forced Politicization

Someone investigating the political implications of the new perception of ecological crisis will certainly encounter a wide range of answers. One of these will refer to a threat to civilization which cannot be attributed to any god, idols or nature but only to human decisions and the triumphs of industry, or indeed to the very claim of human