INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY, THE GLOBALISATION DEBATE AND THE ANALYSIS OF GLOBALISATION DISCOURSE.

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ABSTRACT: *This paper appraises the study of globalisation within International Political Economy (IPE). It also examines existing analysis, more specifically, on the ideational dimension of globalisation, generally situated within IPE but also found in other branches of political science. As a discipline, IPE is largely founded on the study of globalisation; intra-disciplinary disputes often coalesce considerably with a debate on the nature and implications of globalisation. More recently, a large body of theory has emerged on 'globalisation discourse', generally housed within the 'third wave' of globalisation theory. This work has both challenged the foundations of IPE but also offered empirical analysis of globalisation as an ideational phenomenon. This paper will assess such work and ask a) what the implications are for ideational analysis within IPE, and b) what we have learned about the nature of globalisation as an idea.*

KEYWORDS: *IPE, Globalisation, Discourse, Ideology, Materialism*

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[1] Address for correspondence: Department of Politics, University of Sheffield, Northumberland Road, Elmfield, Northumberland Road, Sheffield, S10 2TU. Email: c.berry@sheffield.ac.uk. This paper is an adapted version of a chapter from my doctoral thesis. Ultimately it will be submitted in a revised format – with a more specific focus on the 'third wave' of globalisation theory – as a journal article. All comments would be greatly appreciated.

As a discipline, IPE is largely founded on the study of globalisation; intra-disciplinary disputes often coalesce considerably with a debate on the nature and implications of globalisation (see Phillips 2005a; Weiss 1998). I argue here that most examples of theorising on globalisation situated within IPE contain a materialist bias. As such IPE, generally speaking, replicates the materialist bias found elsewhere in political science (see Rosamond 2003). The critique will not be rehearsed again here; it suffices to suggest that a neglect of the ideational dimension of globalisation creates an inability on the part of many IPE theorists to ask 'why' questions of agency. This tendency will be detailed through examination of the main positions on globalisation within IPE. There are a large number of existing studies of globalisation that attempt, to some extent, to reorient the study of globalisation around the notion that globalisation is an ideational or discursive phenomenon. Colin Hay has coined the term 'third wave' to describe the emergence of such work, although most of the theorists discussed do not adopt this designation. Some represent conscious attempts to overcome the materialist bias, whilst others are undertaken from a materialist perspective. I will also discuss the work of some theorists that do not associate with IPE or indeed political science more generally. The empirical findings of these theorists will be discussed here in detail.

Material globalisation

Ideational analysis is not inimical to IPE as a discipline. In fact, a 'constructivist' ontology upholding ideational/material duality appears to chime with several of the discipline's key 'mission statements' (Amoore *et al* 2000; Gamble *et al* 1996). But the privileged role of globalisation – as a concept which describes structural change in the global political economy – also remains firmly entrenched. There have been a series of critical attempts to challenge this orthodoxy, usually pitched therefore as attempts to 'renew' IPE, and more specifically to 'reclaim the "political"' or 'put the "P" back in IPE' by questioning the framework bequeathed by the globalisation debate (Hay & Marsh 1999). Matthew Watson has recently attempted to put the 'E' back in too, revisiting Andrew Gamble's contention that IPE represents a return to classical political economy in contrast to neoclassical economics (Watson 2005; see Gamble 1995: 520-523). However, it appears that the orthodoxy remains in place. Many IPE

scholars, particular in what has been called ‘American IPE’ or the ‘IO School’ (Cohen 2007; Dickins 2006; Phillips 2005a) maintain a neoclassical approach to globalisation.[2] Recently, an important statement celebrating the more critical ‘British School’, by Nicola Phillips, endorsed the ongoing relevance of globalisation as an organising concept; Phillips (2005c) argued that as well as studying globalisation and its effects, IPE should itself globalise. From my perspective, this privileging of globalisation has two principal effects. First, globalisation is largely assumed to be a material structural phenomenon, and therefore rarely studied as an idea. Second, the prominence of globalisation as an organising concept means that, more generally, material structure has a greater role in IPE explanations than the ideational realm, whether in terms of agency or structure. Agency is conceived as the exercise of power *within* or *in response to* material structure; the subjective perceptions of their material or structural environments is therefore assumed to have less explanatory value, and therefore rarely studied systematically. The blame lies with the narrowness of the globalisation debate, partly imported but also partly created by IPE.

‘Hyperglobalisation’

The term ‘hyperglobalisation’ was coined by David Held *et al* (1999) to classify the deluge of scholarship in the late 1980s and early 1990s describing, or predicting, the death of the nation-state and the emergence of a single, global economy. It was an argument from, in political terms, both the right and the left, or in more scholarly terms, both neoclassical and Marxist political economists.

First, the neoclassical approach. The neoclassical approach to globalisation (also christened ‘the first wave’ in Colin Hay’s wave thesis) was undisputedly the first to popularise the concept. And although its own popularity has waned to some extent, it is still treated as the point of departure for many contributions to the globalisation debate. Moreover, it warrants an airing due to the fact that so many real-world political actors, especially political leaders in rich countries, appear to subscribe to it. Specifically, the neoclassical approach is intimately related to neoliberal ideology, in

[2] ‘*IO*’ is a reference to *International Organisation*, the leading IPE journal published in the United States.

terms of both policy prescriptions and *a priori* assumptions (see, in particular, the work of Martin Wolf (2005)). This is not to say that its relationship with neoliberalism disables its capacity to contribute to theory (as claimed by some critics), but it nevertheless must be acknowledged. Furthermore, it is normal to expect some relationship between a theoretical approach and ideologies upheld by certain political actors.

The basis of this approach to the globalisation debate is neoclassical economic theory. Neoclassical economic theory is an approach to economics based on the presumption of perfect markets. Commodities are exchanged, and capital is invested, via market mechanisms. The ontological epistemological bases of neoclassical economic theory rest upon the atomistic, rational individual, endowed with pre-ordained material interests in an environment of scarce resources. Markets both *exist because of* and *operate according to* this human nature. The neoclassical approach to globalisation, then, assumes the realisation of a global competitive marketplace, or rather argues that the realisation of such an economy is inevitable, and that its emergence is now apparent. This conception has led to the charge that the neoclassical approach has an unnecessarily simplistic view of the economic processes associated with globalisation. However, although relatively straightforward, the way that neoclassical globalisation theorists understand the operation or emergence of the global marketplace is not necessarily simplistic.

The main progenitor of the neoclassical approach is Kenichi Ohmae. Ohmae's work – particularly his book *The Borderless World* (1993) – more so than the work of any other theorist, seemed to encapsulate much of the thinking that had occasioned the rise of globalisation as an analytical concept. Ohmae's most familiar argument, then, concerns the redundancy of national borders. In short, countries are becoming less different or, more precisely, differences between countries matter less. Economic activity has become global, and much less susceptible to the interventions of nation-states. This activity is assumed to constitute a marketplace, and it is the inexorable logic of market competition that has caused economic processes to transcend national circumstances. Essentially, however, Ohmae's work is a narrative (based on empirical, albeit anecdotal, evidence) about the transformed nature of corporate organisation – Ohmae worked for twenty-three years as a management consultant and

business strategist. It is therefore transnational corporations (TNCs) in particular, embodying the norms of post-Fordism, that are deemed to have become global. TNCs are the exemplary institutions of the global marketplace, as both architects and the architecture of globalisation. The extent to which the transformation of TNCs is the essence of globalisation, or merely epiphenomenal of the development of a global economy, is open to interpretation, but this perspective has certainly been fleshed out beyond Ohmae's original narrative – not least, by Ohmae himself (see 1995) – to comprise the more general argument. There is some room within the neoclassical approach for reference to non-market or non-economic factors in explaining globalisation. Theodore Levitt (1986), of the Harvard Business School, believes that technological change is a determining vector of globalisation, and that it is this, alongside market logic, that has contributed to the redundancy of differences between countries. This is not an uncommon argument – indeed, it is present to a lesser extent in Ohmae's work – and, as such, the hyperglobalisation perspective strays, as we shall see, into the territory of the arguments of other globalisation theorists.[3] Economics, as conceived by neoclassical economic theory, is still the central driving force of globalisation, but neoclassical globalisation theory argues, additionally, that factors such as corporate organisation and technological development help to give contemporary market relations their specifically global character.

The main problem with the neoclassical approach to globalisation theory is its structuralist bias. The global or globalising economy is presented as a structure with determining force, exogenous to agents, reproduced by its own logic; that is, the logic of the competitive marketplace. Agents are not conceived as possessing any significant capacity to author, control or even alter its constraints. Of course, the neoclassical theorist may retort that individuals (aggregated in various ways) are fundamental to the market's operation; therefore, the neoclassical approach upholds the view that agents are or can be powerful. However, this would be an insufficient defence. The marketplace and rationality are universal notions, assumed not to be variegated at the micro- or meso-levels. Even treating agency only as the exercise of

[3] In fact, Ohmae's latest book, *The Invisible Continent* (2001), has a distinctly 'transformationalist' feel, in that the outcome of the process of globalisation is described as a global space, rather than simply a global economy. However, the space is characterised mainly as an economic space, and its existence is owed, according to Ohmae, to economic processes.

power, the neoclassical approach falls short as an explanation of globalisation, because its understanding of power and political action is too rudimentary.

A further charge is that the neoclassical approach assumes that it is possible to know *why* certain agents act in certain ways simply by understanding their location in the (increasingly powerful) global structure. Even if we accept the neoclassical defence against the charge of structuralism, it is an excessively materialist perspective. Agents' ideas have no bearing upon how they act; they are not conceived as having different conceptions of their structural environment, or of change within that environment (that is, of globalisation) – only different interests derived from different material circumstances. The point of the argument, of course, as a contribution to political science, is that even these differences are being eradicated by globalisation. Ironically, the neoclassical approach has no capacity to understand the agency to which it (seemingly more than any other theory) contributes. Its materialist and structuralist biases – which derive from the various prejudices of neoclassical economic theory – and it is precisely this feature which even theories of globalisation from critical perspectives have failed to fully overcome.

Second, the Marxist approach. Within IPE, classical Marxism exists largely as caricature. Most Marxist theorists in IPE can be more appropriately classified as neo-Marxists, or more specifically in most cases as neo-Gramscians. However, I believe that as perspectives on the meaning of globalisation as a process of structural change, the differences between neo-Marxism and a lingering classical Marxism are not large. This assessment of the Marxist position on globalisation is based on the work of classical Marxist Alex Callinicos (see 2001; 2002), the theorist to whom Held *et al* refer most when depicting Marxism as part of the 'hyperglobalisation' perspective. However, there are thinkers associated with neo-Marxism that clearly share much common ground with Callinicos' position, such as Stephen Gill, William Robinson, Adam Morton and Andreas Bieler (Bieler et al 2006; Gill 1995; Robinson 2001), all of whom identify themselves – some more tenuously than others – with the legacy of Antonio Gramsci and the neo-Gramscian perspective. Classical Marxism's influence extends beyond the work of those scholars that consciously identify themselves with it in the course of theorising about globalisation.

The Marxist and neoclassical approaches are strikingly similar in some regards, particularly in that they both maintain that globalisation is primarily the realisation of a global economy, and that this economy has a determining effect upon subsequent social and political changes. They both also point to the emergence and power of global corporations as a key element of globalisation; this argument is probably the central feature of Marxism's approach to globalisation. Of course, Marxists conceive of the global economy as a system of capitalism, rather than a marketplace. It is for this reason that this perspective is sometimes labelled the anti-globalisation perspective, since its proponents generally oppose global capitalism. It is an unfortunate misnomer in an analytical sense, because the Marxist perspective on globalisation in no way denies globalisation's reality, and in fact generally assumes that it would be impossible and undesirable to reverse globalisation; Marxists would rather an alternative form of globalisation be established. The label is useful, however, for suggesting the ideological link between this perspective and the anti-globalisation movement – although the movement itself is of course inaccurately named, for similar reasons.

A crucial difference between the neoclassical and Marxist approaches is their conceptions of agency, or of who exercises power in capitalist societies/economies. Marxists refer almost exclusively to agency in terms of class. Therefore, one's agency is a product of one's location in the material structure of capitalism, in relation to others. Marxism assumes that political action can be examined using the same conceptual lens as economic action, unlike the neoclassical approach; this allows Marxism to function as a form of political economy, but only serves to reinforce the charge of structural determinism. There has of course been a debate in Marxist theory about how much independence political action (in terms of power), particularly that of states, has from the economic structure, or in other words, the extent to which superstructure functions independently of base. Nevertheless, Marxists generally relate agency only to given material interests. Ideas are seen as either functional of those interests or, for some theorists, devices employed in service of those interests (i.e. the 'false consciousness' thesis). Moreover, it seems that with the apparent advent of globalisation, Marxists can confidently proclaim the victory of the structural forces of capitalism over the potential mediatory power of states. A global class elite which incorporates the (neoliberal) leaders of nation-states, institutions of 'global

governance' and TNCs, and which acts to reproduce and entrench the global capitalist system, is hypothesised.

In conjunction with the emergence of a global class elite, the emergence of a global proletariat is expected; resistance to global capitalism is often interpreted as signalling the growing relevance or power of the global proletariat. However, the presence of this perspective within Marxism is not evidence of an appreciation of the importance of agency. The instrumentalism of this class in opposing global capitalism does not mean that it or its (broadly socialist) ideology has real agency, since theorists generally imagine that such actors are destined to form a project of collective action due to their location in the global system of production. In general, theorists that interpret globalisation as the realisation as a global capitalist economy imagine that agents interact with this structure on the basis of their location within it, and not on the basis of their subjective interpretations of their material structural context. Ideational phenomena are not involved in the production of agency, but rather are a function of agency, which is a product of the experience of material structure.

It would be unfair to say that either the neoclassical or classical Marxist approaches have a large amount of direct influence within IPE. They are reviewed here mainly because of their importance to the development of the globalisation debate. However, as already noted, it is probably not possible to cleanly distinguish between classical Marxism and neo-Marxism in this regard – the latter is a densely populated intellectual territory of IPE. Furthermore, it is also possible that neoclassical economic assumptions enjoy an indirect influence upon the way in which the subject field of IPE has developed, even in the hands of critical scholars. This is one of the main arguments of Matthew Watson's *Foundations of IPE* (2005: 2-4). Moreover, neoclassical economics is particularly important to 'American IPE' (Phillips 2005c). Nevertheless, the next section will turn to a contribution to the globalisation debate whose direct influence on IPE – once exposed – is undeniable.

The geographical approach

The geographical approach to globalisation theory also conceives of globalisation as a material reality. However, the change to which the concept of globalisation refers is primarily spatial, rather than economic. Changes in geographical structure are deemed to have underpinned changes in other spheres. In practice, few IPE theorists would consciously adopt this classification of their perspective. Some would choose the more ambiguous 'transformationalist' tag. However, I contend that the core of the transformationalist argument is a belief that globalisation is essentially a geographical change, and as such a change in the world's primary material structure. This understanding of globalisation is evident among transformationalists in particular, but also far more widely in IPE. This approach was christened 'transformationalism' by David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton in their seminal book *Global Transformations* (1999), in a conscious attempt by those theorists to distinguish their work from the work of theorists such as Kenichi Ohmae and Alex Callinicos, that is, to suggest there had been a transformation of the old rather than simply a replacement of the old with the new. The implication is that transformationalism is less deterministic than the earlier theories, because the new interacts with the old. However, it will be argued here that this is not necessarily the case. Scholars influenced by the geographical approach are clearly more eager to identify the activity of agents in the process of globalisation, but this does not mean that agency is a significant aspect of their explanatory schemes. This applies principally, of course, to explanations of globalisation, but also more generally where IPE analysis is founded on the assumption of the material reality of globalisation.

The central argument of the geographical approach is that a new global or transnational social space exists, and that all social, political and economic activities are affected by its existential logic. The definition of globalisation provided by Held *et al* employs the term 'time-space compression', and accordingly refers to the 'stretching' of social relations once hindered by territory and distance (1999: 2-3). A global social space is said to exist, and to have transformed previous forms of social, political and economic activities, and therefore to have shaped change within the global political economy. In *Global Transformations*, Held *et al* detail empirically the multifarious nature of social, political and economic changes associated with globalisation. They also note explicitly the debt transformationalists, and thus those influenced by the geographical approach in Critical IPE, owe to the sociology of

Anthony Giddens and Manuel Castells. Giddens' conception of 'high modernity' and Castells' conception of 'network society' are both, essentially, narratives about the emergence of the global, transnational or supraterritorial social space (Castells 1996; 1997; 1998; Giddens 1990). Although Giddens, Castells and transformationalists in general may accept that various manifestations of globalisation, high modernity or the network society are contested and contestable, what makes the process *global* is the spatial dimension of change – and crucially, the nature of the global space is not imagined as contestable. In this context, it is understandable that proponents of the geographical approach are unable to see that competing conceptions of exactly what global structure exists may be constitutive of the structure, or its emergence and transformation.

The most important proponent of the geographical approach in Critical IPE is probably Jan Aart Scholte. Scholte's work best typifies the strengths and weaknesses of the geographical approach. Scholte uses the term 'supraterritoriality' to denote his understanding of the material structure of globalisation. This refers to the development of a social space not bound by territory and distance, with concomitant social, political and economic activities whose nature is determined by the nature of the supraterritorial space. Globalisation, then, is a process of 'respatialisation' (Scholte 2005). Crucially, Scholte does not believe that the geographical change is the only structural change to have occurred recently within the global political economy; he refers, also, to changes within production, knowledge, governance and identity structures. What is more, change within these structures has occurred partially independently of the geographical change, and has interacted dynamically with respatialisation (2005: 22-3). However, it is clear from Scholte's work that the geographical structure has primacy over the others; geography, in the last instance, directs social, political and economic forms.[4] Furthermore, the process of geographical change is the only one to which no agents are attached by Scholte – this is an important point to which we will return. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Scholte's understanding of globalisation enables him to accentuate the open-ended nature of change in the global political economy. Theorists of the economic

[4] This aspect of Sholte's approach has been subjected to polemical attack by Justin Rosenberg. Rosenberg refutes the possibility that geography is capable of such a role. Moreover, he claims that Scholte qualifies his own theory of globalisation to such an extent that it ultimately loses any analytical force (see Rosenberg 2000).

approaches imagine that certain economic forms necessitate specific political forms, but transformationalists understand the effect of geography in a different way: the creation of supraterritorial space is imagined as a universal, existential change to which all other structures and agents must adapt, but specific instances of adaptation entail path dependency and an element of contingency.

The fact that these theorists see globalisation as a geographical structural change rather than an economic one means that their work contains a different account of agency; that is, they are less inclined to argue that structure determines agency. Supraterritorial space is primarily the context of agency rather than a force that agents must cope with. Of course, the geographical approach's depiction of the economic and political processes that geographical change has necessitated is similar to depictions within the other perspectives (see, for instance, Giddens' more recent work (1998; 2002), and in particular Peter Dicken's *Global Shift* (1998; 2003)). However, there is some room for agency, in that political and economic processes that result from globalisation can be embodied in various different social forms, which can be variably influenced by various ideological perspectives and result in differential outcomes. As such, theorists of the geographical approach acknowledge the importance of the ideational realm in *responding to* globalisation. The relationship between transformationalism and political philosophy illustrates this: Held and McGrew, in particular, straddle IPE and political theory; their account of globalisation is intertwined with their 'cosmopolitan democracy' perspective on how to respond to globalisation. Alas, there is no room within transformationalism for the notion that agents are responsible for the construction of any material structure of globalisation (that is, supraterritorial space), and moreover, that they may have been motivated by different conceptions of globalisation when engaging in political action. Globalisation is still treated as a singular, material phenomenon to which all agents relate in the same way; it is only in responding to this relationship that agency becomes important. Even neoliberalism, for instance, is seen exclusively as a response to globalisation, not as an influence upon its trajectory and, in particular, the governance arrangements that have emerged at the global level (see Held *et al* 1999: 144-50; Scholte 2005: 39-41). Obviously, critical scholars taking their cue from transformationalism still have considerable choice on exactly how much they think the global space affects or shapes other phenomena in the global political economy. It

is partly this that has made it popular in IPE. However, it specifically hinders any discussion of globalisation as an idea. Ideational phenomena are not simply responses to context, they are constitutive of context, since perceptions of our context form part of the subjectivities which enable the human action which makes and remakes structure. Without this perspective, the geographical approach is unable to account for where the new global geography may have come from.

See, for instance, transformationalism's account of 'global governance'. Scholte and Held *et al*, alongside other theorists within this camp such as James Rosenau, assume that international institutions such as the United Nations and WTO represent a global political system. This system occupies the supraterritorial space; it exists to regulate the social, political and economic activities that derive from globalisation, which traditional nation-states have been unable to contain or manage. This argument is essentially functionalist. It is assumed that, for instance, increases in world trade are a (largely inevitable) product of globalisation, and that the WTO has been created to manage these increases (Held *et al* 1999: 50-1, 175-6, 182-7; Rosenau 1997; Scholte 2005). Bureaucracy and regulation are assumed, following Giddens, to be essential features of modernity, so if a new geographical space exists within which modernity is experienced, there must be regulatory institutions equivalent to the state's traditional role within national spaces. The possibility that governance arrangements are neither *global* nor *regulatory* is seemingly not considered by transformationalists. In IPE in general, while accounts of global governance institutions like the WTO are not as crude as that first outlined by Held, Scholte or Rosenau, there remains a presumption that material structural change at the global level is at the root of the development of global governance institutions, despite subsequent interventions by power-wielding agents, whom are only occasionally attributed with subjectivity. The geographical approach does not provide an epistemological straightjacket, like those provided by neoclassical or Marxist globalisation theory. However, its influence does lead to the emphasis of some explanatory factors at the expense of others. The influence of the geographical is clearly evident in Nicola Phillips' *Globalizing IPE*, intended as a foundational text for contemporary IPE, and, for instance, in the most popular 'critical' works on international institutions (see Phillips 2005b; also Wilkinson & Hughes 2002).

The globalisation debate and the reclamation of the state

What is commonly known as 'the sceptical thesis' provides a further, crucial perspective within the globalisation, with particular resonance for IPE. Held *et al* define their transformationalist position in contrast to the sceptics, whose thesis is deemed to relate only to the hyperglobalisation perspective. However, I will argue that the sceptical thesis is representative of a much wider concern with IPE regarding globalisation, that is, reclaiming the importance of the state, or of nation-states as powerful actors within the global political economy. Re-evaluating the role and relevance of nation-states amid the claims of some globalisation theorists has, in general, been one of IPE's most pressing concerns, and as such is perhaps the principal conduit by which the globalisation debate has directly impacted upon the discipline. Sceptical theorising has taken many forms; different scholars have sought to repudiate different aspects of the claims made in support of globalisation, using different sets of empirical evidence. Two main wings of sceptical theorising can, however, be identified. First, those that reject globalisation theory's assumption of homogeneity between different states or regions. These scholars aim to show that countries' histories, institutions, locations etc. still matter, and lead to different policy outcomes (see Hall 1986; Helliwell 2000; Ruigrok & van Tulder 1995; Zysman 1996). Second, those that reject the notion that states are increasingly powerless. The latter will be the focus here. The geographical approach has seemingly successfully abandoned the notion of homogeneity while maintaining the status of globalisation, and it is now questions concerning the state's power which provide the main points of contention.

The most well-known statement of this argument is Paul Hirst's and Graeme Thompson's *Globalization in Question* (1996). The book is explicitly premised on the objective of rediscovering agency within IPE analysis. In questioning empirically the reality of a single, global economy, they shatter the illusion that globalisation necessitates certain outcomes, like a transfer of power states from states to economic actors. The empirical evidence provided by Hirst and Thompson has proved extremely important to IPE. However, it is not the case that they successfully restore agency as an explanatory factor to IPE. They dispute the reality of globalisation as

structural change – but principally from a realist theoretical perspective, meaning that the system of states is itself treated as a structural phenomenon. States, as political actors, are clearly present in the global structure; this does not mean Hirst and Thompson have demonstrated that states have the power or autonomy to mitigate, let alone author, structural constraints *sui generis*. Furthermore, asserting the hypothetical agency of certain actors does not mean that the integral part actually played by agents in the global political economy – whether or not depicted as globalised or globalising – is being appreciated, let alone explained.

Attempts to reinstrumentalise the state *vis-a-vis* globalisation that do not explicitly associate with the sceptical thesis are more interesting. Perhaps the most significant attempt within IPE to conceptualise the state's role in conditions of globalisation is Philip Cerny's work on 'the competition state'. Cerny accepts the edict of some globalisation theorists that the state has become 'structurally problematic'. The traditional exercise of power by states, domestically and internationally – typified by the notion of sovereignty – is no longer evident, as state institutions have become internationalised, orienting their activities around the need for countries to compete in the global economy (Cerny 1990; 1995). In later works, especially, Cerny is adamant that nation-states remain 'a crucial building-block' of globalisation (2000: 456). Cerny has claimed that his state theory is 'structurationist', in that it permits both structure (globalisation) and agency (states) a place in its analytical framework. However, there are a number of problems with Cerny's approach. First, he is generally too close to a 'hyperglobalisation' or neoclassical account (Phillips 2005d; Watson 2005). His reading of global economic structure is primarily economistic, and while he accepts the persistence of nation-states, he argues that state institutions have been transformed almost beyond recognition by exogenous market forces. Second, he does not actually devote much time to detailing the creative capacity of states; the thrust if his work is detailing how states have reacted to economic change. While perhaps sufficient to demonstrate that states still matter, and perhaps a fairly accurate description of some instances of state behaviour, this surely does not amount to a synthesis of structural and agential explanations (see Hay 2002a: 384-5). Third, the apparent assumption that states and agency are synonymous (although Cerny (2006) has recently moved away from this position). Fourth, notwithstanding the extent to which he is able to identify meaningful state action, Cerny's explanations for

such action are predominantly materialist. Given that he does not investigate the ideas and perceptions of agents, his only answers to *why* agents behave in certain ways rely on his own account of their material structural context. While Cerny's work is valuable, and innovative, in many regards, it does not allow for the possibility that different agents possess different conceptions of globalisation, or structural change in the global political economy, and act on the basis of these conceptions, and on the basis of ideological perspectives not derivative of their location in the material structure of globalisation.

There is an alternative 'structurationist' approach in IPE, seemingly more plausible than Cerny's approach: that of John Hobson and M. Ramesh. It is worth discussing in more detail here, as a specific contribution to the globalisation debate within IPE, in relation to the state. Hobson and Ramesh (2002) argue that 'globalisation makes of states what states make of it'. They explicitly reject any association with the realism of Hirst and Thompson (2002: 7), but nevertheless offer an account which emphasises the state's capacity to shape international economic processes. They also dismiss Cerny's claim to structuration theory (2002: 6). Hobson and Ramesh criticise current theorising on the state and globalisation – whether structuralist or agent-centric – for three main reasons: first, a zero-sum conception of power, where either domestic or international forces are deemed to be powerful at the other's expense. Second, a latent reductionism, whereby structural change, or the lack of it, is explained with reference to one principal factor. Third, a spatial separationism, whereby the national and international or global realms are assumed to be distinct. For Hobson and Ramesh, this feature contravenes the solution to the 'levels of analysis' problem that the concept of globalisation is supposed to offer (2002: 7).

Hobson and Ramesh offer, then, a collective *both/and* rather than binary *either/or* logic. They describe the 'spatially promiscuous' state, which is embedded in and shaped by both domestic and international social forces. Crucially, they are happy to endorse the view that international social forces are increasingly prominent, and to apply the term globalisation to this phenomena as a descriptive concept. They actually associate their reading of globalisation with the geographical approach, and Scholte's 'supraterritoriality' concept in particular (while avoiding *reducing* any explanation of change to supraterritoriality, which transformationalists including

Scholte are at least partially guilty of). States, for Hobson and Ramesh, have 'reflexive agential power'. Whether successfully or not, they work 'through' rather than 'against' domestic and international social forces, necessarily restricting certain forms of agency, but also creating new social, political and economic arrangements, which may actually have been the desired outcome for the agents involved. The strategies chosen by states will accordingly shape their context, including the global architecture or the process of globalisation.

Closely related to Hobson and Ramesh's perspective is the work of Linda Weiss. The most complete statement of her views, *The Myth of the Powerless State* (1998), demonstrates that Weiss belongs in the same wing of sceptical theorising as Hirst and Thompson, as she rejects what she calls 'the globalisation hypothesis' precisely because she disputes the assumed impact of global market forces on state capacity. For Weiss, although there has been significant change, on a global scale, change has come in a multiplicity of forms; its variability means that its effects are more limited, and less immutable, than we think (2006: 533). Like Hobson and Ramesh, Weiss abandons the generalised notion of 'state capacity', and argues instead for capacit*ies*, plural (1998: 3-4). In some ways, therefore, the processes associated with globalisation may contain 'an enabling logic'; that is, they serve to encourage the expansion of some functions of the nation-state, as Weiss outlined in a 2006 article:

> Enablement implies that in the face of relatively similar globalisation pressures, there are countervailing pressures on government and, often, political incentives to intervene. One can therefore explain the state's room for manoeuvre in terms of the dual logics of global capitalism – not simply limiting, but offering scope for policy choice by virtue of the pressures felt by particular social constituencies, the corresponding demands they place on governments, and the political incentives for policy responses (Weiss 2006: 534)
>
> Whether states respond with renewed or restructured social spending and infrastructural support for the private sector, the result is to centrally mobilise and co-ordinate the necessary resources (Weiss 2006: 535).

Whether or not the above passages really characterises what states are doing is debatable; there is obviously a danger with any generalisation, including those from

the sceptical perspective – Weiss acknowledges this. The major point is that states must be seen as active, not passive. *The Myth of the Powerless State* made the more limited claim some states may be acting as 'midwives' or 'catalysts' for globalisation, either through pursuing liberalisation of economic border controls, or by using collaborative power arrangements to increase real control of their economies (1998: 204-11).[5]

Whether we deem Weiss or Hobson and Ramesh, or indeed Cerny or Hirst and Thompson, as successful in achieving certain objectives, none attempt to overcome the materialist bias of IPE. The reinstrumentalisation of agency essentially involves identifying the fact that states act, or have the power to act, within the global structure (which different theorists conceive in different ways). When it comes to accounting for the action that they actually undertake, the *primary* source of explanation remains – broadly speaking – this material structural context, not factors relating to the agent's subjectivity, or conceptions of their context. What is required is a turn to the ideational realm. The argument here is that IPE contains a materialist bias; this applies most to IPE's treatment of globalisation, but given the role of the globalisation debate in the discipline's organisation, the argument applies more generally. Yet it is analysis of globalisation as an idea that is specifically advocated and undertaken in this thesis. As detailed in the next section, such analysis has already been attempted, by several scholars from different theoretical perspectives. Not all, however, share the ontological perspective on the relationship between material and ideational upheld by this thesis. Few, if any, characterise ideational phenomena in the same way, and as such do not share its methodology to any significant extent. There is also a large body of work outside IPE on the ideational dimension of globalisation. I believe the prospect of IPE providing a better account of how agents shape their material and structural environment.

The ideational dimension of globalisation

[5] Weiss actually contrasts her work with Hirst and Thompson's in this regard. Whereas Hirst and Thompson maintain the viability of sovereignty, and therefore dismiss the importance of supranational political organisations, Weiss shows that some instances of supranationalism *increase* the power of states while undermining their sovereignty (1998: 10-11)

The notion that globalisation is most effective as an idea, rather than material reality, is not alien to IPE analysis. Linda Weiss argues, tantalisingly, that given that globalisation does not determine certain courses of action, globalisation discourse represents 'the political construction of helplessness' (1998: 193). The mantle was taken up by the likes of Colin Hay and Matthew Watson. They created a 'third wave' of globalisation theory, deliberately on the back of the sceptical 'second wave'. The essential argument is that globalisation is best understood not as a process of change in material, structural change, but rather an idea produced by certain actors (duplicitously) in order to justify or legitimise change. This narrow focus has, however, been significantly broadened since Hay and Watson's original work on globalisation discourse in British politics; the work of Hay, and others, now appears to constitute a more comprehensive attempt to document the role of the concept of globalisation in how agents interpret their material structural environment, and how different understandings of globalisation give rise to different policy decisions. Scholars from theoretical perspectives such as post-structuralism and constructivism now associate, to some extent, with the 'third wave' tag.[6] There are also a range of theorists, some from outside IPE, that we could associate with similar objectives in relation to the globalisation debate.

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[6] Although seemingly crucial to understanding the origins of Hay's perspective, the 'wave thesis' of globalisation theory in IPE is actually quite problematic. There seems to be an assumption that work of this type is building upon previous theories of globalisation – not by endorsing 'earlier' work, but by using it is a springboard for new avenues of research. Clearly, the notion of 'waves' of theory is helpful for understanding the construction of the third wave. But I do not accept the chronological connotations of the wave thesis, nor the assumption that each wave is superior to the last. This chimes with Angus Cameron and Ronen Palan's anxiety that '[t]he wave thesis asserts very strongly that from the array of available globalisation theories, some are "better" than others in that over time and through critical reflection they have become empirically more accurate, rigorous and complete and theoretically more sophisticated' (2004:28). It must also be noted that much theorising about globalisation, principally the geographical approach, sits very awkwardly within the wave thesis. In fact, Luke Martell (2007) describes transformationalism as the 'third wave'. This is seemingly more plausible than Hay's approach, which lumps transformationalism and hyperglobalisation together. However, even Martell's thesis is ultimately off-target; he classifies Hay's work as transformationalist! That said, however, Martell's definition of transformation is extremely basic, and radically different to my outline of the geographical approach. Hay's view on the social, political and economic changes that have taken place, and the continuation of state power, may superficially resemble a transfornationalist. However, firstly, he does not see such change as a process of globalisation. Secondly, even if the first objection was invalid, it is nevertheless the case that Hay focuses analytically on ideas about globalisation – transfornationalists simply do not share this focus. Finally, Hay has consistently resisted the idea that material life determines or conditions agency. Transformationalists challenge economism as *a form of* materialist structuralism, but not materialist structuralism in general. Agents can shape the trajectory but not the existence of globalisation. Rightly or wrongly, Hay disagrees.

The 'third wave' of globalisation theory

In an important sense, Colin Hay belongs in the sceptical camp of the globalisation debate in IPE. His work has provided important counter-evidence to the notion that global market forces constrain national governments, or lead to policy homogenization (Hay 1998; 2002c; Hay & Watson 1998; 1999; Hay & Smith 2005; see also Watson 1999). He has even argued that economic trends suggest Britain is undergoing 'de-globalisation', or at least 'Europeanisation' in contrast to globalisation (Hay 1998, Hay & Smith 2005: 128). Hay's contribution to the debate, however, certainly transcends that of the so-called 'second wave'. Similarly to Paul Hirst and Graham Thompson, Hay's work is premised on restoring agency to the globalisation debate. Globalisation is too often presented as 'a process without a subject', that is, a process of structural change exogenous to any particular instances of political agency (Hay 2002a). Whereas Hirst and Thompson's reinstrumentalisation of agency is largely normative – they claim that states, as agents, *could* resist globalisation – Hay's critique is made on explicitly analytical grounds. With David Marsh, as noted above, he has attempted to 'put the "P" back into IPE'. This includes rejecting the structuralism of realism as an analytical framework (which Hirst and Thompson generally subscribe to) as well as the main features of the 'first wave' of theorising on globalisation (Hay & Marsh 1999).

As we saw in the previous chapter, Hay believes the ideational realm is a key factor in successfully synthesising structural and agential explanations. Agents' ideas about the material structural environment shape their political action. As such, 'ideas about globalisation may come to exert a powerful causal effect independent of the process they purport to represent' (2002a: 380). Investigating these ideas is therefore the core feature of the 'third wave'. Hay therefore rebukes the materialist and 'empiricist' orientation of both the first and second waves:

> something quite significant is lost in this overly restrictive emphasis upon material indices of globalisation... rigorous empiricism leads [the sceptical approach] to fail adequately to consider the way in which globalisation comes to inform public policy-making (Hay & Rosamond 2002: 148).

Hay's initial contribution to the globalisation debate came in the form of demonstrating that New Labour upheld *false* ideas about globalisation, that is, he contrasted New Labour's reading of globalisation with his own, more sceptical analysis. Whether true or not, however, the globalisation thesis has 'truth effects' as agents remake their world through policies they believe are compelled to adopt:

> It is the political discourse of globalisation rather than globalisation per se... that summons the inexorable 'logic of no alternative' in terms of systematic welfare retrenchment, wholesale labour market deregulation and fiscal conservatism writ large... it is the political deployment of the discourse of no alternative... that is the most significant factor in restricting the parameters of that considered politically and economically acceptable (Hay & Watson 1998: 812; see also Hay 1997; 1998; 1999).

Although not necessarily entirely absent in Hay's earliest contributions to the globalisation debate, Hay has more recently adopted a broadly constructivist approach to ideas, particularly in collaboration with Ben Rosamond (Hay & Rosamond 2002; see also Hay 2002a; Rosamond 1999). Agents are shown to genuinely believe that globalisation is true; what they believe is therefore more important for understanding outcomes than determining whether or not their beliefs are in fact true.

This perspective has led to a large amount of valuable empirical research on globalisation discourse. The main focus has been the British government, but in collaboration with, firstly, Rosamond and, secondly, Nicola Smith, the globalisation discourse of the European Union and several other West European governments has been examined. The main thrust of Hay's work in this regard has been detailing New Labour's acceptance of 'the logic of no alternative', or globalisation as a non-negotiable, external economic constraint, reflected in the power of global market forces and perfect capital mobility. Globalisation, therefore, is an idea which depicts a social reality in which, firstly, 'the predominant line of causation runs unequivocally from the economic to the political. Politics must always follow where the market leads. And secondly, following logically, the state must not, or cannot, interfere with the perfect function of the global market (Hay & Watson 1998: 817; see also Hay 1998: 530-1; Hay 1997).[7]

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[7] Evidently, New Labour's treatment of globalisation is similar to IPE's treatment of globalisation.

With Ben Rosamond, in 2002, Hay looked in more detail at how different agents (in this case, national governments) articulate globalisation and its effects. Again, they found that the dominant discourse was one which depicted globalisation as an exogenous economic phenomenon, a constraint upon public policy at the national level. It is also deemed as an unambiguously *positive* development. Hay and Rosamond say that this discourse is found principally in the Blair government's discourse in relation to domestic economic policy. However, they also discovered a range of alternative discourses. Most importantly, they found that the Blair government upheld a different view of globalisation in relation to foreign economic policy. Here, in order to justify trade liberalisation (which will produce further globalisation), globalisation is depicted as positive but also contingent upon the political choices made in forums such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Hay and Rosamond found that, principally in France, globalisation was presented as negative, in that it produces homogeneity, damaging national cultures. In this way globalisation is associated with Americanisation, in a cultural sense, in addition to global market forces. Throughout Western Europe, including France, Hay and Rosamond also found the economic process of globalisation associated with negative consequences, and contrasted with the more benign process of Europeanisation. In each of these discourses, the notion of 'what globalisation is' is fairly stable; the differences concern immutability, or whether the process has negative implications. Hay and Rosamond conclude by suggesting the political conditions in which government are most likely to appeal to globalisation. Chief among them is:

> Where left or centre-left administrations are engaged in a process of reforming popular social democratic or social market institutions the appeal to external economic constraints is more likely (2002: 163).

This is an intriguing possibility: globalisation discourse may be a product of the left, or perhaps more precisely the left's perceived need to find accommodation with neoliberalism. The point is slightly undermined, however, by a further hypothesised condition:

> Where globalisation has positive associations and connotations (as in Britain and Ireland) (2002: 164).

Hay and Rosamond do not ponder where such positive connotations might have come from in the first place. Is this another discourse of globalisation, antecedent to the globalisation discourse upheld, for instance, by the Blair government?

With Nicola Smith, in 2005, Hay compared the globalisation discourse of the governments of Britain and Ireland. Their most important finding, particularly for this thesis, was a third discourse articulated by the Blair government. In addition to the dominant discourse, related to domestic economic policy, and the secondary discourse related to trade liberalisation, Hay and Smith found that, in relation to aid and development policy, globalisation's positive nature was called into question. Globalisation, they argue, was treated as *potentially* positive for all countries, but it needs to be made positive through socialisation, or better management in developing countries. This discourse seemingly chimes, therefore, with the World Bank's post-Washington Consensus and the 'good governance' agenda. The Irish government was also shown to uphold a range of discourses of globalisation, relating to a range of policy settings.

Hay's opinion on *why* different agents have different ideas about globalisation, or why different agents present different ideas at different times, is somewhat disconcerting. He refers consistently to the strategic context within which the agent is operating. At the national level, for instance, the Blair government needed to present globalisation as irresistible to justify policy positions such as reducing corporation tax. At the international level, however, globalisation needed to be presented as in jeopardy in order to justify liberalisation, which would maintain the trajectory of globalisation (see Hay & Smith 2005). Assuming Hay, and his co-authors, are right about the strategic imperatives faced by the Blair government, some questions remain. First, does this mean that *any* discourse of globalisation is simply strategic – and if so, from where do the policy objectives served by discourses of globalisation arise? If not, at what point does strategy influence the agent's ideas – in other words, is there an extra-strategic to the element to the invocation of the concept of globalisation? There is plenty of evidence, in both his theoretical and empirical work, to suggest that Hay

does *not* accept the materialist notion of economic interests as the source of ideational phenomena, but these are questions never systematically addressed by Hay's contributions to the globalisation debate. Moreover, the emphasis on strategy appears to contradict the argument, frequently put by Hay, that agents such as New Labour genuinely believe that globalisation is happening, that it is inevitable, and that it is positive. As such, some references to globalisation are deemed 'disingenuous' or 'duplicitous' (Hay 2002b). Hay and Rosamond argue that some references to globalisation are merely 'useful'; in this sense globalisation discourse helps 'in legitimating strategy pursued for quite distinct ends' (Hay & Rosamond 2002: 148). The main problem, here, is the apparent links to Hay's earlier work in demonstrating the falsity of globalisation discourse, that is, the possibility that agents such as New Labour are aware that their discourse refers to myth than reality. Indeed, in work with David Marsh on the globalisation debate, Hay suggests that 'demystifying' globalisation is the main objective of the third wave (Hay & Marsh 2000).

It is worth exploring exactly what kind of idea globalisation is, for Hay. He and his co-authors refer almost exclusively to globalisation as a 'discourse'. However, Hay the term is rarely defined. The meaning of discourse is briefly discussed in the article with Ben Rosamond. It is defined as 'a structured set of ideas, often in the form of implicit and sedimented assumptions, upon which actors might draw in formulating strategy' (2002: 151) and similarly 'a cognitive filter frame or conceptual lens through which social, political and economic developments might be ordered and rendered intelligible' (2002: 157). These definitions seem to contradict the notion that a discourse can ever be deliberately duplicitous, yet Hay and Rosamond maintain that discourse can be consciously *selected*, depending on the political setting. Some ambiguities on the nature of the ideas being studied does not necessarily undermine the value of Hay's empirical ideational analysis. However, it may be possible to infer more from Hay's analysis. It seems that Hay believes that, in addition to upholding certain discourses, agents also have ideologies. The main subject of his empirical work, New Labour, is deemed an adherent of neoliberal ideology. This evaluation features heavily in Hay's earlier analysis of New Labour – from which the 'third wave' originates (see 1997; 1999). It is from neoliberal ideology, then, that New Labour's normative agenda derives. We can presume, therefore, that New Labour selects different globalisation discourses in different settings in order to justify

different aspects of the neoliberal agenda. Hay and Smith (2005) explicitly say this is the reason for the apparent leftwards shift in New Labour's globalisation discourse in relation to development policy. We can presume, also, that the actors identified which uphold significantly different discourses of globalisation that are *not* neoliberal – at least not in the British (or Anglo-American) sense. This does not, of course, fully explain how one's 'cognitive filter' (that is, discourse) can be strategically selected. I agree that agents have the reflexive capacity to, to some extent, *choose* their ideas, and that their ideas help them to interpret their material environment. But surely they cannot discard and replace cognitive filters for the sake of strategy; if nothing else, the discourse supposedly helps them to appreciate their strategically selective situation in the first place. Moreover, even if we posit the pivotal influence of neoliberal ideology, this does not fully explain the intellectual origins of the dominant meaning of globalisation, which all agents, in all policy settings, appear to accept.

Hay's account of 'discourse' appears to overlap significantly with the notion of 'ideology' offered by political theorist Michael Freeden (1996), in the sense that it is possessed by particular agents, and enable them to interpret their environment and determine how it should be acted upon. It certainly appears that, for Hay, globalisation *discourse* is performing some of the functions – at least for New Labour – that we would expect (neoliberal) *ideology* to perform. Indeed, Hay and Rosamond explicitly argue that discourses of globalisation 'exist independently of the actors who draw upon them'. If this is the case, then the conclusion of their empirical work must surely be that, for some agents, globalisation is not simply discursive, but also ideological. In a crucial footnote, Hay and Rosamond state that:

> It is important to be clear about this. Whether external economic constraints are believed to exist is not a matter of choice. Yet whether or not to acknowledge such constraints (where they are perceived to exist) and whether or not to invoke disingenuously such constraints (where they are not perceived to exist) is. The very fact that this is so makes it very difficult to establish whether constraints are genuinely perceived or not... The methodological problem which this presents is, in one sense, intractable and inherent in an analysis of public discourses. Nonetheless, where (as in the British case) the rhetorics of globalisation deployed by the very same politicians

> are incommensurate, there are clear grounds for suggesting a strategic appeal to such rhetorics (2002: 165, n.7).[8]

The problem here is the leap between incommensurability and strategy. In my opinion this does not constitute 'clear grounds'. Firstly, Hay and Rosamond do not discover different discourses employed by the same politicians in the same policy setting (if time is removed as a factor). The very fact that they find them employed in different policy settings surely warrants investigation into the myriad ideas associated with certain policy areas that lead to fluctuations in a discourse's otherwise commensurate deployment. Secondly, and most importantly, Hay and Rosamond underestimate the flexibility of political concepts. Michael Freeden would argue that the fact that New Labour's discourses of globalisation vary in different political contexts while converging upon a single core meaning is entirely normal ideological activity. Globalisation's core meaning (as they see it, external economic constraint) is ever-present, but acquires different peripheral meanings in different political settings. It is tempting to conclude, here, that the reason Hay privileges discourse at the expense of ideology is that he never entirely divorces the 'third wave' from the objectives of the 'second wave', that is, the argument that globalisation is a *false* idea.

Post-structuralism

Like Colin Hay, Angus Cameron and Ronen Palan uphold the notion that globalisation is a discourse. Primarily, however, they depict globalisation as a 'narrative'. The narrative is not, as Bevir and Rhodes would contend, constructed by agents; rather, it acts upon them. As such, the narrative 'performs' (2004: 84). Cameron and Palan, therefore, contribute to the globalisation debate – in their book *The Imagined Economies of Globalisation* (2004) – from a post-structuralist perspective. Following Foucault they uphold the co-dependence of power and knowledge or 'social imaginaries'. Narratives are myths, associated not with objective fact but rather the subjectivities of the powerful. However, this does not make narratives any less real; in fact narratives give meaning, and therefore reality, to the

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[8] Despite its use here, 'rhetoric' is not an analytic concept used to any great extent by Hay and Rosamond.

exercise of power (2004: 3, 40-1). It is not the case, for Cameron and Palan, that reality is entirely discursive. Some narratives are more real than others, in the sense that they are more influential upon the social universe. Narratives must satisfy the partially extra-discursive criterion of 'plausibility': there must be some correspondence with actual human practice, so that the narrative may play a 'mediatory' role between our subjective thought-processes and the world around us (2004: 8-9, 88). As such, it may be that Cameron and Palan are less forgiving of 'first wave' theorising on globalisation than Colin Hay. Indeed, they deny that their work attempts to 'invalidate approaches to globalisation as an analytical or descriptive construct'. Instead, they simply contend that, contra earlier analyses of globalisation, 'the more fundamental significance of the concept is the role it is playing in rewriting the collective imagery of society' (2004: 6-7). It is its success as mediator, for certain groups, that accounts for its ubiquity.

It is not difficult to see the similarities between Hay's and Cameron and Palan's contribution to the globalisation debate. Cameron and Palan are interested, like Hay, in assessing the 'truth effects' of globalisation discourse. *The Imagined Economies* opens with the story of Michael Bonsignore, then chief-executive of technology conglomerate Honeywell, who attempted in 2001 to merge his firm with General Electric.[9] Such mergers are for some scholars the 'proof' of globalisation – yet they are motivated a belief in globalistion's immutability. Agents such as Bonsignore, therefore

> identify a 'meaning' for globalisation from which they then extrapolate implications for the strategic futures of their respective organisations. They employ armies of analysts and consultants to help them predict and then prepare for a world yet to come into existence (Cameron and Palan 2004: 2).

Cameron and Palan explicitly praise the work of Hay for demonstrating that 'however over-simplified and dubious business globalisation theories may appear to the academic observer, they have nonetheless played... an important role in shaping the institutional manifestations of globalisation' (2004: 29). They credit the 'third wave'

[9] The merger was eventually blocked by the European Union. Cameron and Palan were writing before this decision was taken.

with ‘a more reflexive and critical understanding of the nature of historical change’, and say, of *The Imagined Economies*, that ‘this book itself probably falls within the ambit of the third wave’. However, their first chapter, outlining the main protagonists of the globalisation debate in IPE and IR, clearly does not subscribe to the ‘wave thesis’. Furthermore, they are reluctant to fully identify themselves with Hay’s perspective. They note, in particular, Hay’s belief that it is possible to ‘demystify’ globalisation (noted above). Cameron and Palan elect not to adjudicate upon the material reality of globalisation, since any allusion to an ‘objective’ reading of material structure contrasts starkly with their opinion that representations of exogenous context are as important (within certain limits) as the real-world experience they supposedly represent.

How do Cameron and Palan characterise the globalisation narrative? In other words, what are their empirical findings? It is important to note, initially, that the empirical scope of their inquiry is never specified. It related only anecdotally to specific arenas or instances of political action. It is implied, however, that they are referring principally to the discourse of British and American political elites. Cameron and Palan’s central finding echoes the geographical approach, which was discussed earlier. They of course do not argue that globalisation is a process of geographical change; rather, they argue that the globalisations narrative’s primary function is the reframing of space and time (2004: 57-9). All narratives entail a particular understanding of space and time. Accordingly, the globalisation narrative ‘opens up a multiplicity of spatial domains each characterised by different modes of social being and identity’. Globalisation therefore redraws the social map by depicting the emergence of new spaces with a unique social terrain, in which new forms of organisation are required (2004:7-8). In terms of time, globalisation marks out an intelligible progression through time with universal resonance. The future figures prominently: globalisation is something which is ongoing. An image of the future structures our present (2004:9-10).

Cameron and Palan’s main focus is not images of human geography but in fact images of economic change. A specific orientation to space and time helps to constitute the globalisation narrative, but its main implication, as for Hay, relates to our perceptions of economic compulsion. As the title of their book suggests, they

argue that notions of economic space have been re-imagined by the globalisation narrative. As such the economic imaginary is matted with the geographical. Globalisation means the predominant imaginary of the Westphalian era, that of a binary distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' economic space, has been replaced. Not simply, however, by a single global economy – that is, an extension of the 'inside' – but rather three new economies occupying distinct spatial domains. First, 'a placeless globality, the offshore or virtual economy, global in scope and instantaneous in effect. Second, 'a near globality', the national or private economy, where most people imagine that they actually live. This economic form is subservient to the first, as national economies aim to become competitive in serving the global economy, through discipline and flexibility. Finally, 'an anti-globality', the peripheral economy and realm of the socially excluded. The exclusion zone has become cut off from the operation of the global economy, and thus its dehumanised inhabitants must be retrained so they may join the realm of competition; providing sustenance for their current way of life is not in their own interests (Cameron and Palan 2004: 15-22). For Cameron and Palan the discourse of social inclusion and social exclusion has as such become constitutive of the globalisation narrative – perhaps further evidence in support of Hay and Rosamond's suggestion that globalisation has most connotation for centre-left political actors. Overall, globalisation narrates the arrival of post-national economics. It is not happening in other countries, it is at once everywhere but nowhere. As such it matters that it is *global*, as this evokes the notion that the global market is intangible to any political jurisdiction. Hay and his co-authors did not explore the connotations of globality seemingly inherent in globalisation discourse.

Perhaps the most striking element of Cameron and Palan's empirical analysis of the globalisation narrative is the new role prescribed to the state. This issue is of course also central to Hay's work, but is explored in greater depth by Cameron and Palan. They argue that

> the image of the bounded, sovereign, territorial space of the state which equated to the imagined community of the nation is being replaced by a fundamentally different image of the state whereby the relationship between state, citizen, economy and polity is redrawn. To put it differently, the imagined community of the territorial nation-state, the dominant and perhaps constitutive imagery of

> political life in the past two centuries, is very rapidly giving way to a series of imagined economies which maintain the fiction of the state but situate it within a radically different set of boundaries and notions of social space. So the state continues to play a role: but it is a very different state (2004: 17).

The redrawing of the relationship between state, citizen, economy and polity they refer to here is the apparent relocation of the state into the economic realm. The state, in a material sense, has always been an economic actor or institution; now, however, it is exclusively economic, subject to economic logic rather than capable of reflexively shaping the economic realm from a partially independent vantage point, and able to relate to its citizens in only economistic terms. The development of 'global governance' mechanisms such as the WTO is accounted for in a similar fashion. The WTO, among other international institutions, is not divorceable from the economy, and more specifically the global, offshore, state-less economy. As such 'the purpose of the WTO as a whole is less to regulate trade *per se* than to *regulate the behaviour of states engaging in trade*' (Cameron & Palan 2004: 124, emphasis original). It is merely an institutional representation of the immutable, global economic space. This point goes beyond simply arguing that the WTO is hostage to corporate interests. Cameron and Palan are fully aware that although the globalisation narrative has 'very quickly taken a concrete form in institutional structures outside the state', the state itself is implicated in these structures. It is therefore 'seen to survive', even to have been 'rejuvenated'. Nevertheless it is left 'profoundly altered' (2004: 124-5). This argument about the WTO is extremely interesting, given that the current round of liberalisation has subsequently stalled, albeit with little or no effect on the UK government's trade policy agenda – perhaps suggesting the disposability of the WTO to the globalisation narrative.

One final empirical finding worth noting here is that the globalisation narrative, according to Cameron and Palan, has additional 'covert' narratives as well as the dominant narrative they concentrate on empirically. Multi-dimensionality is an innate feature of narrative construction. Specifically, the concept of globalisation

> has appeared in other guises within communal stories that predicted different futures. As the discourse has developed, we have witnessed a compression and repression of the history of globalisation itself, as elements of previous stories subside or

> disappear altogether to make way for a new story that renders the current presentation of globalisation coherent with its past. But the institutional effect of the previous predictions is not lost; it is still with us in some way (2004: 10).

It is for this reason that seemingly new developments, like the rise of China or the challenge of radical Islam, can be incorporated into the globalisation narrative, as they echo previous elements of the infant globalisation narrative regarding the rise of Japan and the Soviet threat (2004: 11).

Cameron and Palan of course recognise that there are a range of political perspectives on globalisation. They note that there is a significant degree of 'conceptual commonality' regarding 'what globalisation is' among different perspectives (they do not refer to 'agents'). They argue, however, that this commonality has not dulled political differences. Rather, it has simply transposed them to a different level of organisation. So instead of disputes about what Britain, for instance, should be like, there are disputes *within Britain* about what the world should be like; the disputes themselves are quite familiar:

> Drawn from the entire political spectrum, they view globalisation as a logical and necessary outcome of a spatial expansion brought about through a form of time-space compression driven primarily by economic and technological change. The shift from nation-state to globality is essentially horizontal – the space of socio-economic organisation covers a wider area of territory – and hence the political issues are the same, albeit within a wider spatial framework (Cameron & Palan 2004: 33-4).

I find this argument ultimately unconvincing. Of course, we should expect to find familiar debates in contemporary British politics, originating before the onset of globalisation discourse, even if we conclude the political landscape is dominated by a novel globalisation narrative or globalisation ideology. But I would expect ideational change to be more significant than Cameron and Palan suggest here. If they are right about the ontological significance of dominant narratives, surely they should share this expectation. Specifically, it is problematic that they refer here to 'the shift from nation-state to globality'. According to their own analysis, globality is an important feature of globalisation discourse – perhaps one missed by Hay – but the core concept

of the narrative is actually globalisation itself. We are primarily experiencing (so the narrative goes) globalisation, not globality. In practice, they have not systematically investigated any perspective on globalisation other than the vaguely-delineated elite discourse, and this needs to be rectified.

Cameron and Palan do not utilise the analytical concept of ideology in any significant way. Like many post-structuralists they reject the Marxist imagery of ideology as a closed and rigid system of thought. The notion of a narrative, and its related notions, portrays ideational phenomena as more flexible. However, it is also the case that, for Cameron and Palan, the globalisation narrative is all-encompassing. They accept of course that, in practice, it is variegated, subject to resistance, and that it has emerged slowly and changed over time. However, the presence of ideational phenomena *separate* to the globalisation narrative is not investigated empirically. Take, for instance, the concept of 'the market'. Obviously, it has a long, contorted genealogy; an implicit recognition of this enables Hay – among many others, as we will see below – to depict the idea of globalisation as related to liberalism or neoliberalism. Even if Cameron and Palan are right about the globalisation narrative, in order to appreciate how it effective upon social reality, we surely need to account for the role of ideas antecedent or exogenous to the narrative – even where they are deemed complementary. This problem, I believe, is suggestive of a wider problem within post-structuralism regarding agency. Cameron and Palan's reference to the ideas of actual agents are sparse and anecdotal. In fact, we could say – albeit using terminology Cameron and Palan would never use – that agents appear only as 'proof' of the hypothesised globalisation narrative. Ultimately, however, this is an ontological rather than methodological 'problem'. While it remains irresolvable here, this does not necessarily mean that Cameron and Palan's empirical analysis is not extremely valuable.

Neo-Gramscianism

In contrast to Cameron and Palan, and to a lesser extent Hay, many neo-Gramscian theorists of globalisation discourse are more comfortable with the notion of ideology. This does not necessarily mean that they actually analyse ideational phenomena *as*

ideologies, but the term is nevertheless frequently invoked. Neo-Gramscianism clearly does not belong, unproblematically, in any of the theoretical camps classified in this chapter. As suggested above – and if the analysis of neo-Gramscianism provided in Chapter One – is correct, neo-Gramscianism may in fact be a close relative of the classical Marxist version of 'hyperglobalisation'. Indeed, there is no doubt that neo-Gramscians such as Stephen Gill and Craig Murphy, in pioneering the development of IPE as a distinct discipline, did much to elevate the concept of globalisation, as a reading of material structural change, to its current status in the discipline. Nevertheless, it is presented by Ian Bruff (2005) as an alternative 'third wave' approach. Bruff resists depicting neo-Gramscianism as a 'fourth wave' – which in any case would surely contort the wave thesis beyond repair – and instead finds common ground with Hay's contribution to the globalisation debate. He welcomes the focus on the ideational dimension of globalisation, and the argument that certain (elite) actors bring about globalisation by acting – whether sincerely or not – as if it already exists. However, he has two main problems with 'third wave' theorising: first, its foundation in the 'second wave' (which Cameron and Palan would actually agree with). There is, according to Bruff, a 'global capitalist order'. Second, Bruff argues that the 'third wave' has travelled too far in the direction of post-structuralism and the apparently misguided notion that 'all is narrative' (which Hay would actually agree with, assuming Bruff is correct). As such 'neo-Gramscian theory can overcome the shortcomings of the otherwise praiseworthy third wave' (Bruff 2005: 261). This section will therefore discuss the work of three scholars associated with neo-Gramscianism that have contributed to analysis of the ideational dimension of globalisation: Mark Rupert, James Mittelman and Andreas Antoniades.

It should be noted, initially, that Mark Rupert's *Ideologies of Globalisation* (2000) is concerned exclusively with American politics – although he refers extensively to international institutions too. His contention is that different social forces within the United States attach different 'meanings' to the process of globalisation. Crucially, of course, he argues that globalisation is happening, or has happened, in the sense that a single, global capitalism system has emerged. He employs 'ideology' as an analytical concept in order to describe the ideas upheld by these social forces – although he does not explore the notion of ideology, he clearly eschews a classical Marxist approach to ideology. The Gramscian concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony are employed

to classify different perspectives on globalisation. The hegemonic ideology is what Rupert calls 'liberal globalisation'. The central meaning it attaches to the process of globalisation is the emergence of a single, global marketplace, in line with that 'predicted' by Ricardian free trade theory, and based ontologically and epistemologically upon an anti-statist abstract individualism. According to Rupert, the reliance on free trade theory marks the hegemonic ideology out as 'liberal' – as such it is a slight departure from the hegemonic 'neoliberal' ideology of the 1980s. Potentially, this is an important finding. However, it is not explored, and in fact is contradicted by several references to 'neoliberal globalisation' elsewhere in the book. Rupert does not relate the hegemonic ideology systematically to any particular agents. Instead, he concentrates on detailing how this worldview is deposited into the fabric of organisations such as the WTO and the North Atlantic Free Trade Association (NAFTA). He does not specify how the 'social forces' of capitalism are represented in political action, at least not in relation to the maintenance of the hegemonic ideology.

The main counter-hegemonic ideology discussed by Rupert is what he calls 'global democratisation'. He refers to various forms of left-wing resistance to liberal (or neoliberal!) globalisation. As such specific agents are more visible in Rupert's analysis. Yet he does not demonstrate what 'meaning' advocates of global democratisation attach to globalisation. He notes that many place great significance on the emergence of global social movements, and the possibility of reforming international institutions. We can infer that in the view of these actors, globalisation is seen as social and political as well as economic, and that it is therefore possible to reshape the global economy on the basis of progressive values. In this minimal sense, global democratisation is an 'ideology of globalisation' – mainly, however, Rupert presents the perspective as a *response* to the material process of globalisation. Rupert also discusses far-right political groups. His association of this perspective with globalisation is highly original (although see Robertson & Khondker 1998: 37). Moreover, in this case he demonstrates that the agency of far-right political actors is related to a specific meaning attached to globalisation, that is, the threat to the American way of life from a tyrannical world government. However, this perspective is still treated primarily as a *response* to material globalisation and, as such, a particularly obtuse response.

James Mittelman also employs the concept of ideology in his analysis of the ideational dimension of globalisation. He argues that 'globalisation is not only about the material structure of power but also constitutive, and constituted by, ways of interpreting and representing the world' (Mittelman 2004: 97). The professed argument of his book *Whither Globalisation?* is that 'globalisation is becoming a form of intellectual power embodied in a knowledge system, propagated by institutionalised authority, and manifested in neoliberal ideology' (2004: *xi*). Two important implications can be derived from this argument: first, the notion that globalisation as an ideational phenomenon (that is, 'knowledge') *produces* neoliberalism as an ideational phenomenon (that is, 'ideology'). Second, the blatant allusion to post-structuralist terminology and arguments, principally the mutual dependence of power and knowledge (see 2004: 3). However, Mittelman certainly does believe that globalisation, in a material sense, is happening, irrespective of ideas about the process. He defines globalisation as 'a global division of labour... characterised by large-scale flows of capital, technology, and workers' (2004: 5). He therefore asserts that 'at all times, globalisation *takes place* – albeit in varied and intricate ways' (2004: 15). Mittelman does not believe the globalisation is exclusively economic, and argues that political and cultural change also serve to constitute the process (2004: 9) – the role of the ideologies of globalisation in the political and cultural realms is, however, not specified.

Among contemporary neo-Gramscians, Mittelman seems to be among the closest to following Robert Cox's 'historical structures' approach, which was endorsed in Chapter One. However, in his empirical analysis he quickly abandons the argument that globalisation is a form of knowledge which produces neoliberal ideology, replacing it with the more vague notion that 'the contemporary era is marked by a bundling of neoliberalism and globalisation' (2004: 47). He discovers, empirically, four 'ideological discourses' of globalisation. First, the dominant 'centrist neoliberal school', upheld by the governments of most rich countries and the international economic institutions. Second, 'reformist neoliberal institutionalism', represented by 'insider' critics such as Joseph Stiglitz. Third, 'historical-materialist transformation' – essentially Marxism. Fourth, 'development transformism', upheld by development and global justice campaigners, advocating that poor countries engage with globalisation on a more selective basis (Mittelman 2004: 50-54). All of these

perspectives, according to Mittelman, converge around this 'bundling of neoliberalism and globalisation'. But there is 'disagreement about what inference to draw from this convergence', because, essentially, they judge the results according to different normative criteria (Mittelman 2004: 54). The main implication of Mittelman's work is the role of neoliberalism in the ideational dimension of globalisation. Ultimately, however, this role remains underconceptualised.

Andreas Antoniades' cites Colin Hay's contribution to the 'third wave', and claims that his neo-Gramscian analysis of globalisation discourse in Greece and Ireland 'builds on and extends this earlier research'. However, he states explicitly that his work is not concerned primarily with ideas – whether depicted as narrative or strategically-selected rhetoric. Instead, his research concerns the political effects of globalisation discourse, and secondarily, the material factors that explain these effects (2007: 311). For Antoniades, globalisation is a 'hegemonic discourse'. As such it aims to define the common sense of society, and as such shape both agents and their environments. Like Mittelman, Antoniades is influenced by post-structuralism, but clearly belongs in the Marxist tradition. He argues that globalisation, as a material process, is happening, exogenous to ideas about the process. However, Antoniades wants to show how 'it is experienced differently in different countries and by different social actors'. He wants therefore to detail the different 'translations' of globalisation. However, for Antoniades the meaning of globalisation discourse remains quite rigid. It is essentially a policy agenda, involving advocacy of privatisation, liberalisation of capital accounts, deregulation, labour market flexibility, and corporate tax reform (2007: 306-7). Antoniades is therefore not principally interested in the concept of globalisation and how it is used by agents – although this does form *part* of his empirical inquiry.

Rather than investigating globalisation discourse, Antoniades instead seeks to assess how this discourse is 'materialised' in different political settings, that is, the extent to which the policy agenda is accepted, and more generally, whether it succeeds in reshaping the nature of the polity. 'Materialisation', as an analytical concept, originates in fact from Foucault's work. Essentially it refers to the role of agents in producing or reproducing globalisation, since that actualise, through policy, the agenda prescribed by globalisation discourse (Antoniades 2007: 307). The concept

‘materialisation’ is intended to signify that globalisation exists as a discourse exogenous to particular settings, and requires the support of particular actors for reproduction.

Antoniades’ research generates a large number of important findings. Having studied political parties, trade unions, business groups and the media, he found that in Greece globalisation discourse produced multi-level societal struggle. Globalisation acquired a heavily politicised and contested character. In contrast, in Ireland, globalisation was apolitical, and became one of the fundamental ‘givens’ of political life. In practice, it appears that Antoniades’ research *is* highly concerned, perhaps even primarily, with how the globalisation concept is actually employed by agents, in relation to the policy agenda outlined above – especially in the case of Greece. To some extent, this undermines his research. He treats globalisation discourse monolithically, and expects to find only different patterns of materialisation. Yet he finds agents not only shaping the material process, but the ideational dimension too – in ways that do not fit comfortably, we could say, in a neo-Gramscian framework of hegemony versus counter-hegemony. In detailing a range of different ‘ideological discourses’ of globalisation, this is a problem overcome by James Mittelman’s analysis. Nevertheless, Antoniades is able, in relation to the concept’s use, to generate impressive insight. For instance, perhaps supporting one of Hay’s arguments, he found that left-wing actors in Greece associated globalisation with a loss of autonomy and control, and contrasted in negatively with the more benign process of Europeanisation. He also argues that the concept itself was largely absent from Irish politics until 2000. He suggests that the concept is more visible when the process is contested – as it was in Greece, and only in Ireland after 2000 (2004: 319). In this way he argues that Nicola Smith, from Colin Hay’s branch of the ‘third wave’, ‘over-emphasised the role and importance of the concept of globalisation in the Irish public discourse’ (2004: 319; see Smith 2005; also Hay & Smith 2005). In this way he attempts to explain his otherwise contradictory focus on the concept in the case of Greece.

On the basis if his profiles of the contrasting experiences of materialisation in Greece and Ireland, Antoniades then asks which material factors explain the differences. He considers ‘domestic structures’ (that is, institutions of government) and ‘political

economy' (that is, the relationship between state, capital and labour at the national level). He also considers a combination of these two sets of factors. Ultimately, by his own admission, his answers are inconclusive. He argues that three factors lying outside his explanatory scheme appear to resonate more than anticipated: the contingent nature of agency, path dependence, and specific, ephemeral material circumstances – such as Ireland's economic boom. These possibilities surely open interesting, if contradictory, lines of further inquiry. Yet Antoniades' profound ontological commitment to materialism – as with neo-Gramscianism in general – appears to close the paths trodden by the likes of Colin Hay, and Angus Cameron and Ronen Palan.

Social theory and globalisation

As an analytical concept, globalisation has penetrated every discipline of the social sciences. I believe that the work of many sociologists on, firstly, the emergence of a global culture, and secondly, globality as a historical era distinct from both modernity and postmodernity, is valuable to the 'third wave' of IPE's globalisation debate. I will discuss here the work of Martin Shaw, Mike Featherstone, Martin Albrow, and Tom Nairn and Paul James. Given the disciplinary divide, I will focus primarily on their empirical analyses of the ideational dimension of globalisation, rather than theoretical or methodological issues.

Martin Shaw straddles sociology and IR; to a large extent his work represents a critique of IR founded on its neglect of the concepts and methodologies of sociology. Shaw's most important works in relation to globalisation are *Global Society and International Relations* (1994) and *The Theory of the Global State* (2000). Shaw's key argument concerns the emergence of a global society, giving rise to a globalist *identity*. It should be noted, initially, that Shaw probably belongs to the geographical approach. He consciously identifies with David Held, Jan Aart Scholte and 'transformationalism'. However, this is not necessarily problematic; the neo-Gramscian theorists discussed above also uphold a materialist approach to globalisation, and it is upon this that their analysis of ideas is based. Shaw is distinguished as a transformationalist by his focus on identity. In this way, ideas about

globalisation can shape the material process. Shaw (1994) argues that people are starting to imagine the world in general as their primary social and political association. This is distinct from universalism in that it contains an assumption of proximity; moreover, it is this identification, rather than simply the growth of transnational or worldwide problems, that has produced a 'global civil society' to challenge the global exercise of political and economic power. In *The Theory of the Global State* notes a multiplicity of levels of political authority, and a diversity of state forms at the national level, as constitutive of global society. Crucially he posits the existence of a 'global layer of state'. In practice, this layer is not the spontaneous outburst of globality but rather a product of political developments in the West. However,

> although the West has dominated the elaboration of this layer, it is important to emphasise that its global legitimacy rests precisely on its representation of the vastly larger number of juridical states created in the non-Western world since 1945 (2000: 229).

Perhaps Shaw's most intriguing argument relates to social democracy. Shaw (1999) has argued that social democratic ideology may be the main benefactor of the rise of a globalist identity. Global society makes possible a form of both socialism and democracy unhindered by the demands of nation-statehood. However, he points out that, while the work of Antony Giddens (1998) in this regard is promising, such a perspective has yet to be articulated by social democrats in the West.

Despite some interesting arguments, it is probably fair to say that most sociologists would disagree with much of Shaw's analysis. This certainly applies to Mike Featherstone, perhaps the archetypal theorist of global culture among sociologists, or more specifically the sub-discipline of cultural studies (see also Robertson 1992; 1995; and Hopper 2006). Featherstone rejects the (implicit) assumption of theorists like Shaw that global culture is a product of modernity, or more specifically Western modernity. As such Featherstone explicitly criticises the 'monological' sociology of theorists such as Antony Giddens, whose early work on modernity is influential upon the geographical approach. This approach misses 'not only the cultural viability of non-Western civilisations, but the specificity of the cultural complex of Western

modernity' (1995: 100). Featherstone prefers to see globalisation not as the emergence of a single, global culture – however conceptualised – but rather as 'a dialogical space' or, more facetiously, 'a global babble' (1995: 102-3). He argues not that the world is a single space in a material sense, but rather that we now conceive of the world as a single place. In this way globalisation is specifically cultural. Of course, this conception is shaped by experiences of material change, such as technological development, migration, the power of international institutions, and the emergence of global financial markets. Yet it is not the case that there is a global culture in the way understood by Shaw. Rather there is increasing physical and mental contact across the world – one effect is a sense of globality, but this goes hand in hand with the rise of new parochialisms and a resurgence of nationalism:

> One effect, then, of the globalisation process – the increasing contact and sense of the finitude of the world, the consciousness that the world is one place – is to lead to a clashing of a plurality of different interpretations of the meaning of the world formulated from the perspective of different national and civilisational traditions (Featherstone 1995: 113).

So we can expect ideational phenomena inspired by the notion of globality or the concept of globalisation to take multiple, contradictory forms.

Martin Albrow's book *The Global Age* (1996) posits globality – in a similar vein to Featherstone – as 'a new reality' replacing modernity, but not postmodern. Its core feature is, of course, the notion that the world is a single place (like Featherstone, and unlike Shaw, he treats this as an ideational rather than material phenomenon). Albrow does believe that the material changes often associated with globalisation – such as technological development, environmental crises, the emergence of a global economy – are real in a material sense, but do not alone constitute globalisation. Rather, they are associated with the concept of globalisation precisely because this sense of globality pervades the processes of change (1996: 4). Albrow presents global culture in the same way as Featherstone (Albrow 1996: 144-9) but nevertheless believes it is possible to speak of the meaning or principal effects of globalism, as an idea, monolithically. For Albrow, the core feature of globality is globalism's replacement of 'the nation', or more precisely the bundling together of modernity and the status of

nationhood in human organisation. As such he argues that 'the global is a challenge to both simultaneously': it exposes the limits of progress or modernisation, and undermines all local and parochial identities (1996: 80). Like Shaw, Albrow believes that globality is an inherently positive development. It privileges ideologies such as environmentalism and feminism, and leads to greater recognition of human rights. The essential argument in this regard is that globalism the modern notion of universalism. According to Shaw, universalism is modernity's most endearing feature, but it was marred by an 'optimistic progressiveness' based on 'abstract idealism'. Globalism leads to a more 'pragmatic and direct' style of politics, and privileges those perspectives for whom modernist universalism was most central to their meaning and core objectives (Albrow 1996: 84).

Albrow has a fascinating take on the meaning of globalisation as a political idea. He argues that while globalism belongs to the age of globality, globalisation is actually modernist. It attempts to maintain the illusion of a historical path and the inevitability of progress. Nevertheless in invoking 'the global' it contains a kernel of truth. According to Albrow, it is employed as a concept by those perspectives with least claim to universalism, and as such represents 'repair work' by ideologies increasingly confused and archaic in conditions of globality (1996: 85-9, 163).

The most controversial aspect of Albrow's work is the hypothesised 'global state'. *The Global Age* attempts to reconceptualise contemporary statehood in the age of globality, in a similar way to Shaw's *The Theory of the Global State.* For Albrow, individuals now think and act independently of their nationality. Furthermore, government is a 'polycentric worldwide web of practices'. States have not necessarily lost power, but they pursue objectives formed outside the established framework of nation-statehood. Ultimately, this will increasingly eradicate the source of their power, that is, their relationship with 'the nation' (Albrow 1996: 168-71). In the place of nation-states, Albrow argues that global social movements will eventually construct a global state. Similarly to Shaw, he believes it would be inherently more democratic than nation-states, due to the loss of the 'baggage' of territoriality and inter-state competition. Although blatantly normative as well as analytical, this is actually quite an important insight. Most members of the 'third wave' note the association between support for 'the global' with a retreat of the idea of state action, and not simply

nation-states. Albrow suggests that it was precisely nationalism, devised by modernity, which crippled the idea of the state, and that it may in fact be perfectly compatible with globality. He does admit that, in current conditions, 'it would be all too easy to lose the idea of the state'. However, he clearly assumes that such a possibility is a feature only of the interregnum between modernity and globality, before the ultimate triumph of globalism – and this in fact is the intellectual space in which he locates 'globalisation' as an idea (1996: 173). This epitomises, however, the problems with Albrow's work. I welcome the fact that he discovers, in globalism (and subsequently globalisation) a specific meaning, which he attributes to a greater or lesser extent with all uses of these terms. But the global state hypothesis represents Albrow's misdirection. Feminist, and certainly green, political thought may be becoming more mainstream in Western societies, but nevertheless it remains that the vast majority of the political spectrum is dismissed as, in his words, 'repair work', representative of a interregnum soon to pass. He might be right, in a philosophical sense, to attribute this meaning to globalisation (especially if he is right about the end of modernity) yet it also means that most of the agents actually exercising power at the dawn of the global age are neglected. Specifically, his assumption that the idea of the state will survive in the global age seems far too optimistic.

Tom Nairn and Paul James' work on the idea of globalisation vehemently rejects the notion that globalism has replaced nationalism. In this way they offer (critical) support to Featherstone's thesis. Nairn and James' book *Global Matrix* (2005) is a lot more interested in surveying the ideologies of globalism and/or globalisation than in locating globality alongside modernity and postmodernity. This distinguishes them as sociologists – however, ultimately, their empirical analysis does not represent a through appraisal of globalisation as an idea. Their case study of British politics, for instance, focuses on constitutional change and does refer to the ideas of globalism or globalisation at all. Nevertheless, their overall thesis on the resurgence of nationalism is extremely interesting. They argue that the nationalism of countries like Britain and the United States has not surrendered to globalisation; rather, they present themselves as 'the globalising nation', and the world as 'One Market Under God'. Such a perspective, they argue, is a fundamentally *neoliberal* globalism. But the globalist element is equal in importance to the neoliberal. Specifically, globalism is crucial to 'the War on Terror', in that it is presented as a global battlefield, confronting a global,

abstract enemy. As such, there may be many other globalisms, interacting with older ideological traditions. Their focus is nationalism and neoliberalism (because they are principally concerned with critique), but this is far from exhaustive.

Globalism as Ideology?

There has been one significant attempt to argue that globalisation discourse has in fact given rise to a distinct ideology: the work of Manfred Steger on 'globalism' as an ideology.[10] Perhaps tellingly, Manfred Steger does not conceive of his work as a contribution to the 'third wave', although this probably has more to do with his alternative classificatory scheme for the globalisation debate (see Steger 2002: 17-41). Steger actually endorses Michael Freeden's approach, and as such argues that globalisation, as a political concept, has assumed a crucial role in Anglo-American political culture. Yet it is unwieldy and essentially contestable – different ideologies will decontest the concept in different ways, by endowing it with peripheral ideational components, in order to interpret the world and determine how it should be acted upon in a comprehensible fashion (Steger 2005b: 12, 14-15). Steger accordingly posits 'globalism' as the main ideology which has decontested globalisation for public consumption. As we will see, it is a problematic argument.

Initially, however, I will reconstruct Steger's approach in more detail. As well as following Freeden, Steger actually associates, loosely, with neo-Gramscianism. As such, he argues that globalism is a *hegemonic* ideology, peddled by elites to legitimate their power:

> the public interpretation of the origin, direction, and meaning of [the] profound social changes that go by the name 'globalisation' has fallen disproportionately to a powerful phalanx of social forces that has arranged itself around the ideology of globalism... globalists simultaneously distort social reality, legitimate and advance their power interests, and shape collective and personal identities... globalists supply people with simplified images of a free-market world far more coherent and desirable than it really is (Steger 2002: *ix-x*).

[10] Tom Nairn and Paul James cite Manfred Steger as a major influence in their work.

Steger explicitly endorses the work of Stephen Gill and Robert Cox (2002: 40). Generously, we could say that Steger actually upholds a Coxian approach to ideas. However, he certainly veers closer to the materialism of Gill than the ideational/material synthesis of Cox. He is distinguished, as a neo-Gramscian, by his association with Freeden's methodology. However, he is also distinguished by his understanding of what globalisation is, as a material process. Despite employing the concept of hegemony he does not refer at all to class or capitalism. In fact, his opinion resembles the geographical approach. As such, globalisation is an

> unprecedented compression of time and space reflected in the tremendous intensification of social, political, economic and cultural interconnections on a global scale (2002: *ix*).

The result is 'a new condition of globality'. Essentially, for Steger, it is precisely because globalisation is a multi-dimensional process derived from geographical change that many possible interpretations of globalisation are possible.

Globalism, then, constitutes the dominant, hegemonic perspective on what globalisation is. As the above quote suggests, globalism presents globalisation is a 'market ideology'. Its purpose is to legitimate the notion of the free market. As Steger repeatedly asserts, it is actually entirely indistinguishable from *neoliberal* ideology. He defines globalism as

> a free-market doctrine that endows the relatively new concept of globalisation with neoliberal norms, values and meanings (2002: *x*).

He adds:

> But I wrote this study out of a firm conviction that globalisation does not necessarily have to mean or be what globalists say it means or is (2002: *x*)

This seems problematic. The problem is not necessarily that Steger upholds a materialist view of globalisation, or employs the Gramscian concept of hegemony. Rather, it is the implausible nature of his presentation of globalism. How can there be

many possible decontestations of 'globalisation', yet only a single 'globalism', as ideology? What about globalism gives it an unimpeachable claim to 'the global' or 'globality' not present in other (potential) representations of globalisation? Steger's argument in this regard inverts Martin Albrow's argument. Whereas Albrow argues that the defining idea of globality is globalism, and that references to globalisation misrepresent globalism in a regressive fashion, Steger is arguing that globalisation is the defining idea of globalisation, and that the ideology of globalism is the regressive element. This seems problematic because, as Albrow shows, globalism is the root idea from which notions of globalisation are necessarily derived. I am not arguing that globalism cannot exist as a distinct ideology, in the way Steger suggests; but if it does, then it alone *owns* the derivative notion of globalisation. Other ideologies may seek to share globalism's conceptual terrain, which may in time result in a transferral of ownership. But the argument that globalism derives from globalisation is implausible.

The truth, of course, is that Steger does not actually treat globalism as an ideology, in the way understood by Freeden and other political theorists. Rather, he is referring to neoliberalism. He outlines the relationship between neoliberalism and globalism in a section of his book *Globalism* titled 'Pouring Old Philosophical Wine into New Ideological Bottles'. For Steger, neoliberalism is an ideology premised on a market utopia: individualism, free trade, the moral and economic benefits of competition, 'greed is good', scepticism of state action, and so on. According to Steger, these are actually old ideas rejuvenated by the elite in the 1970s and 1980s. In contemporary politics, by associating globalisation with the market, neoliberals have 'marshalled their considerable resources to expand the neoliberal project into a full-blown globalist ideology'. Globalism therefore 'offers few new political or economic insights. Largely, it constitutes a gigantic repackaging exercise' (2002: 11).

It is perhaps possible that Steger has uncovered upon a potentially important finding here. As noted above, Mark Rupert (almost) suggests that globalisation derives from liberalism rather than neoliberalism, and that therefore 'liberal globalisation' is the new hegemonic ideology. In detailing the influence of Adam Smith and David Ricardo on 'the new market ideology', Steger could have explored this interesting possibility. Yet despite Rupert's clever through-ball, Steger misses an open goal. He draws no philosophical distinction between the *laissez-faire* perspective of Smith and

Ricardo and later thinkers such as Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, and actually presents all as advocates of neoliberalism. The far more important problem is the damage inflicted on the notion of ideology. Steger says that the only original element of globalism is 'an innovative connection between quaint free market *ideas* and cutting-edge global *talk*' (2001:11; emphasis added). In this regard he does a better impression of Colin Hay than Hay himself. I concluded my overview of Hay's analysis of globalisation by wondering whether his analysis actually led to the finding that globalisation was ideological rather than simply discursive. In Steger's case, he employs the analytical concept of ideology while actually treating globalism as a strategically-selected discourse:

> my focus on the ideological dynamics of globalism as it unfolds in the public arena permits me to explore in more detail the discursive strategies of neoliberal forces as they attempt to harness the concept of globalisation to their material interest (2002: 14).

Leaving aside the reference to 'material interest', there is nothing inherently problematic about this outlook. However, it surely contradicts phrases such as 'full-blown globalist ideology', which was cited earlier.

Nevertheless, such problems do not necessarily invalidate Steger's empirical analysis, even if reconceived as a study of the way that neoliberals deploy globalisation discourse strategically. Steger argues that there are 'five central claims of globalism', that is, representations of globalisation. First, 'globalization is about the liberalisation and global integration of markets'. This insight is not particularly original. However, I believe the bundling together of liberalisation and global integration is important. As shown above, Hay argues that the political support for liberalisation is 'incommensurate' with the notion of an exogenous, economic process. Steger rightly assumes, instead, that political concepts are inherently slippery and ambiguous. Second, 'globalisation is inevitable and irreversible', because markets are ultimately irresistible. It is important that this 'claim' is distinguished from the first. As Steger argues, not every claim is ever-present discursively, depending on the political circumstances – but this does not mean that they are not being implicitly invoked. Third, 'nobody is in charge of globalisation'. This claim evokes the retreat of the state,

again with reference to a neoliberal view of the economy. I believe Steger is wrong not to place greater emphasis the retreat of the state, qua Cameron and Palan. Fourth, 'globalisation benefits everyone'. Fifth, 'globalisation furthers the spread of democracy in the world', because political freedom follows economic freedom and increasing interaction with liberal democratic countries.

While Steger is surely wrong to conclude that '[t]he five globalist claims... show that globalism is sufficiently comprehensive and systematic to count as a new ideology', his work remains problematic even if reconceived as analogous to Colin Hay's work. Simply, he does not focus enough on particular agents to justify such a portrait. In terms of agency, he claims that his empirical focus is 'the advocates of globalism', and says that such people

> usually reside in wealthy Northern countries and include corporate managers, executives of large TNCs, corporate lobbyists, journalists and public relations specialists, intellectuals writing to a large public audience, state bureaucrats, and politicians (2002: 46).

Subsequently he quotes liberally from all, with a particular fondness for journalists and politicians. He makes no systematic attempt to show how these actors or their ideas relate to the exercise of power in particular policy-making contexts.

The problems with Steger's work are compounded by his more recent work on the aftermath of 9/11 and the rise of neoconservatism. Essentially he argues that globalism now has a sixth claim, that is, 'globalisation requires a war on terror' (Steger 2005a; 2005b). Apparently, its ability to adapt to new circumstances only further established globalism's status as an ideology (2005b: 24-6). In fact, contrarily, the sixth claim demonstrates the fallaciousness of Steger's work. Steger accepts that the sixth claim creates logical contradictions within globalism. For instance, it acknowledges that many parts of the world are resisting globalisation, or not becoming democratic, and that massive state power is required to steer globalisation or at least switch its auto-pilot device back on (Steger 2005a). However, it is not apparent that this is a problem internal to globalism. Steger's own analysis shows that globalism is not an ideology – it was a strategic discourse deployed by neoliberal

ideology. He makes some sense of this by constructing the term 'market globalism' to describe the neoliberal perspective on globalisation. Neoconservative ideology, the author of the sixth claim, is depicted as 'imperial globalism'.[11] But these remain distinct ideological perspectives. No doubt there are particular actors that value both the neoliberal and neoconservative approach to globalisation, which created logical contradictions in their own perspectives. Yet even then, it would not be accurately depicted as a contradiction within globalism. Simply by positing the existence of different globalisms, Steger undermines the basis upon which a globalist ideology was originally hypothesised. In Steger's own terms, neoliberalism and neoconservatism may have come to share hegemonic status, but they do not inhabit the same ideological space. What Steger *should* be doing with the sixth claim is revisiting his original analysis and pondering whether the concept of globalisation is now subject to a range if different decontestations from a range of ideological vantages. Instead he fixates on whether globalism can survive as a single ideology, when the logic of his own analysis dictates that globalism is an ideology that never was – a political-strategic compromise mistaken for morphology. To reiterate, it may be that there *does* exist an ideology of globalism or globalisation – my objective here is to appraise Steger on his own terms.

Conclusion

It appears that globalisation, as an ideational phenomenon, is more than discursive. Existing studies show that, for many political actors, it provides a comprehensible yet comprehensive set of tools for interpreting the world, and how the world is changing. I would suggest that this makes globalisation *ideological*. This does not mean it constitutes 'an ideology'; however, it suggests that globalisation is more significant than simply something that neoliberals talk about qua neoliberals, or that revolutionary socialists talk about qua revolutionary socialists, and so on. Post-structuralists, and some neo-Gramscians, are both helpful in this regard. However, neither focuses enough on how agents interact with and shape the ideational realm while they embody it. Specific policy decisions are treated as evidence for the

[11] An unfortunate moniker; unlike 'market globalism', 'imperial globalism' has an explicitly critical connotation, and therefore does not adequately describe the ideology's self-governed meaning.

existence of narrative or hegemony rather than investigated as political settings where both the material and ideational dimension of globalisation is contested. For the 'third wave' in general, there is too much focus on elites. The connotation is that globalisation, as an idea, is simply neoliberalism by another name. Neoliberalism may be the principal or even exclusive influence upon globalisation discourse, but the ideational dimension of globalisation must be studied in its own right to fully account for its nature and effects – including as it is reflected in the ideas of agents that are opposed to neoliberal policies.

Globalisation may be hegemonic, discursive, epistemic, a narrative, a governmentality, a *zeitgeist*, and so on. Yet essentially it is a political concept which different agents will incorporate into their cognitive, normative and prescriptive schemes, in various ways. Whatever is deemed to *origin* of the concept, or the *motive* for particular agents' employment of the concept, demonstrating how agents do this is central to political economy analysis of outcomes. I believe that such an approach, organised around the analytical concept of ideology, presents the most serious challenge to IPE's treatment of globalisation in general. It demonstrates the role of agents in shaping globalisation, but also in attributing meaning to the process.

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