CHAPTER 3: SUMMARY

This chapter examines several concepts related to globalization – imperialism, colonialism (and post-colonialism), development (and dependency), Westernization, Easternization, and Americanization. While some of these processes had an impact on globalization in the past, others continue to affect and might even be a part of globalization today. *Imperialism* describes methods employed by one country to gain territorial control over another, in order to exercise political, economic, and territorial control over it. Such control might be exercised over multiple nation-states as well as less well-defined geographic areas. The idea of imperialism has come to be associated with rule over vast regions. This characteristic leads it to be associated with globalization.

Major imperial powers have included Great Britain, the former Soviet Union, and in usually a less direct form, the United States. Today, while political imperialism (direct political control) has declined, other forms persist.

Lenin argued that economic factors are the essence of imperialism. According to this view, factors inherent in capitalism lead nations to undertake imperial ventures. Apart from the economic aspect, cultural imperialism is also an important form of control. This idea emerged primarily in the European context with the belief that “superior” culture should “civilize” the rest of the “less developed” world, through exploratory, missionary, and humanitarian missions. Education and publishing acted as key tools for the dissemination of European ideas. The US has been the most powerful global force from the perspective of cultural imperialism, through the proliferation of American movies, television, and books.

Hardt and Negri argue that heavy-handed state-based imperialism has now been replaced by a decentered empire wherein power operates through a more complex and subtle network of global political, economic, and cultural processes. On the other hand, Harvey makes the case for a new imperialism in the form of *capitalist imperialism* with the US as its prime representative. This form of imperialism consists of a complex and contradictory fusion of political and economic imperialism. *Colonialism* involves more formal mechanisms of control over a territory entailing the creation of an administrative apparatus to run a colony’s internal affairs. There have been two major, more recent, phases of colonialism – the first began in the fifteenth century and was dominated by Spain and Portugal; the second lasted from the 1820s to the end of WW I and involved Great Britain, France, and Germany, as well as the US and Japan.

The end of WW II saw a strong drive toward decolonization. Colonization was replaced by a more insidious attempt at economic control and exploitation, through *neo-colonialism*. *Postcolonialism* relates to developments in former colonies after the departure of the colonizing power.

*Development* as a project focused on the economic development of specific nations. It was an inherently elitist project based on the assumption that the North was an “ideal” model of economic growth. In its attempt to move the South as close to this “ideal” as possible, the project extended beyond economics. Efforts were undertaken to replace the “inferior” socio-cultural factors of the South with those in the North, which were presumed to be more conducive to economic growth. This project was motivated by Western apprehensions that weak nations would follow the communist path.
A major critique of the development project emerged in the form of *dependency theory*. Adherents of this theory argued that instead of promoting development in reality the development project led to the South’s greater dependency on the North. Underdevelopment is not traceable to internal sources in a particular nation. Rather, it is a product of the relationship between developed and underdeveloped countries in the capitalist system. Globalization is often criticized as a less offensive version of the development project.

*Westernization* is a concept that is often perceived as being coterminous with globalization. The term has a strong negative connotation attached to it, due to linkages with earlier periods of Western imperialism and colonialism. However, this view leads to the exclusion of the positive aspects of what the West has to offer to the world. Beyond its politics and economics, Westernization includes other influences such as technology, language, law, lifestyle, and food. As opposed to the unidirectional flow implied by Westernization, globalization involves multidirectional flows. Westernization implies homogenization, while globalization involves both homogenization and heterogenization. In addition, through its focus on the West, Westernization also ignores the linkages among countries in the periphery. *Easternization* stresses flows from the East to the West. However, it may have more to do with factors internal to the West than with flows from the East. Among the array of phenomena which are Eastern in origin and are now common in the West are yoga, Zen, vegetarianism, tarot, and the impact of Eastern music. In addition, we can also include here the powerful impact of Eastern (especially Japanese) manufacturers on the American market, through their influence on production and management techniques such as “just-in-time.”

Americanization is also a component of the larger process of globalization. It is defined as the export of products, images, technologies, practices, and behavior that is closely associated with America and Americans. Discourse on the issue emerged, at least in part, as a result of concern about, and the study of, America’s influence on Europe. While after WW II, the US was seen as the savior (at least by some) of Europe, by the 1960s it was perceived more as a business, industrial, and economic threat to Europe. More recently, the industrial threat posed by the US was replaced by a fear of American dominance in global consumption, through processes such as Coca-Colonization, McDonaldization, and Starbuckization. Apart from the economic realm, the process of Americanization is also evident in Europe, and throughout the world, in such areas as politics, law, military, and culture.

However, this discourse is complicated by other issues, and therefore a more nuanced analysis of Americanization is required. In discussing Americanization, we need to specify the import under consideration. Similarly, the particular form of Americanization—cultural, social, communicative, political, or economic—needs to be specified. While some global processes are traceable to the US, many details of this complicated process would be lost if it was simply subsumed under the heading of Americanization.

The issue becomes more complex when we try to define what counts as Americanization. Does the product or process have to be produced in the US? Or, does it depend on whether it is identified as American by those who import it? It can be argued that the process of Americanization has as much to do with the receiving nation as with the US itself. Receiving nations are not passive entities and they play an active role in shaping the process of Americanization. For instance, many nations have now created their own McDonaldized restaurants, which are then exported back into the US.
Anti-Americanism is an intense and non-homogeneous global process, comprising of distinct forms, causes, and expressions. Five conceptions of anti-Americanism are outlined – one side of a dichotomy, a tendency, a pathology, a prejudice, and an ideology.

In contrast to all the other flows, globalization consists of multidirectional flows, with no single point of geographic origin. In addition, while globalization is a decentered process, the others are focused more on nation-states. Globalization generally involves subtler control and hence does not generate the same degree of intense opposition as at least some of the other processes (imperialism, colonialism). Globalization can be said to be the broadest of the processes discussed in this chapter. All of the others either continue to survive in, or are subsumed under, globalization. It could also be argued that, in a sense, most of these processes are past their prime. The current era may then be regarded as an era of the posts – post-imperialism, post-development, post-colonialism, post-Westernization, and post-Americanization.