This book is set up as a primer that attempts to foreground the voices of social change that make up the current landscape of global politics of resistance, and that define the discursive spaces, processes, structures, and constructions of social change efforts across the globe. These current forms of social action spread throughout local sites in different parts of the globe offer us guiding frameworks for understanding the ways in which disenfranchised communities and the people residing in these communities are seeking to transform the political, economic, and social configurations that have excluded them. Although the issues that are taken up by these efforts of social change vary widely, what lies common to them is their emphasis on opening up opportunities for communication, recognition, representation, and community participation in local, national, and global decision-making processes (Bello, 2001; de Sousa Santos, 2008; della Porta, 2009; della Porta & Diani, 2006; Giugni, 2002, 2004; Giugni, McAdam, & Tilly, 1999; Guidry, Kennedy, & Zald, 2000; Johnston & Noakes, 2005; Langer & Muñoz, 2003; Lucero, 2008; Mayo, 2005; Meyer & Whittier, 1994; Moghadam, 2009; Smith, 2002, 2004; Smith & Johnston, 2002; Starr,
Therefore, at the heart of the theoretical framework that I will elucidate throughout the different chapters of this book is the concerted emphases of these various social change processes on opening up communicative spaces for participation, recognition, representation, and dialogue, in ways that create possibilities for listening to the voices of subalternitywithin mainstream structures of policy and program articulation, shaping the material realms of policy making and program planning (Bello, 2001; Dutta, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2010, 2011; Ferree & Tripp, 2006; Frey & Carragee, 2007; George, 2001). Because the politics of representation lies at the very heart of these communicative struggles of resistance across the globe, the voices from the global margins seeking to transform the underlying communicative inequities are at the center of this book, working in solidarity to offer directions for structural transformation. As a strategy of disruption, I will seek to center the voices of resistance engaged in these various global struggles, although these voices are constituted in dialogue with my subjectivity as an academic interested in the emancipatory politics of social change.

Figure 1.1. South Korean farmers demonstrate against the World Trade Organization on December 15, 2005 (Photo by Guang Niu, iStockphoto, contributed by EdStock).
Communication Studies scholars have long studied resistance in various contexts of communication (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Cloud, 1994; Dutta & Pal, 2007; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b; Mumby, 2005; Pal & Dutta, 2008), documenting the discourses and discursive processes at micro, meso, and macro levels that oppose the power and control written into the dominant structures of organizing. Whereas a large body of research on resistance has drawn on the fragmented discourses in everyday practices that resist the oppressions constituted in dominant structures, other lines of research have interrogated the emphasis on micro-practices of resistance and instead suggested the importance of examining the dialectical tensions between the discursive and material aspects of resistance against structures of oppression (Cheney & Cloud, 2006; Cloud, 1994; Dutta, 2009, 2011; Zoller, 2005). Yet more recent research in Communication Studies notes the Eurocentric logics that permeate scholarly examinations of resistance, and instead argues for the development of postcolonial and Subaltern Studies approaches to the study of communication that foreground the voices of resistance in the global margins (Broadfoot and Munshi, 2007; Dutta, 2009, 2011; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b; Munshi, 2005; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b). The culture-centered approach joins the voices of postcolonial and Subaltern Studies scholars in Communication Studies and elsewhere to deconstruct the logics of erasure that silence subaltern representation in dominant public spheres in the global North/West where policies are configured and then carried out locally through collaborations with the local elite (Dutta, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011). The politics of culture-centered work therefore lies in the precise moment of solidarity between academics at discursive sites of power with subaltern communities in the global margins in configuring a co-constructed politics of representation that opposes the dominant structures of oppression by rendering visible the hypocrisies underlying these structures and by articulating alternatives for local, national, and global organizing of resources that are based on alternative values and rationalities.

Therefore, resistance is understood in terms of the cultural, social, political, and economic processes that are directed at transforming the global structures of material inequities and the communicative inequities that
accompany these global structures (Dutta, 2008, 2009, 2011, in press a, in press b; Dutta & Pal, 2010, 2011; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b). Particularly paying attention to the inequities in communicative structures and the efforts of change that are directed at fundamentally changing the processes and configurations of communication, the thesis of this book is driven by the culture-centered approach to communication for social change (Dutta, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2011; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b). The culture-centered approach to communication for social change focuses on the inequities in the opportunities for participation in communicative processes and spaces, and puts forth the argument that essential to the processes of structural transformation is the transformation of communicative structures, infrastructures, processes, rules, strategies and techniques that erase subaltern voices (Dutta, 2011, in press a, in press b; Dutta & Pal, 2011; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b).

Attending to the historic and contemporary differentials in access to communicative sites where articulations are made, policies are passed, and programs are implemented, culture-centered research documents the discursive processes and messages through which these differentials are maintained (Dutta, 2008c; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b; Dutta & Basnyat, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Pal, 2008). Essential to the reproduction of these differentials is the privileging of certain forms of knowledge and knowledge claims and the simultaneous “othering” of other forms of knowledge claims as backward or primitive. Along with the primitivization of specific processes and forms of knowledge, the sites at which these processes and forms of knowledge are enunciated are marked off as outside the normal realm of participation. Discursive strategies of dichotomization are essential to the logics of (neo)colonization that carry out projects of marginalization by couching neoliberal projects in the languages of development, modernization, and in more recent times, liberalization and industrialization. The primitive other from the Third/South/Underdeveloped spaces emerges into discursive spaces of (neo)colonization as the agency-less subject in need for being saved by the dominant actors in the First/North/Developed sectors. The language of culture emerges into the discursive spaces of development to describe and categorize the “other” as a subject to be
managed and controlled under the logics of globalization (Dutta, 2011, in press a, in press b; Dutta & Pal, 2010, 2011; Sastry & Dutta, 2011a, 2011b; Escobar, 1995, 2003). It is this precise framing of culture as primitive and static underlying development interventions that is resisted in the culture-centered approach by foregrounding the dynamic, contextually situated, and active role of culture as a site for constructing alternative epistemologies that offer alternative rationalities for organizing life worlds (de Sousa Santos, 2008; de Sousa Santos, Nunes, & Meneses, 2008; Dutta, 2008, 2011, in press a, in press b; Shiva, 2001; Shiva & Bedi, 2002).

In the culture-centered approach, communication for social change seeks to change the inequitable structures that limit the possibilities for communication (Dutta, 2009, 2011; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2005b; Dutta & Basu, 2007a, 2007b; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b). The material margins are defined, produced, and reproduced through communicative processes that mark the margins as backward and incapable of participation, and simultaneously erase those from the margins from the mainstream policy platforms, juridical structures, and platforms of decision making (Dutta, 2011; Kim, 2008; Pal, 2008). At the root of the processes of communicative marginalization is the economic inaccess to sites of power amidst mainstream structures that therefore dictate the rules, languages, techniques, and procedures for communicative participation. The consequence of communicative erasure is the further economic disenfranchisement of those in the margins, through the development of policies and programs that concentrate economic wealth in the hands of the dominant structures and simultaneously foster exploitative relationships with the margins. The relationship between symbolic and material marginalization therefore is twofold: on one hand, symbolic marginalization happens because of material marginalization; on the other hand, it is because of symbolic marginalization that material marginalization is perpetuated. Underlying the politics of resistance therefore is the necessity to disrupt this cyclical relationship between symbolic and material marginalization (Cheney & Cloud, 2006; Cloud, 2005; Dutta, 2011, in press a, in press b; Pal & Dutta, 2008b, 2010, 2011). These forms of resistance, I will argue through the presentation of examples that are woven
throughout the book, are built on the idea that the margins are in essence fostered through logics of communication that limit the communicative opportunities for participation and voice. By listening to the voices of resistance constituted in the global margins, possibilities of structural transformation are introduced within the dominant spheres of knowledge production that have carried out the marginalization of the subaltern sectors through the delegitimization of the agency of local communities. Localized community participation emerges as a site for resisting the top-down control enacted by neoliberal forms of governance imposed through structural adjustment programs (SAPs) (Bello, 2001; Dutta, 2011, in press a, in press b; Johnston, 2009; Olivera, 2004; Shiva, 2001).

With the increasing inequities globally that have accompanied the processes of neoliberal reforms pushed across the various sectors of the globe (Millen & Holtz, 2000; Millen, Irwin, & Kim, 2000; Navarro, 1999), there have been increasing public participation in processes of social change, demanding for social justice and equity, evident in the Seattle protests in 1999, and the World Social Forums (Johnston, 2009; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996a, 1996b; McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001; Moghadam, 2009; Smith, 2002; Smith & Johnston, 2002; Tarrow, 2005). As the global centers of material wealth have increasingly consolidated powers in their hands through the co-optation of the state, civil society, and international networks to serve their agendas of wealth accumulation, the discursive spaces and communicative sites of participation have been dramatically reduced, having been constrained in the hands of the powerful political economic actors with access to global resources (Dutta, 2011). Under the name of promoting freedom and liberty, the language of the market has taken precedence, and has simultaneously carried out both physical as well as structural violence on communities at the margins through top-down programs of neoliberal governance that are imposed on communities without their participation (Dutta, 2008a, 2008b, 2011; Dutta & Basnyat, 2008a, 2008b). Communicative processes therefore have been increasingly limited in offering avenues for participation to the disenfranchised communities of the globe, ironically juxtaposed in the backdrop of the dramatic rise in participatory projects in international financial
institutions (Bello, 2001; Dutta, 2011, in press a, in press b; Sachs, 2005; St. Clair, 2006a, 2006b; World Bank, 2001, 2002). The irony of neoliberal governance lies in the mismatch between the languages of participation and democracy that are widely circulated in order to push for neoliberal reforms that further disenfranchise the poor and the middle classes, and the ongoing erasures of actual opportunities for participation of the poor and the disenfranchised sectors in local, national, and global processes of decision making. Transformative politics of resistance therefore is constituted at this very juncture of erasure where voices of local communities from the global margins are continually being erased to push down monolithic logics of neoliberalism: In such instances, how then do communities from the margins create opportunities for participation?

Throughout this book, working through several case studies, we will actually listen to the voices of the men and women who have been violently rendered invisible in dominant structures of policy making and program planning under neoliberal hegemony. In weaving together the stories of resistance in the pages of this book, I will emphasize the processes of co-construction that lie at the heart of the culture-centered approach; the erasure of communities from the global South is resisted through the presence of those voices of change within the discursive spaces of knowledge production, representation, and circulation. Each of the examples that are woven into this book offer insights into the dignity and resilience with which communities at the margins seek to challenge structures of invisibility so that their voices may be heard; these struggles about economic justice, agricultural justice, environmental justice, political justice are each also struggles for voice. Through their voices, we listen to the stories of resistance through which local communities collaborate with other local communities dispersed across the globe to work toward fostering platforms where their voices would shape the realms of theorizing and praxis. We will begin this chapter by introducing the concept of resistance in the communication literature and by foregrounding the contributions of the culture-centered approach to this literature on resistance. We will then examine the foundational framework of globalization and attend to the basic premises of neoliberalism that constitute the political economy
of globalization. Our deconstruction of neoliberalism will set the stage for understanding the paradoxes and hypocrisies that are embodied in conceptualizations of neoliberalism; it is through this journey of deconstruction that we will then outline some of the key themes that guide the culture-centered approach to social change communication.

**Resistance and Communication**

Communication scholars studying resistance emphasize the discursive elements of resistance, noting that resistance is constituted, constructed, negotiated, and enacted through discourse (Mumby, 2005; Pal & Dutta, 2008). Communication constitutes the framework for resistance through discourse, offering the template of meanings on which resistive acts are formulated (Dutta, 2009). Communicative approaches to resistance study the notion of everyday forms of resistance, understanding resistance in terms of the subjectivities of individuals negotiating structures (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Mumby, 1997), along with resistance studies that emphasize collective processes of organizing, and more recent emphases on understanding resistance in subaltern and postcolonial contexts (Broadfoot & Munshi, 2007; Dutta, 2008, 2009, 2011; Munshi & Kurian, 2007). The thread that runs through these various studies of resistance is the focus on the role of communication in constituting, reproducing, and enabling resistance in a wide variety of contexts (Dutta, 2009, 2011; Zoller, 2005). It is through communication that individuals and communities come to develop their resistive identities, and form the frameworks for resistive action (Dutta, 2011). Communication, in other words, creates the thread that weaves acts of resistance in relationship to the dominant structures of oppression, offering entry points for disrupting and/or transforming these structures. Communicative performances such as songs, speeches, slogans, poetry, and dances emerge as avenues for reshaping the contours of power by opening up new meanings and by recrafting existing meanings (Carawan & Carawan, 1963; Cohen-Cruz & Schutzman, 2006; Conquergood, 1986; Denzin, 2003; Deshpande, 2007; Foster, 1996; Gomez-Pena, 1993, 1996, 2000; Hashmi, 2007; Martin, 1998). These performative forms often emerge in communicative modes that challenge the essential rationalities
of communication within dominant structures (Dutta, 2011). The messages that are constituted in these communicative acts, on the one hand, resist the very rationalities of communication that make up the expectations of dominant structures; on the other hand, they emerge in forms that disrupt the assumptions that underlie the perpetuation of resistance.

The emancipatory or the critical thrust in research on resistance, informed by Marxist theories, focuses on workers’ interests and explores possibilities of worker revolution, drawing upon the role of discourses in mobilizing collective forms of resistance (Cheney & Cloud, 2006; Dutta, 2010; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b). Communication here is seen as the basis for the formation of identities, for the sharing of frames that comprise the basis for collective organizing, and for the development of the ambiots of collective action (Dutta, 2009, 2011). In other critical work, the focus is on bringing about structural transformations through grassroots participation in processes of change; once again, communication forms the foundation of the grassroots processes of organizing (Dutta, 2011; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b; Frey & Carragee, 2007; Zoller & Ganesh, 2012). Participatory processes of communication in local communities bring communities together in solidarity, set in opposition to oppressive structural forces. Through conversations, dialogues, and sharing of information and resources, these localized communities offer resistance to broader structures (Dutta, 2011). Resistance is fundamental to the processes of change in such localized grassroots movements, written in direct opposition to the structures of oppression. For the most part, this idea of resistance embodies the mobilization of a collective identity that opposes the exploitative goals of dominant social actors that control the sites of production. In the context of class-based acts of resistance, estranged from the ownership of production, laborers must abolish private ownership of production by organizing “class-based resistance” (Jermier, Knights, & Nord, 1994, p. 3). Members exert control through economically sustained access to discursive spaces and processes that serve as sites of power and control; resistance, therefore, is constituted in opposition to the materially located economic disparities within the system (Cloud, 1994; Marx, 1867/1967). In this sense, in Marxist processes of organizing, the communica-
tion among workers, the formation of organized identities, and the fostering of collective demands through meetings and discussions become the bases for economic organizing. The development of material strategies of resistance is built upon communicative processes (Dutta, 2011). The resistive consciousness is formed and expressed through participation in processes of communication. The relationship between material and discursive practices fosters possibilities of structural transformations (Artz, 2006; Cheney & Cloud, 2006; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b). When workers develop strategies such as going on a strike, they do so through communication. Furthermore, the strategy of going on a strike is at once material and communicative; it holds its economic power to disrupt by communicating its resistive message to the dominant structure. Organizing here fosters a space for resistance. Furthermore, in the context of subalternity, resistance in and of itself becomes a struggle for spaces of recognition and representation (Dutta, 2011). The challenge to structures are constituted amid the organized struggles of subaltern communities to seek out representation and recognition within those discursive spaces and processes in the mainstream that have effectively erased them and carried out their economic marginalization through these processes of erasure. In this sense, transforming the very nature of the communicative processes and spaces lies at the heart of resistance; it is through communication at the mainstream sites that subaltern communities disrupt the logics of oppression.

Within Communication Studies, with the growing relevance of postmodern criticisms that drew attention to the ambiguities and fluidity in the relationship between control and resistance, scholarly attention shifted to studying the micropractices of resistance within a critical postmodern framework (Mumby, 2005; Tretheway, 1997, 2000). In this sense, the literature on micropractices was directed toward disrupting the metanarratives of modernist frameworks in resistance research. Contrary to totalizing collective consciousness of resistance in the realm of modernism, localized forms of resistance and subjectivity are central to critical postmodernism, where individuals socially constitute identities through discursive configurations that also open up spaces for resistance (Collinson, 2002; Murphy, 2001; Tretheway, 1997). Micropractices of resistance take place on a “lo-
cal, immediate and often informal level” (Gottfried, 1994, p. 107), which includes covert forms of resistance such as “sabotage and theft” (p. 107) that may not immediately be recognized as resistance. James Scott (1985) regarded such occasions of resistance as “routine resistances” (p. 23). Such routine and creative forms of resistance serve as “hidden transcripts” (p. 46) because they are neither documented in any public record, nor do they involve any collective action that is explicitly articulated in opposition to dominant structures. Prasad and Prasad (2002) suggested routine resistance can be deployed by means of subtle subversions of control systems through strategies such as gossiping, employee distance, and ambiguous accommodations. Most of these resistances are ubiquitous and manifest in mundane practices.

The everydayness of resistance shifted focus from what Mumby (2005) called the dualistic to a dialectical relationship between control and resistance, drawing attention to the discursive nature of resistance. Much of the current resistance literature in organizational research (Clair, 1994; Collinson, 2002; Murphy, 2001; Tretheway, 1997, 2000) examines the discursive practices in organizations to understand resistance as a routine yet complex social process that draws its meaning from the contextual aspects of organizing. Scholars have studied a variety of discursive practices such as humor and joking (Ezzamel, Wilmott, & Worthington, 2001), “bitching” and gossip (Sotirin & Gottfried, 1999), modes of dress (Gottfried, 1994), discursive distancing (Collinson, 1994), and whistle-blowing (Gabriel, 2008) as forms of resistance. Resistance redefines the same practices that it confronts and thus facilitates a point of change. However, this postmodern treatment of everyday forms of micropractices has also come under criticism for not engaging thoughtfully with the politics of structural transformations in the face of global oppressions, especially as they relate to collective forms of organizing and the charting out of terrains of solidarity between organizational workers and the various subaltern communities outside the organization that configure as the sites of oppression carried out by global organizations (Dutta, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2010; Ganesh et al., 2005; Pal & Dutta, 2008b). In many ways, the emphasis on micropractices of resistance within the dominant resistance literature in Communication
Studies privileges US-based, white, middle class settings of dominant organizations that are often the very organizations and organizational settings that perpetuate global inequities (Buzzanell, 2000), reflecting the US-centric biases of communication research and perpetuating the global structures of oppression without questioning them. The singular emphasis on everyday forms of resistance within mainstream structures leave unquestioned and unmarked the terrains of power and control that are constituted amid the global divisions of labor at the intersections of the nation state, transnational corporations (TNCs), and international financial institutions (IFIs). The assumptions of neoliberal hegemony go unchallenged as the specific values embodied in many of these studies are the reconfigured scripts of neoliberalism fashioned into discourses of fetishized liberty, identity performance, and individualized freedom achieved through consumption, negotiation, and individualized performance. For instance, the emphasis on resistance and resistive performance in the context of careers within globalized organizational settings often fail to interrogate the locus of these careers within the dominant agendas of global hegemonic structures such as TNCs, and therefore, remain oblivious to the gross inequities and the politics of inequities that are produced and perpetuated by these structures. To frame the everyday practices of middle class workers within TNCs as resistive and to solely focus on these everyday practices as embodiments of resistance does violence to the experiences of the global margins that are rendered invisible and economically exploited by those very TNCs that employ the workers at globally attractive salaries. Most fundamentally, the US-centric bias of communication research essentially perpetuates a global hegemony of knowledge production that continues to reify the dominance of the North/West as a site of knowledge production, simultaneously undermining the resistive voices from the global South that challenge this hegemony, and justifying the structural violence perpetrated on the global margins under the label of US supremacy (see, for instance, Dutta, 2011, a discussion of the ways in which the narrative of freedom was quintessential to the US-led imperialist occupation of Iraq). Noting this point, McKie & Munshi (2005) share:
Much of the mainstream organizational communication scholarship, for example, remains largely US-centric and the “obsession with understanding, theorizing, and researching the skills and competencies of communication in largely American settings (and a vision of the U.S. way as the global way) tends to give American work . . . a parochial character.” (p. 50)

These questions raised by critics point toward the need for engaging in understanding the relationship between discourses of change and the structural transformations that they could possibly open up in the context of transnational hegemony, especially attending to the voices of resistance from the global South and the calls for solidarity that emerge through the agentic expressions of these voices. Building on the earlier approaches to the study of resistance that note the structural aspects of collective organization, the fluid and dialectical relationships between control and resistance, the discursive processes through which resistance is enacted in organizational contexts, and the discourses of resistance in global social movements, communication scholars in recent years have called for research that examines the collective processes of bottom-up resistance in global politics that seek to transform the inequitable structures of neoliberalism (Dutta & Pal, 2010; Ganesh et al., 2005; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Zoller & Ganesh, 2012). The study of resistance itself, therefore, becomes a mark of solidarity in sketching out a politics of social change seeking to transform unjust global structures and policies. For instance, the scholarship by Peeples and DeLuca (2006) draws attention to the deployment of discourses in the environmental justice movement. The culture-centered approach described in earlier work and further developed in this book responds to this call for research on bottom-up organizing of social change by offering a theoretical framework that examines the role of communicative processes in fostering spaces of listening and in enabling social change through the processes of listening.
Globalization: Definition

Contemporary processes and practices of social change across the globe are situated on the landscape of globalization; the increasing presence of voices of resistance across local spaces distributed throughout the globe is positioned on the bedrock of the underlying economic and political processes that have marked the unequal contours of globalization as we understand it today (Algranati, Seoane, & Taddei, 2004; Ayres, 1999, 2001; Bennett, 2003a, 2003b, 2004; Bhattacharya, 2009; Brecher, Costello, & Smith, 2000; Choi, 1995; Cleaver, 1998; Cockburn, St. Clair, & Sekula, 2000; De, 2009; della Porta, 2009; della Porta, Kreisi, & Rucht, 1999; Donk, Loader, Nixon, & Rucht, 2004; Dutta, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2011; Guidry, Kennedy, & Zald, 2000; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Robertson, 1992). Globalization is characterized by the increasing flow of goods, capital, labor, and services across national borders; economically, it is defined and marked by neoliberalism as the primary political and economic organizing framework for social relations, economic relations, relationships of production, institutional frameworks, policy making, and implementation of policies across various sectors of the globe (Dutta, 2009, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2011; Harvey, 2005; Ganesh et al., 2005; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Sassen, 1998).

Neoliberalism, articulated in the visions of a global free market as an enabler of liberty, is embodied in the principles of privatization, liberalization of trade, and minimization of public services, and serves as the dominant logic of economic and political organizing that is exerted through international structures of power that shape the contours of policy making and programming on the global landscape, shaping national policies and determining internal political processes constituted around principles of economic organizing in the form of SAPs (Dutta, 2011; Ganesh et al., 2005; Harvey, 2001, 2005). As a social, cultural, economic, and political process, it has been marked by the hegemony of the neoliberal logic as the primary organizing framework for constituting relationships among nation states, key political actors in these nation states, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs), global policy-making bodies, activist groups, and wider publics in the various sectors of the globe. The relationships of publics, civil society organizations, the state, and TNCs
are negotiated through neoliberal frameworks of governance that operate on the basis of the principles of privatization of resources and the opening up of markets across the globe (Dutta, 2011; Khagram & Levitt, 2008; Sassen, 1998). Public structures, infrastructures, and programs are taken over by privatized entities and NGOs; simultaneously, the role of the nation state is reduced from the terrains of provision of social welfare to the terrains of ensuring of geostrategic security for global markets for TNCs. Notes Harvey (2006):

The corporatization, commodification and privatization of hitherto public assets has been a signal feature of the neo-liberal project. Its primary aim has been to open up new fields for capital accumulation in domains hitherto regarded off-limits to the calculus of profitability. Public utilities of all kinds (water, telecommunications, transportation), social welfare provision (social housing, education, health care, pensions), public institutions (such as universities, research laboratories, prisons), and even warfare (as illustrated by the “army” of private contractors operating alongside the armed forces in Iraq) have all been privatized to some degree throughout the capitalist world. The intellectual property rights established through the so-called TRIPS agreement within the WTO defines genetic materials, seed plasma, and all manner of other products, as private property. Rents for use can then be extracted from populations whose practices had played a crucial role in the development of genetic materials. Biopiracy is rampant and the pillaging of the world’s stockpile of genetic resources is well under way to the benefit of a few large pharmaceutical companies. (p. 44)

The framework of privatization takes over as the primary aspect of relationships, defining relationship with nature, social and cultural resources, public utilities, forms of social welfare, and so forth in terms of the private ownership of property. Resources, turned into the domain of private property, are transacted through the logics of the market, facilitated by the role of the State and the international financial institutions (IFIs) in defining them in the private domain. As a result, under neoliberal governance, the relationship of property bearing individuals with resources is mediated through the market.
Because neoliberalism operates on the essential premise that the deregulation of markets accompanied by the opening up of economies would free up markets, which would in turn free up social and political relations, it is the logic of the market that drives the basic premises of neoliberalism. Liberty is understood in terms of the liberty of the market; political and social liberties of expression are seen as arising out of the freedom of the market. The role of the State, therefore, is configured in terms of the protection of the freedom of the market. The State is seen as playing the function of securing the market and engaging with political structures globally to ensure that the barriers to the free market are minimized. State programs under the neoliberal framework are therefore directed at building a military-police base and strengthening it in order to ensure the security of the market. Terror emerges on the specter of neoliberalism as the essential threat to the market, to be adequately mapped out and controlled through anti-terror programs (Giroux, 2003). The development of the military and the police is tied to the primordial task of ensuring the security of the “free” market as a site of exchange.

As depicted in the rationality of the market that drives the basic premise of neoliberalism, the neoliberal logic is fundamentally an economic logic that operates on the basis of the idea that opening up markets to competitions among global corporations accompanied by minimum interventions of the State would ensure the most efficient and effective political economic system (Harvey, 2005). Politics and economics are interwoven in the role of the State as a catalyst of the efficient market; the language of efficiency and effectiveness is foregrounded in the narrative of governance (Brown, 2005; England & Ward, 2007; Miller & Rose, 2008). Efficiency mediates the effectiveness of the market in managing relationships and in achieving optimum effects; this is best accomplished through the role of experts in neoliberal governance, who through their expert knowledge, manage resources within the logic of the market. The welfare of the individual is achieved through the transference of rights and responsibilities at the level of the atomized individual, where the empowered individual is expected to optimize his/her health and well-being through rational choices enacted in the market. Duggan (2003) notes: “... neoliberalism
is not presented as a particular set of interests and political interventions, but as a kind of nonpolitics—a way of being reasonable, and of promoting universally desirable forms of economic expansion and democratic government around the globe” (p. 10).

Participation in the neoliberal logic, therefore, is at the center of individualized management, as the role of the State in managing public infrastructures, education, and public health programs are transferred to communities comprising of loosely networked connectivities of individuals who are expected to optimize their participation in the market through individualized rational choices. Community participation and social capital are seen as ways of transferring the mechanics of governance into the hands of communities, with the assumption that loosely networked linkages of individuals within communities develop reciprocal relationships of support, thus shifting the burden of care from the state to the community and to the individual (Putnam, 1993, 1995). By extension, it is the atomized individual who becomes the rational subject of the neoliberal intervention; through the development of appropriate knowledge and expertise, and through participation in the market, this individual enacts his/her citizenship. In minimizing the role of the State, functions of social welfare are transferred into the mix of individuals and communities. Rational individuals participating in reciprocal relationships in communities are expected to take responsibility for the provision of services such as health and education. Empowerment is achieved through the unleashing of the entrepreneurial individual as a rational participant in the enactment of beneficial choices through reciprocal relationships guided by rational choice. Similarly, communities emerge as responsible sites for managing the delivery of services, fostered through community participation and partnership (Sharma, 2008).

Therefore, proponents of the neoliberal logic argue that the public sectors in nation states around the globe ought to be privatized so that these sectors could operate most efficiently and effectively. Global structures of privately funded infrastructure management emerge as mechanisms for efficient and effective management. In public health, for instance, global funding by corporate and private foundations such as the Bill and Melinda
Gates Foundation far exceed the funding infrastructures in public health for most national governments. As a result, the contours and mandates of global public health are increasing shaped by private entities and privatized spheres of control. In essence, then, the management of public programs becomes a profitable business for private entities; in other instances, public or collective resources such as water are turned into private commodities to be then exchanged in the marketplace (Dutta, 2011). Public-private partnerships become mechanisms for turning resources into the hands of privatized entities that treat specific societal problems that were previously envisioned to belong in the public domain through public-private partnerships (Miraftab, 2004; Mosley, 2001).

The advent of the neoliberal logic on the global stage has been marked by the power and control of global organizations such as the IFIs: World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), as well as the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), which later evolved into the World Trade Organization (WTO), created with the goals of minimizing the barriers to global trade and maximizing trading opportunities for TNCs across national borders. The influential role of IFIs in fostering global neoliberal governance is carried out through loans offered by these programs, which are accompanied by specific configurations of structural adjustments that are imposed on nation states taking the loans. Top-down interventions of change within nation states are accomplished through the debt relief mechanisms and loan programs that are doled out by IFIs. Given the historic patterns of differentials between the global North and global South in the context of access to resources and access to IFIs, the policies of IFIs are largely shaped by the nation states of the global North. For instance, from the early days of the World Bank, the policies of the Bank were shaped by US interests, with the US having the largest stake in the Bank and being the major player in nominating the president of the Bank, who has always been an US citizen. Simultaneously, the mechanisms of SAPs implemented by the IFIs become mechanisms for exerting control on the global South by pressuring the South to open up their markets through policies of liberalization, privatization, and reduction of support from public infrastructures and resources. Essentially, then, organizations
such as the World Bank utilize their international façade to push neoliberal policies that ultimately privilege the interests of the US and US-based corporations in the global arena (McKinley, 2004). The neoliberal logic of power and control has been and continues to be carried out through the linkages among TNCs, IFIs, WTO, national governments, and local elites, also referred to as neoliberal hegemony, with a critical role played by the debts doled out by the IFIs as mechanisms for setting up structural adjustment programs in nation states across the globe.

That globalization has resulted in the increasing inequalities in society, both within nation states as well as across nation states, is empirically documented (Millen & Holtz, 2000; Millen et al., 2000). Worth noting are the dramatic inequalities in the distribution of resources; simultaneously, certain segments of populations globally have been increasingly disenfranchised. The trickle-down logic of neoliberalism that was founded on the notion that the economic benefits accrued through the growth of the richest sectors would eventually trickle down to the lower sectors has been seriously questioned (Farmer, 1999, 2003; Farmer & Bertrand, 2000; Millen & Holtz, 2000; Millen et al., 2000), with empirical data pointing toward increasing disparities rather than reducing disparities Simultaneously, the distribution of communicative spaces and the opportunities to participate in these spaces are unequally distributed, with increasing gaps in access to communicative infrastructures between the rich and the poor (Dutta, 2008, 2009; Kim, 2008; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b). The poor are increasingly marginalized from discursive spaces where decisions of neoliberal development are taken (Dutta, 2011). The marginalization and erasure of the poor from policy and program platforms is particularly visible amidst those programs and policies of displacement, land-grab, industrialization, and mining that have tremendous effects on the lives of the poor (Dutta, 2008a, 2011; Farmer, 1988a, 1988b, 1992, 1999, 2003; Padhi, Pradhan, & Manjit, 2010; Pal, 2008; Rothman & Oliver, 1999, 2002). These disparities have been observed within local spaces, within nation states, as well as across the various sectors of the globe. Of particular interest here is the increasing marginalization of the poorer sectors of the globe with limited access to material resources as well as to platforms for articulating their
voices within specific domains of policies and programs that have strong impact on their lives and livelihoods (Anuradha, Taneja, & Kothari, 2001; Bhattacharyya, 2009; Das & Padel, 2010; Dutta, 2008, 2009; Dutta-Bergman, 2004a, 2004b; Kabeer, 1994; Padhi et al., 2010; Pal & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Survival International, 2008).

Marginalization is both communicative and material; communicative marginalization connotes the continued construction of a group, class, or sector as belonging at the bottom of a social system, often tied to the material location of the group, class, or sector, with limited opportunities for participation in discursive spaces and processes. The markers of marginalization vary widely, including categories such as class, caste, race, gender, nationality of origin, sexual orientation, and so forth, although almost all forms of marginalization carry an economic logic with them, with the emphasis on the inaccess to basic resources; subalternity is expressed in the forms of marginalization that completely erase the presence of the raced, classed, sexed subject from the discursive spaces of participation. The question of the margins has become of increasing interest to communication scholars as globalization processes have actively participated in creating these margins and in sustaining them through top-down structural adjustment programs embodied in trade liberalization, privatization, and exploitation of natural resources, and often operating on the basis of violence to delegitimize the rights of the communities at the margins to have a voice or to establish their stake on the resources that are introduced into the logic of the market (Amnesty International, 2010; Bhattacharyya, 2009; Das & Padel, 2010; De, 2009; Dutta, 2009, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2011; Farmer, 2003; Millen et al., 2000). For instance, under the name of SAPs and development initiatives, collective lands belonging to indigenous people worldwide are being usurped for the purposes of developing mining projects, hydroelectric projects, manufacturing plants, industrialization zones etc. (De, 2009; Morales, 2008; Padhi et al., 2010; Navlakha, 2010).

In Orissa in India, a location that is rich with mineral resources, the state-sponsored Operation Green Hunt is utilizing police and military violence to thwart tribal resistance to projects of mining and industrialization in the region (Das & Padel, 2010; Padhi et al., 2010; Survival International,
2008). The frames of terrorist threat and geo-security are deployed to justify the use of violence on tribal populations in order to make way for projects of neoliberal development. Similar stories of state-enacted violence against local resistance are also evident in the US, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Europe, and in the Andean region countries of Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, and Venezuela (Burt & Mauceri, 2004). The use of the military and the police under the framework of geo-security ensures that power is retained in the hands of neoliberal hegemony, and furthermore works toward the colonization of global resources in the hands of TNCs (Dutta, 2011). The military-police nexus also works to retain neoliberalism as an organizing framework of society, politics, economics, and culture.

In conceptualizing the question of resistance in the framework of neoliberalism, the culture-centered approach draws attention to the role of listening to the margins as a process for creating the possibilities for transforming the globalization processes that continually participate in the creation of the margins, and in the enactment of violence on the margins through the labels of development and industrialization (Agacino & Escobar, 1997; Basu & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Bennett, 2004; Beverly, 2004a, 2004b; Boal, 1979, 1992, 1995, 1998; Dutta, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2011; Guidry et al., 2000; Kim & Dutta, 2009). Listening offers an entry point for change by essentially returning the gaze on those structures of neoliberalism that have perpetrated the violence on subaltern communities through languages of development, modernization, democracy, and participation. The act of listening to subaltern voices interrogates these structures of oppression and renders open the constructs of democracy and participation, questioning their rhetoric in the backdrop of the reality of the lived experiences of subaltern communities under the programs of reform. For the purposes of this book, we will engage with those margins of contemporary societies that are systematically erased from dominant discursive spaces of knowledge production, co-constructing alternative frameworks of organizing for change. Even as the increasing power and control in the hands of neoliberal hegemony are carrying out the exploitation of the subaltern sectors, communicative processes and practices of change are being articulated among the subaltern
spaces in the midst of these very structures of oppression. These processes of change are directed at transforming the specific programs of trade liberalization, privatization, and minimization of public resources that have been brought about by neoliberalism. Voices of resistance shared across the globe demonstrate the ways in which communicative practices of social change are enacted in combination with material practices to disrupt the oppressive and exploitative structures of neoliberalism (Dutta, 2011; in press a, in press b; Pal & Dutta, 2008b). The overall purpose of this book is to listen to these voices of resistance at the margins that seek to disrupt dominant structures of neoliberalism and bring about transformations in these structures through local politics of participation. The culture-centered approach reviewed in the book as an organizing framework for co-constructing the narratives of resistance departs from the dominant approaches to communication for social change by fundamentally noting the capacity of marginalized communities to consciously and strategically participate in processes of change that are meaningful to them and that threaten to disrupt neoliberal structures that marginalize them (Basu & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Desmarais, 2007; Dutta, 2008b, 2008c; Reed, 2005; Stoller-McAllister, 2005). From other participatory approaches to communication, it differs in the explicit identification of the variety of ways in which participation is co-opted into dominant structures to serve their agendas (Dutta & Basnyat, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c); instead, participation in culture-centered work foregrounds the agency of local communities in articulating knowledge claims that render impure the categories of neoliberalism, and instead offer alternative frameworks of organizing social, political, and economic process.

**Neoliberalism: An Interrogation**

The global hegemony of neoliberalism is accomplished through the articulation of neoliberalism as a marker of human progress, treating it as a universally advanced stage of progress in the development of global modes of governance (World Bank, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001, 2002). However, closer scrutiny of key concepts of neoliberalism draw attention to the Eurocentric roots of the concept, tied to Eurocentric notions of progress and
global development, situated in individualistic understandings of freedom and participation. Neoliberalism, therefore, is a cultural artifact that is tied to specific sets of values located within specific historical-political contours of Eurocentric thought, primarily within the context of Europe and the US. Neoliberalism was popularized by Hayek and Friedman with its roots in Austria and the US, respectively, and was globally positioned in the aggressive push of the Washington Consensus during the presidency of Ronald Reagan in the US and Margaret Thatcher in the UK (Harvey, 2005). This Eurocentric foundation of neoliberalism is eloquently elucidated by Duggan (2003, pp. xi-xii):

Neoliberalism developed primarily in the U.S., and secondarily in Europe, in response to global challenges that challenged the dominance of Western institutions . . . Generated by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the U.S. Treasury, and also implemented through the World Trade Organization, neoliberal policies of fiscal austerity, privatization, market liberalization, and governmental stabilization are pro-corporate capitalist guarantors of private property relations. They were designed to recreate the globe in the interests of the unimpeded operation of capitalist “free markets,” and to cut back public, noncommercial powers and resources that might impeded or drain potential profit making.

The critique offered by Duggan brings forth the tremendous political influence exerted by neoliberal institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF in securing the global hegemony of the neoliberal logic. Through their loans and debt programs, these IFIs created a global neoliberal presence, turning nation states into sites of neoliberal governance through their top-down SAPs imposed on nation states (Duggan, 2003; Harvey, 2005). Furthermore, the IFIs, World Bank, and IMF played key roles in diffusing the US agenda of neoliberalization through international loans given out to governments in the global South, which were in return required to sign into opening up their markets to US capital (Harvey, 2005). Implicit then in the global diffusion of neoliberalism were the neo-imperial functions played out by IFIs in shaping and dictating national policies in the global South, and in opening up markets in the global South to US-based TNCs.
Embedded in the economic logic of neoliberalism is its imperialistic desire to impose a narrowly defined cultural logic on a global scale; this becomes possible through the framing of the Eurocentric value system as a universal metric of progress and development. Postcolonial interrogations attend to this relationship between the specific and the universal, raising questions such as: What is the discursive move entailed in the conversion of the Eurocentric specific into the a-cultural universal? Engaging the concept of neoliberalism from a postcolonial lens suggests that neoliberal economic policies are predicated on the Eurocentric logic of economic and political organizing that privileges the individual, and therefore, brings to question the taken-for-granted bases for the cultural roots of neoliberal ideas that are superimposed on the globe through top-down programs described earlier (Dutta 2011; A. Prasad, 1997, 2003, 2006). Consider for instance what Harvey (2005) notes about the theoretical core of neoliberalism:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. (p. 2)

The basic values at the core of neoliberal theory are culturally rooted in the celebration of individual rights and the individualistic ownership of property (Dutta, 2011; P. Prasad, 1997). Therefore, the individual emerges as the unit of analysis; it is through the enactment of individualistic choices that the individual participates as a citizen within the neoliberal framework. These cultural values, I argue, result in specific, culturally based sets of practices ingrained in the Protestant roots of US-style capitalism, simultaneously erasing other ways of livelihood (P. Prasad, 1997; Weber, 1988). The logics of free market and free trade are ultimately founded on this specific Eurocentric cultural articulation of the individual as the unit of analysis and decision making, with an emphasis on the effectiveness and efficiency of the individual as a knowledge agent that is empowered to make her or his choices.
Especially worth noting is the process through which neoliberalism is established as a global form of governance. The global hegemony of neoliberalism, much like the earlier theories of development, is achieved through the obfuscation of this specific cultural logic and through the representation of neoliberalism as a marker of universal human desire. It is precisely this move that erases the cultural substratum of universalized Eurocentric concepts of individually directed freedom and ownership of property that underlie the neoimperial character of neoliberalism (Dutta, 2011, in press a, in press b; Banerjee & Linstead, 2001; P. Prasad, 1997). This Eurocentric logic is sold globally under the narrative of progress and modernization to serve the interests of Western power elites. Duggan (2003, p. 11) notes:

In world politics, Western political leaders and economic elites have supported neoliberal policies as the apogee of private freedoms and maximum wealth expansion within a neutral regulatory framework. But in practice, the institutions promulgating neoliberal solutions to global problems have advanced the specific interests of Western financial, commercial, and trade centers with coercive tools—especially through offering conditioned loans to needy nations, and by negotiating biased trade agreements.

The underlying cultural logic of neoliberal governance is accompanied by an economic logic that privileges the economically powerful actors in the global North exercising their powers through the IFIs and their instruments of top-down SAPs. Through the loans and debt relief programs, IFIs imposed SAPs on the global South, carrying out a form of neo-imperialism that exhumed resources from the global South to enhance the wealth of TNCs located in the global North, constituting “a reinvention of Western imperialism, not the worldwide democratization and broad-based enrichment promised by neoliberal globalization’s promoters” (Duggan, 2003, p. 11). Financialization of economies and the development of lending mechanisms emerge as extractive tools that further accumulate the wealth of the rich. This upward redistribution of resources facilitated by the IFIs is captured poignantly by Harvey (2005, p. 74):

The extraction of tribute via financial mechanisms is an old imperial practice. It has proven very helpful to the restoration of class power,
particularly in the world’s main financial centres, and it does not always need a structural adjustment crisis to work. When entrepreneurs in developing countries borrow money from abroad, for example, the requirement that their own state should have sufficient foreign exchange reserves to cover their borrowings translates into the state having to invest in, say, US Treasury bonds. The difference between the interest rate on the money borrowed (for example 12 percent) and the money deposited as collateral in US Treasures in Washington (for example 4 percent) yields a strong net financial flow to the imperial centre at the expense of the developing country.

Loans serve as key mechanisms for the global dominance of transnational capital, setting up structures that extract wealth into the centers of capital. These patterns of wealth extraction, favored through the unregulated global markets, work toward redistributing wealth upwards, making the rich richer while simultaneously impoverishing the poor. In other instances, global sites of neoliberalism perpetuate the agendas of neoliberalism through efforts of democracy promotion that are directed at civil society organizations in the global South with the aim of fostering public opinion that would enable the opening up of markets (Dutta-Bergman, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c). In yet other instances, support for dictatorships, military coups, and local elite are offered as mechanisms for instituting neoliberal states. Finally, in the ultimate expression of the imperial character of global neoliberal dominance, nation states are invaded through military operations framed in the language of “democracy building” to establish neoliberal states elsewhere in the globe (as in the case of Iraq, see Dutta, 2011; Dutta-Bergman, 2005c).

The global hegemony of neoliberal governance has been accompanied by rising inequalities across the globe, both within nation states as well as across nation states (Coburn, 2000, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Gershman & Irwin, 2000; Millen & Holtz, 2000; Millen et al., 2000; Navarro, 1999; Nixson & Walters, 2003; Payer, 1974; Peet, 2003). As poverty has increased globally, wealth has become increasingly concentrated in the hands of the economic elite, who exercise their power through their interpenetrating relationships with the political elite. The development of global policies that favor privatization and liberalization has led to the minimization of
public resources, accompanied by rising unemployment, food insecurity, and poverty. The poor are increasingly disenfranchised through public policies that favor the privatization of resources; as a result, resources that were publicly available now have to be purchased as commodities in the marketplace.

Essential then to the politics of social change is the identification and analysis of neoliberal strategies, attending to the assumptions that recycle in global practices of neoliberal transformations, and returning the gaze to the dominant structures of neoliberalism situated in the global North. Emphasizing this need for critique that originates from the global South, Banerjee & Prasad (2008) note that:

there is a need to “anthropologize the West” to show how organization, practices and knowledge become translated into universal categories despite their European origin. Perhaps, ‘provincializing Europe’ to borrow a phrase from Dipesh Chakrabarty can reveal the historical peculiarity of taken-for-granted universal truths and allow the emergence of human narratives that interrupt and defer the universalizing and totalizing discourses of management and organization theory in an attempt to reclaim historical difference. (p. 96)

With this goal of returning the gaze to the structures of global economic and political control, this book seeks to listen to the voices of resistance spread across the globe that organize in solidarity, seeking out spaces of social change and structural transformation. The culture-centered approach is offered as a theoretical entry point for dialogue that deconstructs the neoliberal rhetoric of democracy, participation, and community and simultaneously seeks to co-construct narratives of resistance with communities at the global margins that actively enact their agency in participating in a politics of change that is directed at transforming those very structures that marginalize them.

**Culture-Centered Approach: Voices of Resistance**

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, in the face of the increasing consolidation of power in the hands of TNCs, the opportunities for
articulations of voices have been increasingly constrained, with political and juridical platforms increasingly being taken over by corporate interests (Dutta, 2008, 2011, in press a, in press b; Dutta & Pal, 2011). Policy platforms and public spaces have increasingly been turned as sites of privatized control, playing out the agendas of TNCs and economic elites; the culture-centered approach is offered precisely in this backdrop as an entry point for participation that foregrounds the roles of communities as entry points to the articulations of alternative rationalities that resist the dominance of neoliberalism. With the guiding observation that access to juridical, legislative, and executive spaces of governance have been predicated upon the economic access to resources, with these spaces primarily serving the interests of transnational hegemony, the culture-centered approach explores the processes of meaning-making at the margins that sustain themselves in spite of the marginalizing efforts of the dominant structures (Dutta, 2011). What then are the possibilities of resistance for communities at the margins that have been disenfranchised through the communicative structures of neoliberalism that have minimized the opportunities of meaningful participation in spite of the rhetoric of participation, democracy, and community empowerment?

The culture-centered approach begins with a critical analysis of the discursive structures and processes that limit the opportunities of participation. The mainstream structures of communication serve the interests of the dominant actors in society, maintaining and propagating the goals of these dominant actors, and perpetuating their political and economic agendas. In the contemporary global scenario, communicative processes in the mainstream are constituted with the goals of maintaining the interests of the power elite, and continuing to reinforce the increasing class differentials within the neoliberal framework (Dutta & Pal, 2011). These existing processes, commitments, and philosophies of dominant actors are situated within the rules, roles, and goals of structures. Structures here refer to ways of organizing institutional processes and resources that enable or constrain access to resources. Social change, therefore, is conceptualized in the context of the goals of communicative process, strategies and tactics directed at changing these structures in contemporary global-
ization that are primarily driven by the neoliberal logic, thus increasing global inequities and facilitating the upward transfer of wealth into the hands of the wealthy.

It is on the basis of the principle of transformation in social structures that the culture-centered approach is proposed as an organizing principle for engaging with the communicative processes, strategies, and tactics that lie at the heart of contemporary efforts of social change (Basu & Dutta, 2008a, 2008b; Dutta, 2008, 2009; Dutta & Pal, 2011; Kim & Dutta, 2009). For example, the World Social Forums (WSF) have emerged as popular sites of resistive politics against neoliberalism, bringing together over 5,000 activists from 117 countries at the first WSF meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2001, and increasing that number to 155,000 activists from 135 countries by the 2005 meeting (Moghadam, 2009). The WSF is an exemplar of participatory consciousness of local collectives, communities, and networks as they articulate alternate values and principles of organizing in their dialogic engagement at global sites. Similarly, multiple efforts of resistance have emerged from the global South that challenge the key definitions and implications of neoliberal policies (see Dutta, 2011). The ultimate goal of this book is to offer a framework for understanding communicative principles of resistance set on the canvass of the articulations of local-national-global structures that continue to perpetuate inequities, injustices, and silences across the globe. Attending to the ways in which marginalized communities across the globe participate in processes of structural transformation, the book documents various instances of culture-centered processes of social change communication in the backdrop of globalization that are directed at creating points of access and justice for the poor, underserved, and marginalized sectors of the globe.

**Hypocrisies and Paradoxes**

Critics of neoliberalism document the hypocrisies that are embodied in the definition of neoliberalism and in the application of neoliberal principles that are carried out in the names of freedom and liberty (Duggan, 2003). Culture-centered politics of social change are constituted at these very sites of hypocrisies. Because specific arguments and logics of prog-
ress, modernity, enlightenment, and emancipation lie at the heart of the knowledge claims and public relations tactics that are utilized by transnational hegemony to diffuse “free” market reforms in the global South, it is through the foregrounding of the hypocrisies in the logics of neoliberalism that discursive spaces and sites are opened up for engaging in dialogues about alternative rationalities of global organizing (Dutta, 2011).

Whereas in the definition and rhetoric of neoliberalism, the liberty of the individual is foregrounded as the key driving force in pushing ideas of neoliberalism in global markets, what remains absent from the articulations of liberty is the critique of top-down use of force in instituting neoliberal reforms globally (Dutta, 2011; Dutta-Bergman, 2005c; Harvey, 2005). The hypocrisy of neoliberal expansionism lies in its use of force to carry out transnational imperialism under the very language of liberty. Whereas neoliberalism is instituted globally through appeals to the logics of democracy and freedom, the implementation of neoliberal experiments in the global South have often taken place through the use of explicit imperial force such as in the case of Iraq (Dutta-Bergman, 2005c; Harvey, 2005); through the use of manipulative strategies such as USAID sponsorships of local elites and the simultaneous undermining of populist forces in the global South (Dutta-Bergman, 2005c); through the explicit undermining of democratic processes in order to promote pro-market reforms, often in the form of support for pro-market dictatorships (Dutta-Bergman, 2005c); and through the use of economic tactics of exertion of power (Harvey, 2005). Therefore, the rhetoric of democracy in neoliberalism is juxtaposed in the backdrop of the actual practices of violence that are carried out in the name of democracy, often thwarting local democratic and populist processes. Therefore, essential to a culture-centered critique is an interrogation of Eurocentric notions of democracy constituted within neoliberal frameworks, opening up the space theoretically and practically for the local ideas and ideals of democracy as voiced by local communities from the global South.

Similarly, the theorizing and the rhetoric of neoliberalism are fundamentally based on the concept of the non-interventionist state that frees up the market as a rational actor. Freedom in this sense is achieved through
competition in the market, devoid of the hand of the state. The role of the state is conceptualized as minimal, thus allowing for the freedom of the market and for competition to play out. It is this logic of neoliberalism that is utilized to push neoliberal reforms globally; public programs in the global South are forcibly cut back under structural adjustment programs, the public sector is increasingly privatized, and the state is forced to open up its markets to foreign capital, simultaneously minimizing the subsidies that are paid to the local sectors. In the backdrop of these top-down programs imposed on the global South through the SAPs that are pushed by IFIs and mostly by the US in its role in influencing the IFIs, we observe the largely protectionist policies that are applied by the US to promote certain sectors, such as the agro sector within its domestic confines. Furthermore, as recently, when financial institutions fail, the state is expected to bail out these financial institutions. The hypocrisy of neoliberal governance, therefore, lies in the internal contradictions of the logic, and the large-scale gaps between what is preached as an argument for justifying neo-imperial interventions of resource grab and the actual practice of neoliberalism. Whereas on one hand, the role of the state is minimized in regulating financial capital and in promoting public welfare, on the other hand, the role of the state becomes fairly important when it comes to supporting financial institutions and ensuring a market for these institutions.

The liberty of the market is equated with the attainment of individual liberties. Yet, in multiple instances, these individual liberties are governed in the domain of the state. Whereas the state, on one hand, promotes economic principles of free market, on the other hand, it develops fairly draconian policies for governing private lives. Individual liberties become constituted within the logics of the market and may be sacrificed if the security of the market is threatened. The military-police apparatus within the neoliberal state serves to maintain the security and stability for the market. When this stability is potentially threatened, individual liberties may be sacrificed and brought under the surveillance of the military-police state as observed in the post-9/11 climate in the US or with the large-scale police atrocities that have been carried out on peaceful protestors to thwart the Occupy movement. The interrogation of these contradictions
in the value systems in neoliberalism opens up the discursive space to the possibilities of listening to voices from the global South, especially in the backdrop of the systematic erasure of the South as an entry point to the creation of knowledge.

*Listening to Voices from the Global South*

Because the global hegemony of the neoliberal logic is accomplished through the capacity of dominant global political-economic actors to turn a fundamentally Eurocentric logic into a universal, accomplished through the forceful role of the IFIs including the IMF and the World Bank in pushing specific top-down programs of governance based in Eurocentric values, resistance to the global hegemony needs to be understood in the context of those voices and rationalities from the global South that have been rendered invisible through the use of structural, physical, political, and epistemological violence. Especially worth noting in the various forms of violence is the key role of epistemological violence, which is fundamental to the project of imperialism. It is through the depiction of the traditional knowledge of colonies as backward and in need of uplifting that the colonizer carries out the act of colonization. Embodying this very logic, the colonization of the global South is carried out under neoliberalism in the guise of development, promising to bring enlightenment and progress in the form of economic growth while actually fostering further marginalization and exploitation of the global South. It is on this landscape of silences in development policy and program platforms that the voices from the global South emerge into dominant discursive spaces, rendering impure the underlying logics of neoliberalism and the accompanying programs and policies that arise out of neoliberal thought. Although we will engage with the narratives of resistance offered across global spaces, particularly relevant in my treatment of resistance in this book is the engagement with the resistive epistemologies that emerge from the global South.

In listening to the voices of resistance from the global South, the culture-centered approach seeks to foster openings for the articulations of alternative rationalities that offer entry points into imagining an alterna-
tive framework for organizing the social, political, and economic systems across world. At the center of culture-centered theorizing is the impetus to provincialize Europe, and in doing so, to open up possibilities of theorizing from other worlds that offer alternative visions for how we come to understand the world and relate to it. Culture is adopted in a strategically essentialist sense as a vantage point for organizing, as a way to turn the lens on the dominant structures of political and economic organizing in neoliberalism, and as a legitimating ground for the voicing of alternative arguments. The concept of culture co-opts the Eurocentric notions of culture and cultural aggregates to offer issue frames and to mobilize participation in the politics of resistance against the narrow definitions of liberty, democracy, and free market that guide neoliberalism. Culture emerges in discursive sites of social change to offer frameworks of learning and praxis from the global South.

The impetus to listen to the voices of and from the global South also disrupts the hegemony of US-centric and Eurocentric processes and frameworks of knowledge production. When actors from the global South talk back to the dominant structures of knowledge production, they do so by taking into task the very processes of knowledge production through which theories are judged and applications are carried out. They also interrogate the fundamental rules of the game that are applied in the production of knowledge and the values that are intertwined with these rules. Therefore, in attending to the many voices from the global South that find their way into discursive spaces, we will pay attention to the ways in which these voices negotiate their structural marginalization, identify the structural marginalization, and specifically articulate explicit forms of resistance to their structural marginalization. What are the discourses and discursive processes through which these voices from the global South seek to invert the hegemony of the neoliberal logic? What are the meanings that circulate in global politics of resistance that open up possibilities for structural transformations on a global scale, enabled through the presence of the voices from the global South that render impure the dominant logics of neoliberalism (Dutta & Pal, 2011)?
Networks of Solidarity: Local and Global

The organizing framework of neoliberalism is formulated around the global frameworks of neoliberal governance that shape the landscape of inequalities locally and globally. Because neoliberalism operates through the powerful linkage between the global and the local, the resistance to neoliberalism is also built on this relationship between the local and the global. Top-down interventions in neoliberalism are carried out through global policies that are developed by the IFIs such as the World Bank and the IMF, then imposed on the nation states, and furthermore carried out at local sites, producing specific effects of oppression and exploitation on local communities. Resistance is mobilized through the reversal of these top-down processes, with local voices driving the politics of change. However, because of the top-down nature of globalization politics of neoliberalism, the domains of influence also lie within national and global sites.

Solidarity networks among local, national, and global sites carry on the messages of resistance from local sites of change to national networks and then to global sites of social change through transnational networks of organizing. The networks of solidarity between local voices of resistance with national and global voices create entry points for collaboration that disrupt national and global policies that carry out oppressions. Many of the struggles presented through the pages of this book are highly localized, resisting the specific forms of oppression that have been carried out by local elites. Yet as we listen to these narratives of resistance, the voices of the activists and community members make us aware of the global nature of the policies and reforms that are pushed nationally and locally; it is through these frameworks of awareness of the interpenetration of local, national, and global issues that activist groups organize their resistance simultaneously at multiple sites of protest.

Communities in Resistance

As noted earlier throughout this chapter, communities are the key sites of neoliberal governance and are also the entry points to the politics of social change. With the transfer of responsibility and entrepreneurial skill sets to the level of the community, the provision of social services, such as
education and health, is moved into the realm of the community. Community participation is utilized to serve the privatization agenda through the use of the language of empowerment to minimize the role of the state in supporting public programs and in offering programs of welfare. In the framework of neoliberal governance, whereas on one hand, communities as sites of social capital become key players in carrying out the roles of service provision that were earlier handled by the state, on the other hand, communities play minimal roles in influencing state-level decisions of governance and in guiding political and economic decisions of the state that favor transnational hegemony.

The language of empowerment of communities is tied to the disempowerment of communities as sites of decision making regarding the use, maintenance, allocation, and regulation of resources. Programs of community relations, private-public partnerships, and participatory planning are utilized as tools within the framework of neoliberal governance to secure buy-in for top-down interventions and for carrying out the corporatization of public sectors and resources. For instance, public-private partnerships emerge as instruments of privatizing public programs of HIV/AIDS prevention that were earlier constituted in the hands of the community (Dutta, 2011; Sastry & Dutta, 2011). Participation at the level of the community emerges as a tool of co-optation, where the role of the community is played out in carrying out the agendas of neoliberal governance. In neoliberalism, local agency is co-opted as a strategic tool for enhancing the consolidation of resources in the hands of transnational hegemony and for the upward transference of resources to the power elite. Agency and the expression of agency in community settings are configured within the goals of the powerful economic and political actors. Programs of community participation and participatory research are driven toward the goals of serving transnational agendas, thus enhancing the reach of transnational hegemony within communities.

The culture-centered approach interrogates this co-optation of community participation to explore the local level processes of resistance and social change in communities that are directed toward challenging the inequitable policies written into the global political and economic struc-
tures. These processes of enactment of agency stand in opposition to the dominant structures that seek to consolidate decision-making powers in the hands of transnational hegemony. Resistance to dominant configurations becomes the guiding framework for understanding community participation, and attention is paid to those grassroots processes of community organizing that are directed at transforming the inequitable structures of control of global resources. Essential to these forms of community participation is the resistive capacity of participatory communication in challenging the communicative inequities that render communities as silent in global structures of decision making. Throughout the different case studies that are utilized in this book, we will engage with voices of resistance in local communities that fundamentally challenge the inequitable distribution of resources and communicative opportunities. Community participation, therefore, will be approached from the standpoint of communities in resistance, seeking to understand those communicative processes that are enacted within local communities, which are directed at transforming the symbolic and material inequities that are written into the sites of neoliberal governance (Cheney & Cloud, 2006; Cloud, 2005, 2006, 2007; Dutta, 2011; Dutta & Pal, 2011).

Throughout the chapters presented in this book, the foregrounding of communities as sites of resistance attends to the agentic capacity of community members and community coalitions as active participants in shaping the realms of policy making and program planning. The purposeful theorizing of communities as sites of resistance to dominant structures is critical to culture-centered theorizing, and this is accomplished through the representation of the voices from communities across the globe that organize explicitly in resistance to transnational neoliberal policies and the specific uptake of these policies in nation states and in local communities. The role of resistance as a defining characteristic of social change, therefore, is foregrounded. Communities as sites of resistance ultimately offer us alternative theories, methodologies, and applications that create entry points for alternative ways of thinking about the world, for organizing the world politically and economically, and for offering frameworks of social justice that attend to the voices of the margins instead of carrying out le-
gal processes and frameworks that disenfranchise those without access to resources. The articulation of community agency in resisting structures of top-down globalization takes place in global sites of resistance, seeking to enact change through participation in processes of direct action and performance, and creating avenues for change through dialogues locally as well as in conversation with solidarity networks across various local sites spread throughout the globe.

**Returning the Gaze**

Ultimately, the arguments throughout the various chapters of this book are put together in a theoretical framework that explores the possibilities of transformative politics directed at changing the ways in which neoliberalism has redefined the organizing of political, economic, social, and cultural spaces of the globe. The hegemony of the neoliberal project has been accomplished by the discounting of the voices from local communities and by essentially eliminating the accountability of the state to the public, instead turning the processes of decision making under the dictates of powerful TNCs. The essential removal of democratic opportunities of participation under the very name of democracy has defined the specter of neoliberalism and redefined the role of communication in democratic spaces and processes. Democracy has been narrowly constructed within Eurocentric ideals of the market and has been used as a tool under democracy promotion programs to attain the expansionist goals of TNCs, opening up foreign markets to their interventions.

It is in this backdrop that *Voices of Resistance* attends to those voices dispersed throughout the globe that seek to reclaim the fundamental human dignity of local communities and their members to communicate and to participate in the realms of decision making. In doing so, because of the large-scale co-optation of communicative possibilities under the Eurocentric definitions of democracy that privilege the market, the resistive voices of local communities return their gaze at the very structures of neoliberalism, identifying the parameters of neoliberalism that minimize the opportunities for participation and narrating the stories of oppression that are written into neoliberal reforms.
From stories voiced in the struggles for water rights in Cochabamba to stories of resistance against World Bank-imposed mega-dams in Nar- mada, local communities seek change by pointing out the hypocrisies in the languages of neoliberalism and by explicitly articulating skeptical stances toward projects of global expansionism narrated under the guise of altruism. In the stories of resistance, we see the continued deconstruc- tion of the age-old narrative of “lifting the burden of the soul” that has lied at the heart of Western expansionism through the deployment of the frames of altruism. This very act of redefining the so-called frames of de- velopment, participation, growth, and progress that constitute the bulwark of neoliberal expansion is an act of returning the gaze, of talking back to the very structures that have hidden the agentic capacity of communities (Snow & Benford, 1992, 1998). As we will see throughout the many ex- amples and the many voices that emerge throughout this book, the voices of resistance expressed at various sites of global oppression and exploita- tion achieve their legitimacy by returning their gaze at the communci- tive processes of neoliberal organizing that have exhumed their agency in justifying neoliberal expansion.

Conclusion

In the rest of the book, we will listen to the voices of resistance that offer us alternative entry points into the dominant discursive spaces, rendering them impure through their articulations. Through the issues and frames they foreground into the discursive space, these voices resist the narrative of individualism and greed that mark the landscape of the neoliberal agenda carried out on a global scale. With the commitment to listening to these voices as they narrate stories of change, I will mostly co-construct narratives that engage the local voices in dialogue, simultaneously paying attention to minimizing my interruptions so that you, the reader, can listen to these voices mediated through the texts. Although the narratives that emerge through these spaces are fundamentally rooted in the impossibilities for representation, they nevertheless seek to offer storied frameworks for understanding and appreciating the resistive processes
and movements through which individuals, communities, and networks of solidarity are expressing their resistance to the inherently unequal global organizing of resources.

Chapter two, titled “Resisting Global Economic Policies,” will open up the book with voices of resistance that explicitly conceptualize the economic policies of neoliberalism and offer resistance to it. Chapter three will examine the communicative processes of change that make up global resistance efforts against inequitable agricultural policies and the effects of these policies on the agricultural sectors of the globe. In chapter four, we will listen to the voices of resistance that emerge in the politics of social change that is directed at transforming the environmental policies globally that have produced large-scale effects on the environment. Chapter five will specifically discuss the processes of social change in the context of politics, attending to the resistive struggles that seek to redefine the terrains of political decision making amidst neoliberalism. Chapter six will offer us insights into the voices of resistance that construct a narrative of transformation within the realm of development, a key marker of neoliberal expansionism. Finally, we will wrap up with an epilogue that will synthesize the threads that weave together a broader politics of resistance, connecting local, national, and global voices of change. Because the meta-theoretical commitments of the culture-centered approach are to listening to the voices at the margins, throughout the book, we will listen to these voices engaged in co-constructions with my theoretical understandings as I seek to make sense of these voices in joining with them in solidarity, seeking out alternative frameworks for understanding and organizing our relationships with the globe, and the policies and programs that construct the stories of these relationships.

Notes

1. Subalternity is depicted in the historic erasure from the dominant discursive spheres.
2. Even as the historic divisions of knowledge structures and material relationships have been reconstituted under contemporary frames of globalization,
the marginalization of the global South in the hands of economic policies and programs dictated from the global North continue to constitute the landscape of globalization. The erasure of communities from the global South is carried out in programs of neoliberalization that use the languages of development and modernization to impose top-down projects of industrialization, mining, and urbanization. The language of development and modernization plays a crucial role in defining the ambits of global economic programs, with the deployment of liberalization and privatization agendas through the precise language of development. As patterns of globalization have deployed and concentrated resources in the hands of global capital, the inequities in distribution of resources have been carried out globally, with pockets of the global South/impoverished situated amidst the global North, and with pockets of global North/rich with concentration of power and economic resources rapidly taking up the material spaces of the global South. The North as well as the South are punctuated by large-scale inequities within nation states. In spite of these ruptures in concentration of power that have fostered a global economic elite across nation states accompanied by the impoverishment of the subaltern sectors across nation states, the rhetoric of globalization continues to carry out the logics of modernization to justify the large-scale adoption of neoliberal policies. Furthermore, the access to international structures of decision making and policy making among TNCs situated in the global North foregrounds the value of theorizing that continues to attend to the nuanced yet fairly powerful differentials in geographic distributions of power.

3. The term “subaltern” refers to the condition of being under, played out in the context of race, class, gender, caste, nationality, occupation, and position within the social structure. Although most of the examples that we work through in this book will focus on the experiences of subaltern communities in the global margins, many other communities discussed in these pages might be considered marginalized because although they are visible in policy platforms, their participatory capacity has been dramatically reduced. The term “subaltern” is framed under a key debate that suggests that to the extent a community can be heard, it is no longer a subaltern (Beverly, 2004a, 2004b; Spivak, 1988). The line of argument I build in this book engages at its base with the above notion, and yet departs from it in charting out a politics of social change, seeking to document the efforts of these groups who have historically been erased (and therefore subaltern) and continue to be erased from policy platforms, and yet make concerted efforts of resistance, putting
their bodies on the line, urging dominant structures to listen. For instance, in the eastern part of India, the Dongria Kondh tribe may be considered a subaltern community because of their historic erasure from dominant discursive sites and spaces and the current erasure of the community from industrialization policies in the region that threaten to displace them (Amnesty International, 2010). It is in this backdrop that the community, which has traditionally been situated amidst subalternity, emerges in mainstream discourses, offering various strategies that disrupt the silences that are perpetuated by the logics of the mainstream. The resistance that we hear in the voices of the Dongria Kondh is accompanied by voices of protests by actors in the mainstream, building local-global linkages of solidarity. Yet other voices that are presented in the pages of this book are voices of resistance emerging out of popular movements of social change such as the Occupy World Street movement that bring together students, teachers, union workers, farmers, and so forth in their protests against neoliberal structures of global governance.

4. Because the South is symbolically reflective of the margins that are left out of dominant discursive spaces, I conceptualize voices of resistance in movements such as the Occupy movement as voices from the global South; these voices belong to the South of the dominant North that frames neoliberal policies to guide political and economic decision making based on specific Eurocentric visions of liberty and market rationality. Furthermore, many of the conceptual categories and resistive strategies that emerge in movements such as the Occupy movement are derived from broader conceptual categories and strategies put forth in Egypt, in Oaxaca, and in Cochabamba. The concepts that emerge in the WSF, for instance, are also largely shaped by resistive articulations in the global South that initially originated the calls for global resistance against neoliberalism.