

GLOBALIZATION AND THE NEW CITY

**MIGRANTS, MINORITIES AND
URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS IN
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

EDITED BY

MALCOLM CROSS AND ROBERT MOORE

Migration, Minorities and Citizenship
General Editors: Zia Layton-Henry and Danièle Joly



Globalization and the New City

Migrants, Minorities and Urban
Transformations in Comparative Perspective

Edited by

Malcolm Cross

Director of the Centre for European Migration and Ethnic Studies

and

Robert Moore

Eleanor Rathbone Professor of Sociology

The University of Liverpool

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MC and RM

Notes on the Contributors

William A.V. Clark is Professor of Geography at the University of Los Angeles (e-mail: wclark@geog.ucla.edu). He is the author of *California Cauldron: Immigration and the Fortunes of Local Communities* (1998).

Malcolm Cross is Director of the Centre for European Migration and Ethnic Studies (e-mail: director@cemes.org).

Jürgen Friedrichs is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Institute of Sociological Research at the University of Cologne (e-mail: friedrichs@wiso-r610.wiso.uni-koeln.de).

Chris Hamnett is Professor of Geography at Kings' College, University of London (e-mail: chris.hamnett@kcl.ac.uk).

David R. Howell is Professor of Economics at the Robert J. Milano Graduate School, New School for Social Research, New York (e-mail: howell@newschool.edu).

Connie Hum is an undergraduate student at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Rebecca Kim is a graduate student in sociology at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Ivan Light is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is author most recently of *Ethnic Economies: Pursuing the American Dream* (San Diego: Academic, 1999) with Steven Gold. Correspondence on Chapter 8 should be directed to Ivan Light (e-mail: light@soc.ucla.edu).

Suzanne Model is Professor in the Social and Demographic Research Institute and Department of Sociology, University of Massachusetts (e-mail: Model@SADRI.UMass.Edu).

Robert Moore is Eleanor Rathbone Professor of Sociology at the University of Liverpool (e-mail: rsmoore@liverpool.ac.uk).

Elizabeth J. Mueller is Associate Professor of Economics at the Robert J. Milano Graduate School, New School for Social Research, New York (e-mail: lizmueller@juno.com).

Jeffrey G. Reitz is Robert F. Harney Professor of Ethnic, Immigration and Pluralism Studies at the University of Toronto, and also professor in the University's Department of Sociology and Centre for Industrial Relations (e-mail: reitz@chass.utoronto.ca). Among his most recent publications is *Warmth of the Welcome: the Social Causes of Economic Success for Immigrants in Different Nations and Cities* (1998).

Alisdair Rogers is at the School of Geography at Oxford University (e-mail: ali.rogers@geog.ox.ac.uk).

Loïc Wacquant is Professor of Sociology at the University of California (Berkeley) and Researcher at the *Centre de Sociologie Européenne du Collège de France* (e-mail: loic@uclink4.berkeley.edu).

Roger Waldinger is Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles (e-mail: waldinge@soc.ucla.edu).

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1

Globalization and the New City

Malcolm Cross and Robert Moore

On both sides of the Atlantic, there is a growing realization that the advent of the global economy is having profound effects on the structure and functions of cities. While cities have never conformed to a simple typology but have reflected economic, political, geographical and cultural differences, so called 'global cities' have come to be seen as critical nodes in the restructured economies of today's advanced economies. It has been suggested, for example, that both the increasing cultural complexity in major cities and increased inequalities of income and wealth are related to the advent of the global economy (Sassen 1991, 1994). Whether this is true or not is one major question to which this book is addressed. Another purpose is to explain what is occurring on both sides of the Atlantic in relation to apparent increases in migration and the effects this may have on established ethnic minorities. A third objective is to re-examine old divisions in the light of these new changes, particularly those relating to the isolation of some social groups in spatial zones, or what in North America are usually referred to as 'ghettos'.

These three themes will be considered separately in this introduction. Before that, however, some clarification is necessary on our use of the over-used term 'globalization'. Moreover, the title of this book makes the bold claim that there is a link between whatever this term connotes and the city, such that the latter may be described as possessing 'new' features. It behoves us to set out this proposition in more detail. An additional claim we shall make is that there are more *similarities* between Europe and North America in relation to this theme than is commonly supposed. In providing a context for this claim, we have to say something about the obvious differences. These

are many but we shall focus on one alone, namely the nature and extent of welfare provision.

Globalization and globalism

The globalization thesis in its strong form as a new and potentially uncontrollable domination by transnational corporations, with associated curtailment of the power of states, is not without its critics (Hirst and Thompson 1996). Certainly we would agree that writing off the state as an agent of control or assuming that global trade is necessarily greater as a proportion of total trade than it was a century ago, or that large corporations are more powerful now than then, would be misplaced. From the vantage point of urban communities, however, changes since the oil price recession of the early 1970s have been significant. From the industrial revolution onwards, there has been an assumption that the city was the motor of employment. Migrants only had to make it to the city to maximize their employment possibilities. Those that arrived in many European cities from former colonies, for example, or those recruited under *gastarbeiter* systems in the 1960s and early 1970s, originally revealed very low rates of unemployment. After 1980, this pattern changed rather dramatically and migrants and ethnic minorities became strongly over-represented in the ranks of the long-term unemployed (cf. Cross 1994; Dangschat 1994; Hollifield 1992; Kloosterman 1994, 1996a).

Today's global order differs from the 19th century. It is less overtly based upon direct military domination and plunder, although puppet regimes of the great powers may practise both and the United States' military force is the ultimate guarantor of global stability. There are, however, features of today's world order that, when taken together, constitute a new form. First we have seen the rise of transnational and supranational military, political and economic organisations that transcend the nation-states that were formed in the 19th century. These include NATO, SEATO, the European Union, NAFTA, the World Bank, the IMF and the United Nations. More important still we see transnational corporations of such wealth and power that many of the world's governments are only minor pieces on the global chessboard. Second we see features of *globalism*, the culture of McDonalds and Coca-Cola, pop singers, film stars, sports people and filmmakers who are known throughout the world and whose appeal transcends language and nationality. To some extent globalism may be equated with the