

# **GLOBAL REGIONALIZATION**

## Core Peripheral Trends

Edited by H.S. Geyer

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*Edited by*

H. S. Geyer

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# Global Regionalization

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## Preface

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'Globalization' has now become a household term in many disciplines. It is associated with the relative ease with which goods and information are disseminated across the globe. Advances in computer-aided communication and information technology as well as in transportation play an important part in it. The instantaneous transmission of images and information and the delivery of goods over very short periods of time over very long distances cause a perception that the world is 'shrinking'. The manner in which the views and behaviour of people in once isolated villages are now being influenced by people's perceptions and behaviour oceans away, causes a feeling of 'global localness'. On the one hand it tends to diminish differences in tastes and needs between people, which causes markets to expand, but at the same time it arouses feelings of tension and distrust amongst people who feel threatened by it. As a result dramatic changes have occurred in the global economic landscape, especially since the collapse of the Iron Curtain. The customary ideological-economic dichotomy of the Cold War era has been replaced by political-economic fragmentation and reorientation – the 'grand divide' of the past making way for greater freedom of choice. New relationships are being forged. Central European countries, remnants of the erstwhile Soviet Union, are increasingly focusing on the West while, in political-religious terms, fundamental elements in the Middle East seem to be interested in bonding more closely with similar elements in the southern states of the old USSR and elsewhere in Europe.

In the advanced economies of the world equally dramatic changes have occurred. There has been a rapid growth in offshore financial markets, an explosion in mergers and acquisitions, nationally and internationally, and all the time corporations are becoming less dependent on one nation's economy alone. In the process the focus has increasingly shifted from the local to the global economy, and from regional centres to global cities and global urban core regions, the latter being the urban networks that are dominating the world economic landscape.

The purpose of the book is to reflect on core peripheral trends inside and between global regions. A distinction is made between global core regions (the extended European Union, North America and the Pacific Rim), and peripheral regions (the Middle East and North Africa, Central Asia, Latin

America, and Sub-Saharan Africa). The book has a strong demographic-economic focus, each element serving as a basis for the explanation of the other. It shows what effects the changing economic conditions and relations inside and between global regions had on demographic trends in those regions and how they impacted on the international division of labour between the core and peripheral areas of the world over the years.

Explanatory-wise the aim of the book is twofold: firstly, to qualitatively differentiate between global core and peripheral regions, and secondly, to assess the severity of core-peripheral conditions inside and between global regions. In this regard the book tries to tie in with current mainstream research on globalization and development, but at the same time attempts to link social and economic issues related to capital and human mobility in a larger core peripheral context. This is a field that has not received sufficient attention in comparative studies thus far, especially different views on current trends in migration and social and economic development in the industrialized, industrializing and lagging regions of the world.

A number of prominent researchers in each of the regions have evaluated recent development trends in the regions. The first chapter, which serves as an introduction to the book in Part One, looks at current general trends in globalization. It covers themes such as the changes that have occurred in the global division of labour over time and factors that have caused these changes in a generic fashion. Core peripheral conditions in the core and peripheral regions of the world are discussed in Parts Two and Three of the book. It is hoped that, collectively, the case studies will provide new insight into the possible longer-term consequences of core peripheral trends in each region, insight that may open up new areas for further research.

Based on the selection of themes and the way in which the contributors handled the materials the book should be of interest to the layman, but in particular to scholars in the fields of political science, economics, geography, regional studies, planning and history.

I want to thank the chapter authors and co-authors for their dedication. I also want to express my appreciation to the staff of the Edward Elgar Publishing Company, especially Alexandra Minton, Caroline McIn, Nep Athwal, Emma Gordon-Walker and Cathrin Vaughan for their professional management of the production process.

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Manie Geyer

December, 2005

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## **PART ONE**

### **Trends in globalization**



## Chapter 1

# Introduction: the changing global economic landscape

**H. S. Geyer**

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### GLOBALIZATION IN HISTORY

Trading and the dissemination and assimilation of ideas between nations in different parts of the world lead to the diffusion of culture. This process, which in essence is a product of the process of globalization, is not new. It has been happening for centuries, as Ralph Linton (1936, pp. 326-327), tongue in cheek, observed:

[A] solid American citizen awakens in a bed built on a pattern which originated in the Near East but which was modified in Northern Europe before it was transmitted to America. He throws back covers made from cotton, domesticated in India, or linen, domesticated in the Near East ... or silk, the use of which was discovered in China. All of these materials have been spun and woven by processes invented in the Near East. He slips into his moccasins, invented by the Indians of the Eastern woodlands, and goes to the bathroom, whose fixtures are a mixture of European and American inventions, both of recent date. He takes off his pyjamas, a garment invented in India, and washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls. He then shaves, a masochistic rite which seems to have been derived from either Sumer or ancient Egypt ...

On his way to breakfast he stops to buy a paper, paying for it with coins, an ancient Lydian invention. At the restaurant a whole new series of borrowed elements confronts him. His plate is made of a form of pottery invented in China. His knife is of steel, an alloy first made in southern India, his fork a medieval Italian invention, and his spoon a derivative of a Roman original. He begins breakfast with an orange, from the Eastern Mediterranean, a cantaloupe from Persia, or perhaps a piece of African watermelon. With this he has coffee, an Abyssinian plant, with cream and sugar. Both the domestication of cows and the idea of milking them originated in the Near East, while sugar was first made in India. After his fruit and first coffee he goes on to waffles, cakes made by a Scandinavian technique from



wheat domesticated in Asia Minor. Over these he pours maple syrup, invented by the Indian of the Eastern woodlands. As a side dish he may have the egg of a species of bird domesticated in Indo-China, or thin strips of the flesh of an animal domesticated in Eastern Asia which have been salted and smoked by a process developed in Northern Europe. When our friend has finished eating he settles back to smoke, an American Indian habit, consuming a plant domesticated in Brazil in either a pipe, derived from the Indians of Virginia, or a cigarette, derived from Mexico. If he is hardy enough he may even attempt a cigar, transmitted to us from the Antilles by way of Spain. While smoking he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented by the ancient Semites upon a material invented in China by a process invented in Germany. As he absorbs the accounts of foreign troubles he will, if he is a good conservative citizen, thank a Hebrew deity in an Indo-European language that he is 100 per cent American.

In the beginning the diffusion of culture and long-distance trading occurred very slowly, first by word of mouth and by hand wherever people could reach one another by foot, domesticated animal or waterfaring vessel. Since the end of the nineteenth century, however, technological advances in the maritime industry, followed by the motor, aviation and finally the electronic industry, made the pace of globalization faster and much more visible.

The initial phase of globalization (much of which resulted in the cultural assimilation referred to by Linton above) could be called global pioneerism. Then came the colonial era (which obviously continued to have features of pioneerism), the drive towards global economic domination through colonization and direct government control – a process that started with the Romans and ended towards the middle of the twentieth century. Since the Second World War the world has entered what could be called the phase of induced globalization, that is, the popularization of particular economic systems and social norms through the process of persuasion (even coercion). The latter has gained visible momentum since the collapse of the post-war Bretton Woods agreement, the deregulation of the capital markets, and especially the advances in the electronic computing and communication technology since the 1980s. It was only then that the concept ‘globalization’ really caught on, became visible, and became a popular theme in many fields of research. Although there are some who are still sceptical about its existence or relevancy (Beinart, 1997; Douglas and Wind, 1987), and others who are opposed to it and consider it a contaminating factor, most regard it as a growing force in the development of economies all over the world.

Generally, globalization is associated with the ease with which goods and information cross international boundary lines leading to an increasing integration of economies around the world (Cyr, 2001; Allen and Thompson, 1997). The information and computer technology revolution played an important part in this. Thanks to advances in this field, the intensity of economic activities over international borders has been growing exponentially in recent years. The use of electronic and mobile computing and communication technology that has now been with us for some time continues to grow at