

## Chapter One: Globalization, Its Definitions Via Some of The Forms It Takes, and A Brief History

Globalization in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century (*contemporary globalization*) reveals the nations, businesses, and peoples of the world rapidly becoming more interdependent. This book focuses on this accelerating interdependence, its causes and its consequences. Whether we recognize it or not, all of us are now involved in globalization.

A word of caution. Globalization is complex, incredibly inter-related, and interwoven into many facets of contemporary life. The clothes you wear, the car you drive, the books you read, the computers, televisions, and cell phones you may use, the food on your plate, your furniture, and even the currency in use, all are very much part of global trade, and influenced by the processes of globalization. National and local economies are also woven into the global economy. Because of its appearance in so many forms, globalization pushes those studying it to use a variety of tools -- everything from history, political science, and economics, to cultural anthropology, geography, science, and the arts.

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### A Roadmap For This Book

Because this is a large book with many chapters, and you may have specific interests to pursue, we offer here a road map to help you find your way where you want to go.

The first four chapters of *Uncertain Steps* offer definitions of globalization, including:

- the advantages and disadvantages of different lenses used to examine it,
- how globalization goes about changing,
- and the beginnings of two opposing stories or narratives about globalization. We see these as *macro narratives*, grand stories about globalization that include and summarize thousands of smaller narratives. One of these we refer to as the *globalization as progress* narrative. The other we term the *globalization as disaster* narrative. As you might expect, tensions exist between these two such different explanations.

Globalization is experienced, conceptualized, discussed, and valued very differently depending on the point of view an observer takes. In other words, one person's understanding of globalization and use of it in language, may not necessarily be another's. Additionally, in chapter three we suggest that any student of globalization can benefit from understanding it at six different levels -- from personal, to local, to sub-national regional, to national, to regional, to global -- ways in which the world is organized socially and politically.

To acquire some background on how globalization came to be , and to hone your skills for approaching this complicated subject, you might be well advised to use these first four chapters.

In the next part of the book – chapters 5 through 13 -- you will find more thorough investigations of some of the notable issues that globalization raises -- economy, health, education, media, energy, population-urbanization-migration-inequality, food security, labor, and crime. Each of these issues in unexpected ways reaches into your life and your future. These chapters provide the reader with useful information about how globalization shapes and influences each of these subjects, and suggest some of the consequences that occur as a result.

The final two chapters of *Uncertain Steps* look into the forces now shaping where globalization appears to leading the 6.7 billion global citizens it encompasses, with Chapter 14 focused on the vital question of sustainability, and the last chapter on possible futures for globalization.

Please note that globalization presents a moving target, with its changes arriving rapidly – on a daily basis. Consequently we have added at the end of chapters online sources where you can pursue the latest useful, in-depth information extending what we provide in *Uncertain Steps*.

Moreover, if you want to explore a series of interactive online case studies, or have more online globalization sites available to you, or use The Good Thinkers Tool Kit, we urge to go to our companion website *Going Global*, available at [Earthwindow.com/grc2/](http://Earthwindow.com/grc2/)

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As an organized field of study, globalization is quite new. The word *globalization* had become common currency by 1990, and at that point journals and books devoted to the subject had increased to thousands from a few hundred a generation earlier. Today a Google search of the word *globalization* produces millions of listings. Globalization has exploded onto the world stage.

Depending on the viewpoint you use, globalization can present quite different faces and present very different stories. Those who enjoy the benefits and advantages of globalization favor the ***globalization as progress*** narrative, and have been described as ***globalizers***. Those who incline toward the ***globalization as disaster*** narrative tend to see themselves through the eyes of people who suffer the negative consequences of globalization, what critics describe as people who have been ***globalized***.

Finally, please consider how the elusive nature of globalization parallels a story in Homer's *Odyssey*. After the Trojan War, the hero Menelaus found himself wrestling the mythological sea creature Proteus, hoping to discover from him the truth about finding his way home. Each time Menelaus had nearly pinned him down, Proteus would change forms, and on they would wrestle. Globalization

has a lot in common with Proteus. Just about the time you think you have globalization pinned down and can get a hold on the truth about it, it can change forms on you. So please note that the perspectives and narratives we use to discuss globalization can offer many useful faces, but eventually you must wrestle with it for yourself and decide what constitutes the truth about globalization, then remain open-minded about the next face it presents.

While what we encounter daily appears to be mostly local, ultimately the world is a web linking what we produce, consume, and communicate with others in distant places and cultures. Globalization is about how each of us fits in to this complex web. So broad a subject can sound a bit intimidating until you find ways to get a grasp of its essentials, an understanding of how one thing leads to another, then another. For example, a full discussion of global trade means exploring its impact on urbanization, immigration, international forms of agreement and governance, energy security, foreign direct investment, threats to public health, income inequalities, food security, cultural resistance to global trade, extra-governmental trade relationships, environmental consequences, and so forth. More, it means exploring each of these complex issues as they appear in different ways around the entire globe. Consequently, trying to limit or circumscribe situations in global study can prove frustrating because of the inter-relatedness throughout the web of globalization. But these frustrations are naturally overcome as you become familiar with the subject. And the more you learn, the more fascinating, and rewarding it becomes when you examine the ways in which globalization shapes your own life.

### **Multiple Definitions**

Out of the many definitions developed for the term *globalization*, the following six are particularly useful to examine.

#### **--*Nothing New: Globalization as Global History.***

Some people do not see much value in introducing the term *globalization*. Those who subscribe to *Nothing New* consider today's greater interactions among nations simply as a continuation of trade and forms of international connections and exchange that began long ago. *Nothing New* suggests that all of these current systems simply have increased or intensified what has gone on for centuries. In this view, history reveals repeated episodes or "eras" of globalization, each building on those that preceded it. The political economist Barry Gills (2001) describes contemporary *globalization* as the "working out" of these processes developed long ago. In a more recent work Nayan Chandra also locates the origin of contemporary globalization in the distant past and in the patterns by which humans came to interact over longer and longer distances (Chandra, 2007).

#### **--*Globalization as the world capitalist system.***

The American sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein has created a complex analysis of the world development over the past five centuries. In this view the modern globalized world was created as European and later American power spread capitalist influences throughout the world. Capitalist systems of investment and production, and the likelihood they carry of possible improvements in the way humans live, have increasingly dominated the economic and social life of each culture that European and American capitalism have contacted. This broadening system of capitalism explanation describes how capital itself continually changes and reshapes the cultures and lives of peoples as it ties them together in a single web. (Wallerstein, 1974).

**--*Globalization as Extended Internationalization.***

Many people use *globalization* as a term synonymous with internationalization or internationalism, that is, how nation-states and the agencies and businesses within them interact around the world. (Here nation-state differs from ethnic or religious groups who may not be identified with states, e.g., Kurds, Palestinians). Within this view *globalization* refers to what nations do in interacting with one another (e.g., economic trade, managing immigration flows, settling disputes, pursuing common interests, etc.).

Because every populated area of the world is organized into some form of government, and is usually identified by the governmental authority in charge of it, this *Internationalization* view offers known points of reference in the form of nation-states. Nonetheless, *internationalization* ignores some significant forces moving globalization, forces such as *transnational* businesses operating in multiple countries, economic institutions such as the World Trade Organization, and global processes such as currency exchange and telecommunications. As we proceed, we hope this important difference in kind between nation-states and other globalization influences will become clearer.

**--*Globalization as the increased circulation of goods, services, and symbols.***

This common interpretation of *globalization* refers to the extent that our daily lives increasingly rely on goods, services, and symbols that we receive via trade with distant places. By the same token, what we produce and trade is integrated into the daily lives of distant peoples. In this view globalization is synonymous with *the world as a common marketplace*, wherein the what is exchanged and consumed ranges from high end manufactured parts, to health products (e.g., pharmaceuticals), to clothing, food and other consumables, to information services, to a complex array of symbolic information products (e.g., film, television, print materials, telecommunications,) etc; (Barnet and Cavanaugh, 1994).

**--*Globalization as Americanization.***

Outside the United States many people perceive globalization as just another term for the increased domination of the world's economy by the United States

through its primary transnational corporations, its influence over international bodies such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, The International Monetary Fund, and the regional development banks (such as the Asian Development Bank). Globalization also involves uses of American military power to assure such things as a flow of oil from distant oil-producing nations. This view sees globalization as primarily the exercise of American political, economic, military and cultural power, and other countries and peoples reacting to these.

### **--Globalization as a Distinctly Modern Phenomenon.**

According to many researchers and commentators on globalization, this view suggests that *contemporary globalization* builds on all of the foregoing definitions, but that it is also influenced by identifiable recent changes such as the computer revolution and the end of the Cold War over the past forty to fifty years (Giddens, 2000).

### **Globalization in History**

How did humanity find its way into globalization as it now exists? Let us start with how exploration and trade have operated through history to shape our present intense globalization.

Through history rulers have pursued expansions of empire—Alexander the Great's empire, the Roman Empire, The Ottoman Empire, Charlemagne's Empire in Western Europe—that linked cultures and initiated important cultural exchanges, such as the libraries built by the Islamic culture that ruled parts of in Spain for some 700 years. Traditionally localities have also produced goods or services, and exchanged them first with one another in villages, then across towns, cities, and regions, usually close to home. As transportation and communication improved, country A produced a good or service to exchange with country B. What began as trade along the "silk road" between Europe and Asia, made famous by the adventuresome Italian Marco Polo, evolved into explorations by the Portuguese, Spanish, British, French, and Chinese, followed by colonies, and empires based on trade. Some say that present globalization is just an expansion of this *historical globalization*, ever-expanding patterns of trade and the cultural exchanges that go with it building the present globalized world.

They emphasize that from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on, more industrially advanced societies have had increasing contact with less advanced societies – areas with little advanced industry, but with sources of raw materials and markets for goods. After the technologically advanced countries established political, military, and economic control over distant territories, some of these less developed places and colonies evolved their own industries, becoming self-sufficient enough to separate into nations such as Canada, the United States, Mexico, India, Pakistan, and the Union of South Africa .

### **Technology and Globalization**

Periods of globalization have been marked by the arrival of revolutionary new technologies, especially those in transportation and communication that allow increased trade over distances. *Contemporary globalization* has followed this pattern. Modern jet aircraft, container ships and super tankers, and computer and satellite communications have revolutionized how goods, services, and information are exchanged throughout the world. These new transportation and information technologies build on similar advances in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when railroads, steam power ships, the telegraph, the advent of electricity, and finally the telephone brought about dramatic increases in world trade. From 1870 to 1913 world trade grew at a rate of 3.5 percent per year, which meant it doubled every twenty years. (Kitson and Michie, 1995: 6) This *core-periphery system* of trade saw a core of developed countries, those of Northwest Europe plus the United States, producing most of the manufactured goods, while the periphery (the rest of the world) served as a supplier of raw materials and as a market for the manufactured products. The colonial empires of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the trade empires in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, remained more or less in place until ripped apart by the Second World War (WWII).

Since WWII the map of world trade has continually reorganized, integrating trade through notable three periods. The total of world exports as a percentage of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP/everything produced), grew steadily from around 1820 through the collapse of the global financial system in 1929. During the global depression of the 1930's, international trade reversed because many nations adopted tariff protections. Nonetheless, the concentration of trade under the old core regime remained roughly intact through 1938, with 71 percent of world trade concentrated in four countries, and 90 percent of world trade in 11 countries.

WWII interrupted all trade patterns, after which global trade rebounded and rapidly multiplied in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to take its current forms. From the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century on, globalization became more and more reliant on the global trade in oil, as oil made possible the cheap transportation on which global trade has depended. In Table 1.1 below, note that eight oil firms (underlined, including four of the top six income producing corporations in the world) grossed approximately 1.75 trillion dollars profits in 2008,. That over 3% of total world income was earned by just eight transnational energy corporations demonstrates the dominant role that oil has played in contemporary globalized trade.

The ratio of exports as a part of total world industrial output has alternately risen and fallen as the global economy has become increasingly interdependent. Notably this interdependence, which for several decades has enriched industrial nations, now reveals some of its negative consequences. In the face of a global crisis in credit, with major downturns in banking, autos, housing, and other large industries, the interdependence of contemporary globalization has led declining consumer economies such as the U.S. to depress the economies of producer nations accustomed to selling into the U.S. market.

This contemporary period of trade that has integrated the economies of nations first centered on exchanges of parts and manufactured goods, with a supporting trade in raw materials. By the late 1980s almost 80 percent of developed country exports were manufactured items, while developing countries showed even more dramatic change, their manufactured items rising from 20 percent to almost 50 percent in the late 1980s. (Dicken, 2002: 46) A second shift occurred in the growth of intra-industry trade, trade between countries in products such as car parts. This intra-industry share of world trade in the developed countries has risen to over 85 percent of trade by the 1990s, compared with 45 percent in the early 1960s.

Table 1.1 Top 25 Global Corporations (2008, Fortune Magazine)

Top 25 Global Corporations by Dollar Volume			
Rank	Name	Total Volume of Sales (000,000)	Profits
1	Wal-Mart Stores (US)	378,779	12,731
2	<u>Exxon Mobile (US)</u>	372,824	40,610
3	<u>Royal Dutch/Shell Group</u>	355,782	31,331
4	<u>BP (UK)</u>	291,438	20,845
5	Toyota Motors (Jap)	230,201	15,042
6	<u>Chevron (US)</u>	210,783	18,688
7	ING	201,516	12,649
8	<u>Total</u>	187,280	18,042
9	General Motors (US))	182,347	-38,732
10	<u>ConocoPhillips (US)</u>	178,558	11,891
11	Daimler	177,167	5,446
12	General Electric(U.S.)	172,468	22,208
13	Ford Motor(U.S)	172,468	-2,723
14	Fortis	164,877	5,467
15	AXA	162,762	7,755
16	<u>Sinopec (China)</u>	159,260	4,166
17	Citigroup(U.S)	159,229	3,617
18	Volkswagen(Ger)	149,054	5,639
19	Dexxia Group	147,648	3,467
20	HSBC Holdings	146,500	19,133
21	BNP Paribas	140,726	10,706
22	Allianz	140,618	10,904
23	Credit Agricole	138,155	8,172

24	State Grid(China)	132,855	4,423
25	<u>China National Petroleum</u>	129,798	14,925

The third change may be the most important. This trade takes place through the action of Transnational Corporations(TNCs), which now dominate world trade. Table 1.1 identifies the top 25 corporations in the world. By UN estimates, TNCs account for as much as two thirds of the world export of goods and services, a huge change from previous eras. Perhaps even more striking is the vast amount of trade that takes place *within* transnational corporations. This trade within corporations is world trade—trade across national borders—that is counted like all other international trade. In other words, in the old model we saw the nation as the unit doing the trading, that is, a firm in China trading with a firm in Brazil, and we viewed this as inter-nation exchange, globalization. Now, however, somewhere between one-third and one-half of all international trade in the world occurs when one part of a corporation located in one country trades goods (or services) with another part of the same corporation located in another country. For example, this form of global trade occurs when Toyota car parts created in Japan are sold to a Toyota assembly factory in the United States. Or parts of clothing manufactured in Asia are assembled into a finished product in Central America or the U.S. The rise of trade within TNCs makes it clear that transnational corporations have come to dominate contemporary globalization.

### **Globalization As A Modern Phenomenon**

Contemporary globalization can be identified via distinctive features that have emerged over the past fifty or so years, characteristics which help to define globalization. It may help to consider that studying globalization is a bit like using a camera with different lenses. With a given camera and lens, you frame in and focus on some specific causes and consequences of globalization, yet in doing so, you inevitably frame out and lose the focus on other globalization forces that then require a different lens to be viewed. For example, consider the following ways you might frame globalization. 1) The contemporary world of trade has built over centuries from trade practices that were developed deep in our historical past, including the invention and growth of the nation-state and its effects on trade. 2) The extraordinary technological innovations of the nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries set the stage for what would become called variously the “information age” or the “network society.” 3) Nineteenth century imperialism organized much of the world on the basis of European and American political, economic, and military power. 4) Some wars of the twentieth century were truly “global”, that is, some of the combatants had global aims, and certainly the effects of WWI and WWII were global, as was the Cold War.

These phenomena—trade history, recent technological innovations, the dominant global influences of Europe and America, and the impact of wars, plus other historical causes—all have places in considering *globalization*, but attention

solely to any of them may lead you to frame out some other characteristics of globalization that also deserve your attention. The point: feel free to refer back to these pages to remind yourself of some of the many salient features of globalization.

Contemporary globalization also includes some of the following attributes:

- *The invention of the Transnational corporation (TNC)* TNCs developed out of the great international corporations that arose in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, e.g., Standard Oil (now Exxon Mobile) and Ford Motors. Modern TNCs emerged in the 1950s and 1960s to extend the reach of international corporations, which up to then had tended to be centered in a host nation, while drawing on resources from global sites and selling products internationally. TNCs such as McDonalds, Citgo, Phillips, and Volkswagen have stockholders and trade stocks around the world. They draw on distant sites for their raw materials and parts, and have research and development facilities, factories and shipping facilities, and wholesale and retail outlets in nations around the world. They seek to take advantage of cheap labor, inexpensive raw materials, minimal regulations, and available capital wherever these can be found around the globe. They treat large regions or the entire globe as a marketplace for their goods and services (Barnet and Mueller, 1974). While often retaining the names established in their countries of national origin, TNCs such as Exxon Mobile, General Motors, Sony, Intel, Phillips, and BNP Paribas operate worldwide. These TNC's extend their unique corporate values and cultures to many nations, operating as completely independent entities with their primary loyalty to themselves, not to the nations in which they began. These attributes lead TNCs to lack any identifiable national loyalty, as they seek to control larger shares of markets and to avoid taxes wherever they can. Consequently some authors speak of the invention of a global corporate culture, or even "Mac-culture" (Barber, 1996).
- *The global shift in manufacturing.* A primary feature of contemporary globalization has been the movement of manufacture out of the mature industrial countries into "the third world," a group of newly industrial countries (NICs), , and the lesser-developed nations (LDN's). Some nations – particularly failed states -- have lagged in this extension of industrialization throughout the world. Robert Reich wrote in the early 1990s that significant world manufacturing had moved away from the older industrial nations, leaving behind societies caught in widespread economic struggles (Reich, 1991). For example, General Motors has invested in manufacturing Buick automobiles in China, moving jobs and some sales abroad, but despite massive layoffs in the U.S. over recent years, this huge TNC still has been forced to confront bankruptcy.
- *Foreign direct investment (FDI).* This investment of capital from one nation directly into the ownership of enterprises in another country makes possible

the global shift in manufacturing and the sale of services from abroad. FDI has become a key marker of the global economy, cited as a way to measure global inter-dependency and to signal the relative success of poorer nations in raising capital from richer ones. FDI also takes place at very high levels between mature industrial nations (richer nations), as well as between richer and poorer. Contemporary globalization now relies on the worldwide ownership of capital that constantly crosses national borders seeking better return on investment.

- *The new global division of labor.* The availability of cheaper labor and fewer labor and environmental regulations has led manufacturing to shift from western industrialized countries toward third world nations. Initially this inexpensive labor referred to blue collar work in the manufacturing. Since the late 1980s, improved telecommunications have allowed white- and pink-collar work to move toward cheaper labor as well. For example, X-rays from Honolulu patients are routinely read in India overnight via inexpensive telecommunications. White-collar work traditionally has referred to management or professional activity, as opposed to its blue-collar production counterpart. Pink-collar work has come to refer to the cheaper labor force doing data entry and other service tasks needed in a computerized society, so-called *pink* because such workers are overwhelmingly female. Billing, record keeping, medical transcriptions, call centers, and other service support activities are increasingly located in countries distant from the industrial countries where sales occur.

Within English-speaking forms of work, such labor shifts have favored Asian nations such as the Philippines and India, where technological infrastructure can be employed to organize large numbers of relatively inexpensive English-speaking workers (Krempel and Pluemper, n.d.). In these cases work moves to the location of the labor.

The past two decades have also witnessed the reverse, labor moving to the work, with vast global migrations inside and across borders reshaping labor markets. Within countries around the world – from Nigeria and China to Brazil and Pakistan-- hundreds of millions have moved from the countryside to the city, where jobs have concentrated. Large numbers of workers are also drawn from the poorer to the more affluent countries in search of work, as parts of the EU now experience. Perhaps the Philippines leads in labor moving toward work; it is estimated that fully 20 percent of its adult labor force works outside the country, with workers abroad sending remittances to their families. (Wright, 2002; Herod, 2002).

- *The impact of new technologies on globalization.* Three *novel* technologies have dramatically influenced the shifts in productivity and marketing that ushered in modern globalization. **First**, the creation of jet aircraft in 1959 shrank the world by allowing for a much more rapid exchange of people and

goods over great distances. **Second**, the introduction of container ships in 1956 and super-tankers in 1958 reduced the costs of moving heavy cargo by ship, rail, and truck throughout the world. As a result, the production of goods has moved wherever inexpensive labor and fewer regulations are available around the globe. **Third**, the invention of modern telecommunications—with high speed, high capacity computer systems and a global internet—has led to more efficient production and improved control of inventories and shipping. These advances have also made many markets for goods accessible instantly from anywhere in the globe 24 hours a day. Computers, bar codes, and consumer identification now log the preferences of individual consumers, revolutionizing sales. Computers and the Internet also make possible global currency trading and stock trading, and have made it easier for capital to move freely across borders. (Neubauer, 2000).

- *Neo-liberal policies.* With its emphasis on reduced government regulation and more free trade among nations, neo-liberalism emphasizes the role of global competition as promoting economic efficiency and growth. In the last forty years neo-liberalism has spread from western industrialized countries to lesser-developed nations. As a global market philosophy that influences both domestic and foreign policies, neo-liberalism has promoted reduced taxes, the privatizing of state resources, deregulated industries, and overall reduced government control of trade -- erasing tariffs and quotas, and allowing investments to move wherever profits look better globally. With Neo-liberalism now the official mind-set of globalization proponents (Steger, 2002), neo-liberals have privatized everything from tax collection for governments, to hiring private military firms to provide security for foreign military bases, to controlling water resources, to having corporations police their own emission of pollutants. Neo-liberalism has fostered the creation of the World Trade Organization and such trade groups as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Association) and the EU (European Union), and it has influenced how China's state-centered capitalism balances government-owned businesses against free market firms. Unfortunately in the U.S. it also fostered the deregulation of banking that has contributed to the recent global banking and credit collapse.
- *Global and regional trade systems.* For some commentators contemporary globalization is primarily about establishing organized free trade systems. The creation of the supra-national World Trade Organization out of its predecessor The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1994 signaled that global business could now move nation-states to promote more extensive global trade. The creation of the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) and the European Union and Common Market have institutionalized free trade in ways that reduce the role of the nation-state in influencing international exchange. Transnational relationships such as NAFTA tend to: (1) free the movement and uses of capital; (2) exploit labor. Some also argue

that these multi-nation agreements force nations to lower environmental and safety standards.

All of these characteristics and considerations deserve a place in your thinking as you define and examine globalization. As you explore further what fits within the frame of globalization, however, please recognize that it proves useful to switch points of view, to look at the same situation from different framings, sometimes in specific close-ups on certain characteristics and features, sometimes in frames that present you the widest possible amount of information.

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