

# ENGAGING GLOBALIZATION

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**The Poor, Christian Mission,  
and Our Hyperconnected World**

**BRYANT L. MYERS**



**Baker Academic**

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With love and appreciation to

Lisa

Brooke, Casey, and Samantha Grace  
James, Laurel, and Evelyn Angelica

# Contents

List of Sidebars	xiii
Series Preface	xv
Acknowledgments	xvii
Abbreviations	xxi

## Section 1: Setting the Stage

---

1. Introduction and the Path Forward	3
What Is Being Proposed?	
How Will We Get There?	
Questions for Discussion	
2. Twin Foundations	15
Theological Affirmations	
<i>Globalization and God</i>	
<i>The Creation Narrative</i>	
<i>Explaining the Human Condition</i>	
<i>What Does God Intend?</i>	
<i>Human Flourishing</i>	
Complex Adaptive Social Systems	
Questions for Discussion	

## Section 2: Introducing Globalization

---

3. Understanding Globalization 33
- The Problem of Definitions
    - Metaphors for Globalization*
    - The Outcomes and Processes of Globalization*
  - Globalization from Below
  - The Dark Side of Globalization
  - The Dynamic Domains of Globalization
    - Technology*
    - Economics*
    - Governance*
    - Culture*
    - Human Beings*
  - Summing Up
  - Questions for Discussion
4. The Ambiguities of Globalization 53
- The Emergent Nature of Globalization
    - Who's in Charge of Globalization?*
    - What Shapes Globalization?*
    - Is Globalization Inevitable?*
  - Globalization's Unresolved Issues of Concern
    - Asymmetries of Power*
    - Income Inequality*
    - Unending Economic Disruption*
    - The Health of Our Planet*
    - The Reduction of Human Identity and Purpose*
  - The Challenge to the Church in Mission
  - What's Next?
  - Questions for Discussion

## Section 3: The Two Eras of Globalization

---

5. The First Era of Globalization: Going Global by Migration, Conquest, and Mission 69
- The First Era
    - In the Beginning—Migration*

- Migration and Conquest*
- Migration and Mission*
- The Age of Exploration: 1400–1700*
- Setting the Stage for the Second Era of Globalization*
- The Transformation of Britain
  - What Changed?*
  - Tectonic Shifts*
  - The Economic Transformation*
  - Increased Human Agency*
- Questions for Discussion
- 6. The Second Era of Globalization: Globally Connected and Closer Together 87
  - The Second Era
  - Globalization I: 1800–1914
    - Technological and Economic Change*
    - The Contribution of the Church*
    - Globalization of Mission*
  - The Great Disruption: 1914–89
    - Between the Wars*
    - Post–World War II*
    - The Cold War*
  - Globalization II: 1989 to Today
    - Rapid and Uneven Change*
    - The Relegation of the Church to the Spiritual Realm*
  - Summing Up
  - Questions for Discussion

## Section 4: The Impact of Globalization

---

- 7. The Impact of Two Hundred Years of Globalization 107
  - Economic Growth
    - Toward a Global Economy*
    - Economic Centers Are Moving*
    - Goods and Services Are Moving*
  - Technological Change
    - The Emergence of Modern Sciences*
    - Technology Is Connecting Us*
    - New Forms of Energy*

- A New Technological Era Is Emerging*
- People Are Moving
  - Modern Migration*
  - New Features of Migration Today*
- Better Human Lives
  - Better Health*
  - Education and Literacy*
  - The Social Sciences Emerge*
- Culture and People Change
  - Changes in Human Self-Understanding*
  - Globalization of Compassion*
  - Church and Compassion*
- Questions for Discussion
- 8. Assessing the Second Era of Globalization 129
  - What Happened to the Poor?
  - Differing Perspectives on Globalization
    - Toward the Promised Land*
    - A False Dawn?*
    - Things Fall Apart*
  - The Last Two Hundred Years in a Nutshell
  - As We Move On
  - Questions for Discussion

## **Section 5: Globalization and the Poor**

---

- 9. Globalization's Response to Poverty 147
  - The State of the Poor Today
    - There Is a Lot Left to Do*
    - Where Are the Poor?*
    - Their Unhelpful Contexts*
  - The Global Response to the Poor
    - Origins of the Idea of Development*
    - Evolution of the Development Theories*
    - Development as Freedom—Amartya Sen*
    - What Do the Poor Have to Say?*
    - The Global Institutions Responding to the Poor*
  - Summing Up

Questions for Discussion

10. Contemporary Thinking on Development 163

Global Proposals for Poverty Eradication

*Delivering Development*—Jeffrey Sachs

*Discovering Development*—William Easterly

*The Bottom Billion Are Different*—Paul Collier

*Culture and Development*—Lawrence Harrison

Recent Insights

*The Mystery of Capital*—Hernando de Soto

*The Power of Credit*—Muhammad Yunus

*Discovering What Works*—Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo

*Information and Communications Technology for Development  
(ICT4D)*

Faith and Development

*Where Are the Christians?*

*They Are Suspicious but Curious*

*We Are Also Suspicious and Need to Be More Curious*

*Is There Value in Dialogue?*

*An Enriching Conversation*

Summing Up

Questions for Discussion

---

**Section 6: Globalization and the Church**

11. Globalization and World Christianity 187

Two Preliminaries

*The Mission of the Church*

*Making Sense of Our Christian History*

Christianity: An Enduring Globalism

The Globalization of World Christianity

*The Historical Trajectory*

*The Nature of Christian Mission*

*God Did Not Die*

The Changing Shape of the Christian Church

*What Changed?*

*What Do These Changes Mean?*

The Frontiers of Mission Today

Questions for Discussion	
12. The Theological Limitations of Globalization	207
A Flawed Anthropology	
The Problem of Power	
The Relegation of Morality and Ethics	
The Missing Moral Ecology of Globalization	
Questions for Discussion	
13. The Christian Engagement with Globalization	219
A Protestant Contribution—Max Stackhouse	
<i>Global Public Theology</i>	
<i>Global Civil Society</i>	
A Roman Catholic Contribution—Daniel Groody	
<i>Catholic Social Teaching</i>	
<i>Key Themes of Catholic Social Teaching</i>	
<i>Globalization, Justice, and Spirituality</i>	
Changing Culture—James Davison Hunter	
The Decisive Importance of Prayer	
Summing Up	
Questions for Discussion	
14. The Missiological Challenge of Globalization	243
The Mission Field Has Changed	
A Different Kind of Missionary	
Discipleship Formation and the Spiritual Disciplines	
Recovering the Good News in the Good News	
Recovering Our Confidence	
Are We Up to the Task?	
Bibliography	259
Index	276

# Sidebars

- A Relief Worker in a Globalizing World (Ben Ramalingam) 38
- Questions from Below (Olúfẹ̀mi Táíwò) 40
- Who Is Changing Whom? (Jehu Hanciles) 41
- The Missiological Challenge of Globalization (Samuel Escobar) 65
- Center and Periphery (Roberto S. Goizueta) 75
- The Dark Side of Empire (Branko Milanović) 92
- The End of Globalization I (John Maynard Keynes) 96
- The Consequences of Relegation (Emmanuel Katongole) 102
- Open Borders (Olúfẹ̀mi Táíwò) 116
- The Past Leaves Us No Choice (Martin Wolf) 133
- The Limits of Economic Freedom (Pope John Paul II) 134
- An African View (J. N. K. Mugambi) 137
- Muslim Perspectives on Globalization 140–41
- A Suspicious Perspective (Ali Mohammadi and Muhammad Ahsan)
  - Globalization Is Dangerous but Inevitable (Abu Sadat Nurullah)
  - Globalization Does Not Have the Final Word (Mohd Abbas)
- The Poor as Entrepreneurs (Hernando de Soto) 150
- God Makes a Global Claim (Justo L. González) 192

- In Today's World . . . (Pew Research Center) 198
- The Implications of Change (Andrew Walls) 201
- Self-Theologizing (Justo L. González) 202
- Theology and Globalization (Daniel G. Groody) 209
- The Missing Piece (Jonathan Sacks) 214
- Assessing Globalization (Brian Griffiths) 216
- The Church and Reconstruction 220
- Social Analysis without Theology (Max Stackhouse)
  - From Liberation to Reconstruction (J. N. K. Mugambi)
- The Moral Perspective (Pope John Paul II) 227
- The Power to Change (James Davison Hunter) 237
- The Arts Are Needed Too (James K. A. Smith) 239
- Discernment and the Holy Spirit (Kirsteen Kim) 246
- Worship and Desire (James K. A. Smith) 249
- Becoming Good News Again (John Dickerson) 253
- Be Encouraged (Melba Maggay) 256

## Series Preface

A mission leader in 1965, not too long ago, could not have foreseen what mission looks like today. In 1965 nations in the non-Western world were gaining their independence after centuries of Western colonialism. Mission societies from Europe and North America were trying to adjust to the new global realities where Muslim nations, once dominated by the West, no longer granted “missionary visas.” The largest mission field, China, was closed. Decolonization, it seemed, was bringing a decline to missionary work in Africa and Asia.

On the home front, Western churches were in decline, and the traditional missionary factories—mainline churches in the West—were struggling with their own identities. Membership was then—and remains—in decline, and missionary vocations were following the same pattern. Evangelical and Pentecostal churches began to surpass mainline churches in mission, and then, just when we thought we understood the new missionary patterns, Brazilians began to go to Pakistan and Malaysians began to evangelize Vietnam and Cambodia. Africans (highly educated and strongly Christian) began to move in great numbers to Europe and North America. Countries that had been closed began to see conversions to Christ, without the aid of traditional mission societies. And in the midst of this rapid transformation of missionary work, the alarm rang out that most Christians in the world were now in Asia, Latin America, and Africa rather than in the West.

What does it mean to be involved in mission in this new world where Christianity has been turned upside down in less than a century?

*This series is directed at this new global context for mission.* Fuller Theological Seminary, particularly through its School of Intercultural Studies (formerly School of World Mission), has been attentive to trends in global

mission for over half a century. In fact, much innovation in mission thinking and practice has emanated from Fuller since Donald McGavran moved from Oregon to California—as the first and founding dean of the then School of World Mission—to apply lessons about church growth learned in India to other areas of the world. Since that time many creative mission professors have provided global leadership in mission thinking: Ralph Winter (unreached people groups), Paul Hiebert (anthropology for mission), Charles Kraft (mission and spiritual dynamics), and Dudley Woodberry (Islamics), among others.

This series provides the most recent global scholarship on key themes in mission, written for a general audience of Christians committed to God's mission. Designed to be student, user, and textbook friendly, each volume contains voices from around the world speaking about the theme, and each chapter concludes with discussion questions so the books can be used for group studies. As the fields of mission are changing, shifting, or shrinking, the discussions connect the church and the world, East and West, North and South, the developed and developing worlds, each crossing cultural, political, social, and religious boundaries in its own way and knitting together people living and serving in various communities, both of faith and of other commitments—this is the contemporary landscape of the mission of God. Enjoy the challenges of each volume and find ways to live into God's mission.

Scott W. Sunquist

Amos Yong

# Acknowledgments

I have just finished ten years as a professor of transformational development in the School of Intercultural Studies (SIS) at Fuller Theological Seminary. I describe myself as an accidental academic as I never dreamed about teaching at the graduate level when I completed my thirtieth year at World Vision International with every intention of retiring there. I am indebted to Doug McConnell, then dean of SIS, who saw an opportunity for me and the seminary, and then patiently coaxed me into changing careers.

As a new professor with no history in academics, I discovered that I was expected to develop a portfolio of courses to teach. The first choice was obvious. I developed a course based on my earlier book, *Walking with the Poor*, a book deliberately limited to the grassroots aspects of transformational development, the topic most directly connected to my experience at World Vision.

I then decided that I needed to develop a course on poverty and development that provided a global, sweeping overview of the field. This was largely a new area of interest for me and thus represented a far greater challenge. The first few versions of this course were pretty rough, as I had a great deal to learn. So my first acknowledgment goes to all the students who suffered through the initial versions of the course and yet kept encouraging me. What surprised me was that most students reported that the topic of globalization in Christian perspective was new to them. Apparently, they had not been exposed to the idea of a Christian engagement with globalization in either their churches or their Christian colleges. This discovery was one of the reasons I decided to write this book.

As I developed the course, I was helped greatly by my faculty colleague, Jehu Hanciles, a brilliant professor of world Christianity whose primary

research at that time was on migration, globalization, and mission. His book *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West* was foundational in shaping my views, and you will find his fingerprints repeatedly in this book. Jehu was also part of a team at the Lausanne 2004 Global Forum that wrote the Lausanne Occasional Paper on globalization and the gospel.<sup>1</sup> This seminal thinking on globalization from a missiological perspective was also an important part of my formation.

Jehu taught his own course on globalization and Christian mission, and our courses proved to be complementary. When Jehu saddened us all by taking up a new challenge at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University, I revamped my course to include more world Christianity and Christian mission. Thus the shape of what became this book began to take form. Jehu also reviewed chapters 5 and 6 on the history of globalization; the chapters were greatly enriched by the critical eye of a real historian.

As strange as it may seem for a seminary professor, I have never taken a formal class in theology. I learned my theology “on the road” in bits and pieces. My ten years as the director of World Vision’s MARC ministry (Missions Advanced Research and Communications) allowed me to engage with the larger evangelical and ecumenical mission movements and to attend many Lausanne Movement and WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism conferences. Through the kind auspices of Vinay Samuel and invitations to conferences that he orchestrated, I was introduced to many members of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (now International Fellowship of Mission as Transformation). Listening to papers by Vinay, René Padilla, Kwame Bediako, Mercy Oduyoye, Valdir Steuernagel, Miroslav Volf, Melba Maggay, Ron Sider, Raymond Fung, Kosuke Koyama, and others—and then reading their work on an endless series of long plane flights—resulted in a slow accumulation of theological perspectives on global issues relating to mission and transformation.

I am also particularly indebted to Bill Dyrness, a theologian of global reach, and his brilliant activist wife, Gracie, who are friends and mentors, and have been for a long time, in terms of a broad range of issues of theology and social ethics. Bill and I have taught together, and Bill has reviewed and commented on most of my theological writing. Conversations here at Fuller with Bill, Mark Lau Branson, Love Sechrest, Oscar García Johnson, Howard Loewen, Amos Yong, and others have extended and deepened my theological thinking. But, of course, all the bad theology in this book is mine.

1. LCWE, “Globalization and the Gospel.”

I am also indebted to colleagues at World Vision International who worked with me from time to time over the years and introduced me to broad perspectives on poverty and development as well as some of the major international development institutions. Stephen Commins, a lecturer in urban planning at UCLA and a frequent consultant to the World Bank, introduced me to the world of international advocacy over thirty years ago and was kind enough to comment on an earlier version of a chapter in this book. Manfred Grellert, a Brazilian Baptist pastor with strong roots in liberation theology and World Vision's regional vice president for Latin America for many years, pushed and prodded many of us who were much slower in understanding the systemic causes of injustice and poverty at that time. In the 1990s, I hired Alan Whaites to restart and expand World Vision International's global advocacy efforts.<sup>2</sup> Highly experienced in international NGO advocacy work and deeply familiar with global policy issues, Alan provided me with a rigorous, if informal, education into globalization, global institutions, and poverty. Finally, I am indebted to Jeff Thindwa, a former director of World Vision Malawi and now an expert on governance with the World Bank. Together and separately, these friends educated a somewhat naive American on his journey toward a deeper and more nuanced understanding of God's globalizing world.

This book was completed only because the current dean of SIS, Scott Sunquist, pushed me to turn my globalization course into a book that would become part of Baker Academic's Mission in Global Community series. Constantly surprised and sometimes overwhelmed by the challenge of writing about something so inchoate and complex as globalization, I received much encouragement and many accommodations from Scott that made this book possible. Scott also reviewed my history chapters.

I also need to acknowledge my colleagues at Baker Academic, all of whom have been a pleasure to work with. Jim Kinney has been a continuing source of encouragement while tolerating an unending series of questions and corrections. My editors, Eric Salo and his team, did a very careful and thorough job of catching my many errors and making the manuscript readable.

Finally, I must salute my family and their tolerance for what became known as the "stupid book." "Is Dad still working on the stupid book?" "Your Dad can't come over this weekend, he's working on his stupid book." Even my three-year-old granddaughter Sammy got in the act: "Hi Babu, can you read

2. Alan left World Vision to work in Nepal on governance for the UK Department of International Development and then with the OECD in Paris where he has become a respected global expert.

me your stupid book?” “Sammy, it has no pictures.” After a puzzled silence, “Oh well, never mind.”

My wife, my best friend and love of my life, tolerated my daily disappearances into my study without complaint and supported and encouraged me on the long journey down the rabbit hole that is book writing. My children Brooke and James did the same, accepting less grand parenting with graceful understanding.

At the end of the day, I am grateful to God. God took an ex-hippie and saved him from himself a little over forty years ago. God gave me a godly woman of depth, perseverance, and courage and two wonderful children. God brought me, totally unqualified, into World Vision and a long and satisfying career at the service of the poor, accompanied by good leadership and great friends. Somehow in that process, God managed to find a book in me. And now, after my unexpected sojourn into the academy, God has managed to find another one. I just went along for the ride and did the best I could to do what I was told. God be praised.

# Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross domestic product, measure of total goods and services produced
<i>IBMR</i>	<i>International Bulletin of Missionary Research</i>
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technology for Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International nongovernmental organization
ISIS	Islamic State
LCWE	Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

WTO      World Trade Organization

## Section 1

# SETTING THE STAGE

## 1

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# Introduction and the Path Forward

We live in interesting times.

In the last twenty years, things have been changing with increasing speed in God's world. Economically, the world's gross domestic product (GDP) more than doubled to almost \$78 trillion in spite of a number of recessions in major economies and the global recession of 2008–9.<sup>1</sup> Twenty years ago, the world's largest economies in terms of comparative purchasing power<sup>2</sup> were the United States, Japan, and Germany; today they are China, the United States, and India. In the last twenty years, global trade increased from \$2 trillion to over \$18 trillion a year.<sup>3</sup>

This has brought some good news to the poor. The proportion of the world's population living in extreme poverty has been cut in half over this twenty-year period. Deaths of women giving birth have been reduced by almost half, as have deaths of children under the age of five. In developing countries, life expectancy increased by almost nine years. More children are in school, and the greatest increase is among girls.<sup>4</sup>

Technologically, the first website was launched in 1991, and seventeen years later Google indexed one trillion websites. Internet users reached three billion in 2015.<sup>5</sup> In the last twenty years, we have witnessed the launch of Google, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and a host of new social media. The iPhone was launched in 2007, and four years later 1 billion people were using smart phones around the world and 4.6 billion people were using mobile phones. These and more technological innovations are available to this generation of adolescents and youth, which is the largest in history and represents almost one-third of

1. IMF, *World Economic Outlook*.

2. Purchasing Power Parity is used worldwide to compare the income levels in different countries by making adjustments to the exchange rates of two currencies to make them equivalent with the purchasing power of each other.

3. WTO, *World Trade Report 2013*, 55.

4. UNFPA, "Last 20 Years."

5. Internet World Stats, "Internet Users of the World—2016."

the world's population. These young people will have little memory of a world without smart phones, instant messaging, and the internet.

Since the beginning of time, people, plants, and animals have been going global. But it is only in the last two hundred years that going global was turbocharged by the ability of people to get connected and get closer to each other. As we will see later in more detail, the modern era of globalization began with the economic development of Britain in the beginning of the nineteenth century, followed by Europe, the United States, and Japan. This new form of globalization began sweeping the world after World War II and especially with the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s. The drivers of globalization are deep and continuing changes in economics, technology, culture, and human self-understanding.

But there is more to globalization than just getting closer and better connected. It is changing us as individuals, not just our societies. We are meeting people previously too distant to know. Not so long ago, our neighbor usually looked like us or spoke our language; now our neighbor can be a Sudanese mother with a hungry child, or a Syrian girl fleeing the destruction of her home country. Their images and stories are readily available on our digital devices, and we are responding compassionately to these stories.

Yet there is a sense that we are letting globalization and its processes flow over us, unaware that we are being pulled into a new world. I am concerned that we as Christians are not asking the question "Are we and is the world becoming what God intends?" When we see the growth in global compassion, the answer is "maybe." When we see the materialism, the patterns of consumption, and the increase in the abuse of the weak and the environment, the answer is far less clear. These are theological questions for God's people. This leads me to my main point.

With the exception of some within the Christian academy who think we need to resist globalization, the larger Christian community seems to be ignoring globalization or fearing it. When was the last time you heard a sermon series, a Bible or book study, or a retreat topic focused on a Christian understanding and response to globalization? How many churches or denominations have globalization as a focus of their discipleship and mission strategy? I have been teaching a course on this topic at Fuller Theological Seminary for almost ten years, and every year I experience the surprise of students when they begin to engage—"We've had our heads down; there is so much about this we did not know. This has not been on our radar." While Christians seem to be willing to use the technological tools of globalization for church and mission, there is little evidence that Christians and their churches are devoting much energy to understanding globalization,

biblically assessing its values and promises to us, and preparing our people to respond.

I suspect there are three broad reasons for this. First, globalization as a topic seems too big and complicated, too involved with economics, technology, and politics. This is technical stuff best left to experts, and maybe it's a bit worldly for our taste. Second, we Christians have been socialized into quietly accepting our relegation to the private realm of spiritual things, leaving the world of economics, politics, and technology to the West's materialist and secular humanism. We no longer seem to believe that we are to be signs of the coming kingdom of God and that God has made us partners in God's plan to redeem and restore creation. Third, in the aftermath of the passing of Christendom, we have lost our nerve a bit. We are not sure that we are worthy of a place at the public table when it comes to assessing and engaging the globalization of economics, finance, technology, and the like. We are not sure that we will be welcome and, worse, that we have anything of value to offer. We seem to have forgotten that the gospel is true and secular humanism is not.

But it was not always this way. While the traditional account of the emergence of a modern economy and a democratic state in Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century is summarized as the coalescing of the new economics of Adam Smith with the Industrial Revolution and the development of modern science, there is more to the story, as we shall see later in this book. Christian theology provided much of the philosophical and values foundation for what emerged.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, it was churches and individual Christians who worked for protection of children and who cared for the poor in the era of rapid urbanization when people began working in factories unregulated by humane rules. The nineteenth century was the first century of modern economic and technological globalization, but it also came to be called the "humanitarian century"<sup>7</sup> and the "age of benevolence"<sup>8</sup> largely as a result of the work of Christians. The Christians of the nineteenth century had not yet learned that they needed to leave the public square to others.

We need to remember that Victorian evangelicals imagined redeeming the world, not just ruling it.<sup>9</sup> Voluntary mission societies responded to British

6. Gillespie, *Theological Origins of Modernity*.

7. Pinker, *Better Angels of Our Nature*, 168. Steven Pinker is a cognitive psychologist and professor of psychology at Harvard University.

8. Himmelfarb, *Roads to Modernity*, 131. Gertrude Himmelfarb is professor emerita at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

9. Ferguson, *Empire*, 113. Niall Ferguson is professor of history at Harvard University and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

colonialism with a commitment to share the gospel—the whole gospel—humanizing the empire in some places and challenging its excesses in others. Missionaries were critical in promoting religious liberty, mass education, mass printing, newspapers, voluntary organizations, most colonial reforms, and the rule of law, including legal protections for nonwhites.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, Victorian evangelicals launched the world's first national advocacy campaign as a prophetic rebuke directed at the emerging British Empire. The slave trade could not be the backbone of the modern global economic system of the day for the simple reason that slavery was immoral. So were cultural practices such as female infanticide and suttee<sup>11</sup> in India. Whatever the weaknesses or presumptions of cultural superiority, we must acknowledge that the launch of the modern era of globalization was accompanied and challenged by a Christian moral perspective. Christians in Britain and throughout the empire acted theologically and missionally.

And so the church and Christians today need to make a choice. Will we ignore globalization and remain closeted in the spiritual realm with our backs to the world? Will we resist globalization as some kind of second fall, as if God has been surprised by globalization and the staying power of capitalism? Or will we instead engage globalization as a mixture of God's grace and human sin and question its promise of a particular kind of better human future by offering a more complete vision of human flourishing as understood from Scripture? Are we willing to call out and attempt to change the darker aspects of globalization? Will the church decide to engage globalization missionally and work to shape it ethically? Are we willing to fulfill our mission of making disciples of Christ who vote, consume, and volunteer in ways that correct the evil and enhance the good in globalization? Globalization is going to the ends of the earth with its version of good news. What are we doing?

We need the courage to act as if it were true that the kingdom of God is the only kingdom that will be left standing at the end of time. We need to act as if it were true that God is working now in human history toward that end. Furthermore, we need to act as God's partners in this task for the simple reason that working through flawed human beings is the way God has chosen to act in the world. Walter Brueggemann reminds us that, in the Old Testament, God's resolve always translates into human action.<sup>12</sup> God met Moses at the burning bush and announced God's resolve to free Israel from Egypt and then said to a

10. Woodberry, "Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy."

11. Self-immolation of a Hindu widow on her husband's funeral pyre.

12. Brueggemann, *Journey to the Common Good*, 12.

surprised Moses, “I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt” (Exod. 3:10). This mode of God’s action also appears again in the Gospel of John. Jesus announced that he had come that the world might have life and have it in full, and then he told the disciples, “As the Father sent me, I am sending you. . . . Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:21–22). Acting theologically and missiologically in God’s world is our mission.

But we do not appear to have globalization—as a value system, as a collection of principalities and powers, as an offering of a better human future—in our sights. We need to be making ourselves aware of the missing parts of the globalization story. We need to be informing and forming ourselves about how to witness to the kingdom in the midst of today’s globalization in terms of how we consume, volunteer, and vote. Christians and the church need to contribute to the development of a moral ecology powerful enough to shape and correct globalization in favor of values that support both human dignity and human flourishing—kingdom values. Issues of idolatry and false promises need to be named and alternatives provided. Bottom line: The church needs to get back in the game. We have a God, a gospel, and a truth that a materialist and secular globalization simply cannot provide. It is to contribute to this call to action that I decided to write this book.

### **What Is Being Proposed?**

The intent of this book is to introduce the subject of globalization to students, pastors, and church leaders, to invite them to go before God and seek their individual and collective callings to be faithful witnesses within the sprawling and complex world of twenty-first-century globalization. The book will end with an exploration of the possible missional roles of the church in today’s world of economic, technological, and social change. My proposal rests on four affirmations that I will explore in some depth.

First, globalization is an emergent, highly ambiguous global phenomenon of technological, economic, and social change that is now working itself out in history. Globalization’s underlying values and assumptions are modern, involving a material world with no transcendent dimension and with human beings as the sole actors in history. This world is a source of anxiety and distress since, as individuals and even as nations, we feel powerless in the midst of globalization’s increasingly rapid pace of change, its numerous contradictions, and its mixture of good and not so good outcomes. The future is unclear since all we know about globalization is what we learn by looking back at its history, and the past sheds little light on the future of





placed you and thus created an opportunity for you to witness to Jesus Christ and the values of the kingdom of God in those places.

### How Will We Get There?

Before we delve into the topic of globalization, chapter 2 presents a family of theological affirmations that will keep reappearing as we explore globalization. First and foremost, I will state my belief that God is not surprised by globalization and has a place for it in God’s ongoing project of redeeming us and restoring creation. Second, I will show how creation theology has much to offer to this discussion if we are willing to think deeply about it. Finally, I will summarize what I believe God intends in terms of human life and flourishing.

The second half of chapter 2 introduces the idea of complex adaptive social systems, which I will argue has useful explanatory power. This idea will help us as we think about responses to globalization that call for directing or managing globalization. It also provides a useful way to make sense of the history of globalization and of the Christian church in mission, a topic I address in chapter 11.

In chapter 3 I begin trying to help us understand globalization today, although as you will see, the question of definition is a bit muddled. The chapter will examine a few perspectives on what some call “globalization from below” and also expose the dark side of globalization—an empowered and enabled world of illicit activity. The final section will explore the five interacting domains of globalization: technology, economics, governance, culture, and human beings in large numbers.

Chapter 4 further underscores the ambiguities of globalization as I examine its emergent or dynamic nature as a complex adaptive social system. I will then explore some areas of deep concern regarding the impact of globalization: asymmetries of power, income inequality, economic disruption, the environmental threat, and the reduction of what it means to be human. I will close with a brief note on the challenge of globalization for the church in mission.

Before outlining the other chapters in this book, it may be helpful to introduce the historical schema I will use. I describe the history of globalization as taking place in two broad eras (see fig. 1.1).<sup>13</sup> The First Era began with creation and is still under way. This is an era whose central driver is migration. Plants, animals, and people—traders, adventurers, warriors, and missionaries<sup>14</sup>—moved over the face of God’s earth. These migrations were driven partly by the need to flee scarcity or danger, partly by curiosity, and, in time, by a desire to extend the reach of empires and religions.

The Second Era of Globalization was an augmentation and extension of the First Era. This turbocharging of globalization began in Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the unbidden and unplanned emergence of two discoveries. First, individuals and nations discovered that it was possible to create wealth, to make the economic pie bigger. Second, they discovered that creating an environment that rewarded and democratized technological innovation sped up innovation, which in turn increased the capacities of national economies to grow. These two discoveries led to people, economies, and cultures becoming better off materially, more closely connected, and increasingly globally aware. Together, the combined effect of these two eras resulted in today’s contemporary globalization and its confusing, rapidly changing, still transforming world. This is the world in which we are to act theologically and missiologically as faithful witnesses.

Chapter 5 explores the First Era of Globalization, from creation to the beginning of the nineteenth century. This is an era of migration, empire, and mission. The chapter closes with an account of Britain’s unexpected and emergent economic and technological transformation, which resulted in the dramatic augmentation of the First Era of Globalization.

13. I chose to divide the history of globalization into two eras to help me describe the globalization story for the purposes of this book. Other scholars frame the history of globalization differently. Some see it as a single, ongoing phenomenon from creation to today. Others see globalization as starting in the 1800s. Still others claim it is a new phenomenon that began with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the concomitant explosion in technological innovation.

14. Terms are taken from Chanda, *Bound Together*. Nayan Chanda is the consulting editor of *YaleGlobal Online* at the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization.

Chapter 6 then explores how the Second Era of Globalization unfolds as an extension and an expansion of the First Era. The Second Era can be thought of as having three parts: Globalization I, the Great Disruption, and Globalization II (see fig. 1.2). Globalization I, covering the period between 1800 and World War I, was a largely Western phenomenon of rapidly growing international trade, modernization, European empires, and economic growth in Britain, Europe, the United States, and Japan.

Globalization I came to an abrupt end with the start of World War I. During what I call the Great Disruption, competing political and economic systems emerged—Marxism-Leninism or communism in Russia and national socialism or fascism in Germany. Then the world went to war for a second time. Coming out of World War II, the only free market democracies in the world were Great Britain and the United States. Globalization was on the brink of extinction.

With the end of World War II, fascism receded as an economic and political option. But communism and the Soviet Union remained an immovable alternative to the capitalism and democracy of the West. It was not until the Cold War ended in the late 1980s that capitalism and democracy prevailed and Globalization II emerged in full force seemingly without a rival.

In the last twenty-five years, Globalization II saw much of the developing world in the Global South adopt market systems and connect to global markets, leading to rapid increases in economic growth, a stunning increase in world trade, and a whole new generation of technology that resulted in what many call the “death of distance.”<sup>15</sup> Over one billion of the world’s poor became middle class, mostly in China and India.

Chapter 7 describes the impact of two hundred years of the Second Era of Globalization. To better understand globalization today, we must understand how extensive were the economic, political, and technological transformations during that period. The material lives of a large number of people improved, and mass education emerged as a norm, as did modern public health. More foundationally, people and cultures underwent significant shifts in how they understood the role and agency of human beings.

Chapter 8 provides an assessment of the impact of these two hundred years of change. It begins by examining the effect of this era on the poor. There is a lot of good news on the material front but also some not so good news. The chapter closes with a summary of differing assessments of globalization. There are optimists who believe that the answer to the world’s

15. “Death of distance” is a phrase describing how technology has made geographical distance less of a factor in terms of cost or response times.

ills, especially for the poor, is more globalization, not less. There are skeptics who are not sure we really understand what we are talking about when we talk about globalization, and they wonder if the impact and future of globalization will be ambiguous and possibly disappointing. One author uses the telling metaphor of a “false dawn.”<sup>16</sup> Finally, there are those who see a deeply troubled future that is bad news for almost everyone—a world of increasing fundamentalism, tribalism, and systemic violence for most and a sequestered, wealthy world for those who can afford to keep themselves safe. There are Christians in all three camps.

Chapter 9 examines globalization’s response to the poor. While the poor have been greatly helped in material terms over the last two hundred years, there is still a lot left to do. I will trace the ideas of development and poverty eradication as they emerged in the West. We will look at the slow shift from development as economic growth to a new, more holistic formulation—development as freedom. I will report what the poor have to say when asked what makes them poor and what well-being would look like for them. The chapter closes by describing the globalization of the world’s response to the poor and the many kinds of institutions working to help the poor.

Chapter 10 continues the theme of chapter 9 by examining three major poverty eradication strategies competing for followers and funding—those of Jeffrey Sachs, William Easterly, and Paul Collier. I will briefly introduce the work of Lawrence Harrison on culture and development and then I will describe some important contributions by Hernando de Soto, Muhammad Yunus, and Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo. The technological innovation of globalization is also affecting our global response to the poor in the form of what is called Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D). The chapter closes with a discussion of the increasing interest in the intersection of faith and development in the secular world of development studies. This is creating an opportunity for the church to contribute to what has been up to now a largely secular discussion on poverty.

In the next three chapters, I shift my focus to globalization and the church. In chapter 11, I begin by pointing out that Christianity has an agenda when it comes to globalization. The first nine chapters of Genesis, the Psalms, and Revelation make clear the universal claim of God over the whole earth and God’s global intentions for all humankind. We worship a global God who is at work through all of history. Thus, Christianity offers a normative

16. Gray, *False Dawn*. John Gray, formerly a supporter of neoliberal capitalism, became disillusioned in the face of its human cost. He is professor emeritus of European thought at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

interpretation of what is happening and how things are meant to be. This makes Christians and the church seem suspicious to many who are also attempting to shape globalization. At the same time, the church is also being shaped by the processes of globalization. Understanding the church's unfolding history of adaptive change is highly relevant to our investigation. We will examine the changing nature of the church as well as how the church has changed the way it thinks about mission. We will look at Pentecostalism and the startling fact that by late in the twenty-first century over three-quarters of the people on this planet will be either Christian or Muslim. Learning to love our Muslim neighbor may be the biggest and most important missiological frontier Christians face in this century.

In trying to understand how the church might respond missionally to globalization, I examine the three main theological failings of globalization that I enumerated earlier in this chapter: its flawed anthropology, its misunderstanding of power and its purpose, and its inability to tell us who we are, why we are here, and how we should live. The result is globalization's most fundamental failure: it cannot offer a compelling and satisfying answer to the human need for meaning. This is the work of chapter 12.

Chapter 13 explores two proposals for addressing these limitations of globalization. First, I describe a proposal from Max Stackhouse and his multi-year investigation into globalization. Stackhouse calls for the development of a public theology that offers a spiritual and ethical framework to meet the human need for meaning and also provides a way for the values and processes of globalization to be shaped and corrected. The delivery system for this public theology, according to Stackhouse, is global civil society. I then introduce Catholic social teaching and a proposal from Daniel Groody. Groody's offering parallels Stackhouse's in a number of important ways, but Groody proposes an alternative delivery system: the missional formation of the laity as a result of a discipleship and formation process that is rooted in worship, the sacraments, and spiritual disciplines. While not necessarily disagreeing with Stackhouse on the church's important role in civil society, Groody calls for missionally formed laity whose faith shapes how they vote,

consume, and volunteer as Christians. I close with a brief description of James Davison Hunter's observations on how cultures change, and then connect his proposal for cultural change to our discussion of globalization and the work of Groody and Stackhouse.

The final chapter addresses the missiological challenge of globalization. We are used to a missiology of going from here to a place that has not heard the good news, and we assume our good news is the best news there is. I make the observation that, in today's world, the twin globalisms of globalization are making a competing offer of "good news," and, in a sense, globalization is "evangelizing" us. Globalization's good news is material—it can be seen, touched, and taken to the bank. And it is seductive good news, a tempting offer of a better human future with more of everything one could desire. This means that today's mission field is first of all inside our churches. We need to find ways to form and empower adults and children in the pews or in the parish to first recognize the seductions and then resist this alternative "good news." Only by doing this well can we address the mission field just outside the doors of our churches. Each member of our congregation works, lives, and volunteers in a number of institutions, some of which have the power and influence to change culture. They need to be prepared and sustained as "faithful witnesses within" those institutional locations.<sup>1</sup> We need to inoculate and then equip and release the faithful to be witnesses wherever God has placed them.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Where would you place your church on a continuum with "disengaged, no interest in globalization" on one extreme and "deeply engaged theologically and missionally with globalization" on the other?
2. What factors might be contributing to your church's location on this continuum?
3. Are you in agreement with your church's current position? What, if anything, would you like to see changed?

1. Hunter, *To Change the World*, 197. James Davison Hunter is professor of religion, culture, and social theory at the University of Virginia.