

Clarifying Globalization

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Urbanism is commonly understood as the philosophy of how a city culture affects the behavior on the greater population of the nation and the world. It is closely linked with globalization and the forces that are at work in the democratization of information, the expansion of global capitalism and the extension of homogeneous expressions of culture and styles. Roland Robertson understands globalization as the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole. It is a multidimensional set of processes that is transforming our present social contexts, is weakening national conditions and is experienced in advances in communication technologies, neoliberal economic capitalism, realignments in political movements and dramatic cultural shifts. Robert Schreiter states that these developments represent the extension of the effects of modernity to the entire world and the compression of time and space, all occurring at the same time.[1] For reasons that defy logic, metropolitan areas continue to be home to the emerging informational technologies. I say this because there is no logical reason, in the age of digitization, high-speed Internet and 24-hour investment, why large cities need to be home to the sector. I live in Montréal. One can just as easily practice globalization from Chibougamau, Quebec (10 hours by car) as from the new technopole that is literally in downtown Montréal and the world center for aerospace, pharmaceutical, telecommunications research and development and cinematic animation. Now the compression is truly urban. Admittedly, there is no meta-theory that helps us to explain globalization and urbanization.

Max Stackhouse, however, helps us to grasp the complexities of this compression by showing how globality manifests itself in different domains of social life. These spheres are the channels for the moral and spiritual life which drive the structures of human life in all societies. One finds certain specific channels all the time. When one thinks about the city in a functional manner rather than a geographical one, these functions include: the demographic, social, cultural, economic and technological including the media and the political. The compression and intensification is all-pervasive in our cities.

In this context, we ask you to join the conversation using the questions you find for this conversation.

[1] There is an abundant literature of this subject. The author would refer the reader to Roland Robertson, "Globalization and the Future of Traditional Religion" in *God and Globalization*, edited by Max Stackhouse and Peter Paris. (London: T & T Clark, 2000) 53-68. Also, Robert Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Globalization and Contextuality*. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997). Charles Taylor, "Defining Globalization" in *The Gospel and the Urban World*, 5th edition. Edited by Glenn Smith (Montréal: Christian Direction, 2007) II. 9-15.