



Bound Together: How Traders, Preachers, Adventurers, and Warriors Shaped Globalization

Nayan Chanda

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Since humans migrated from Africa and dispersed throughout the world, they have found countless ways and reasons to reconnect with each other. In this entertaining book, Nayan Chanda follows the exploits of traders, preachers, adventurers, and warriors throughout history as they have shaped and reshaped the world. For Chanda, globalization is a process of ever-growing interconnectedness and interdependence that began thousands of years ago and continues to this day with increasing speed and ease.

In the end, globalization—from the lone adventurer carving out a new trade route to the expanding ambitions of great empires—is the product of myriad aspirations and apprehensions that define just about every aspect of our lives: what we eat, wear, ride, or possess is the product of thousands of years of human endeavor and suffering across the globe. Chanda reviews and illustrates the economic and technological forces at play in globalization today and concludes with a thought-provoking discussion of how we can and should embrace an inevitably global world.

Bound Together: How Traders, Preachers, Adventurers, and Warriors Shaped Globalization Details

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El Aguila says

Very interesting global history interpretation using the themes in the title. As an example, Steve Jobs fell into the Trader category since his products were sold across national boundaries in a very specific and consistent manner. Starts with a very concrete and valid definition for the common, but frequently unsupported claim that globalization has existed since trading began with the Sumerians. Highly recommended for political science, economic, 20th century history, and world history courses.

Nivedita says

Filled with some fantastic trivia apart from doing a very good job about explaining the fascinating history of globalization.

Lalu says

Kidna word, kinda felt like I had ADD with this book but awesome information!

William says

Sort of interesting, but there's not much new here, and it's already dated. A few interesting ideas stretched into a whole book.

Daniel Pratt says

Schizophrenic. This sums up the writing style. This self contradicting drivel is a pure waste of time. I kept thinking, maybe it will get better; it never did. I felt relief when I reached the end.

I did not read this book as part of an assignment, I read it for "pleasure." As far as books like this go, it is possibly the worst I have read. One of the irritating aspects of this book were the inaccuracies. Often, when portions of the book touched on things I am very familiar with, I noticed the author would skew facts, create straw men arguments and often got things plain wrong. You will get nothing of value from this book.

Vikas says

How did the coffee bean, grown first only in Ethiopia, find its way to our cups through Java and Colombia?

How did a camera find its brand in Bodhisattva's name Avalokiteswar, translated in Japanese as Kwanon? How did Europeans learn to play the violin with a bowstring made of Mongolian horsehair? How did the US currency get its name from a German silver-mining town? And how...

"The questions are as varied as they are unending, and they go to the heart of the all-embracing phenomenon of global interconnectedness," writes Nayan Chanda in *Bound Together* (www.penguinbooksindia.com).

Though the word globalisation may be new, the process it describes 'has worked silently for millennia without having been given a name,' he explains. Looking 'under the hood of our daily existence,' Chanda finds that globalisation stems 'from a basic human urge to seek a better and more fulfilling life' and that the key actors behind the process have been 'traders, preachers, adventurers, and warriors'.

The book opens in Africa, because "we now know that around sixty thousand years ago, a small group of people — as few as perhaps one hundred fifty to two thousand people from present-day East Africa — walked out." The five billion inhabitants of today's non-African Duniya are descendants of those villagers who walked out of Africa, argues the author, citing DNA studies by Allan Wilson, Rebecca Cann, Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza and Peter Underhill.

The global journey was almost entirely on foot, with occasional use of rafts or dugouts over waters, postulates Chanda. For, "the horse was not domesticated until 6,000 years ago, and the camel only 3,000 years ago." About 30-40 million pastoralists continue their nomadic life, while the rest settled down.

"The forty or fifty thousand years that our human ancestors spent walking the length of the earth, experiencing the unimaginably harsh weather of the late Ice Age, have carved our bodies, altered our faces, and changed our pigmentation. The effect of the first globalisation — the dispersal of humans around the globe — has been the emergence of a superficially diverse human species."

The author travels 'from camel commerce to e-commerce', explores the 'preachers' world', inspects 'slaves, gems and Trojan horses', before asking 'Who's afraid of globalisation?' Who? It's the West, which is suddenly worried that millions of Chinese, Indians, and Vietnamese want to join in the global trading system, notes Chanda. But 'the growing concern in the West is seen by many in the developing world as overblown fear about countries that are still desperately poor.'

These are days of high-speed globalisation, unlike as in the past, he warns. So, it is impossible, even dangerous, for the winners to ignore the losers as they could in the era of sailboats and camel caravans. Globalisation process cannot be reversed, Chanda declares. "It can be slowed down by raising barriers, but those barriers are only temporary hurdles to the march of global interconnection."

There is no alternative to rising above our tribal interests, he exhorts. "Calls to shut down globalisation are pointless, because nobody is in charge, but together, we can attempt to nudge our rapidly integrating world toward a more harmonious course — because we are all connected."

A well-told story.

<http://www.blonnet.com/2007/07/10/sto...>

Balint Erdi says

The chapters explaining how traders, adventurers, preachers and warriors helped to make the world "smaller" are a great and fascinating historical read. They underlie the main message of the book, that globalization has always been with us and is not something that we can control or stop. However when it comes to the final chapters where the theme becomes "political", reasoning becomes insipid and feeble. Worse, there is most of the times no reasoning but not too much explanation either, just listing some facts that can swing someone to either of the sides, embracing or disliking globalization. I expected more of the final.

Yusef Asabiyah says

I've given this book a one star and so maybe I'm obligated to say one or two words why.

First, I am interested in the process of globalization and would be especially interested to see an analysis of globalization including an assortment of actors usually not included. That's why I picked up this book: a) it was supposedly about globalization; b) it purported to discuss it in terms of traders, preachers, adventurers, and warriors.

Part b made this book seem promisingly expansive and possibly even entertaining.

I can't say these aren't included in the book. The problem is the "traders, preachers, adventurers, and warriors" making up the content of the book aren't our contemporaries-- some of them aren't even moderns. Some aren't even ancients. Some are prehistorical, if you can dig that.

Now I can't dig it. The author isn't expanding the range of analysis of "globalization" he's changing the meaning of the word as it is used-- used correctly-- by everyone else. He's basically making globalization coeval and co-extensive to what it means to be a human being. He's pushing it back to what happened in grass huts of Africa among our ancient ancestors. A fair subject, and certainly interesting in its own right. There's something a trifle misleading and maybe stupid to call that globalization in a title, though. "How people have always traded, fought, explored, and meddled in others' affairs"-- Yes, give us that title. Don't, please, make globalization something ahistorical, always about "people motivated to better their lives." AS natural as eating, sleeping, pooping.

Tom says

Good read tracing humans out of Africa movement and the relationship that the T,P,A and W contributed to spreading connectivity and commerce.

William says

Surprise! Globalization is not a new phenomenon. Well done look at the long process of the race separating and coming back together.

Nothing says

Globalization, the word has been used to death. In a very short and easy overview Chandra argues a simple but prescient point; Globalization is not new and it's not bad.

Susan says

This book provides a thorough overview of the subtle, constant process of globalization through history. Anyone who thinks that globalization is a new process, one that can be stopped, will be surprised.

Ram says

an absolutely outstanding work from Nayan Chanda. Globalisation as we know it has existed from the beginnings of mankind. Migration of explorers, preachers, colonialists, conquerors has benefited as much as the slave trade. The theory that all mankind originated from a village in Ethiopia and possibly from a single mother is mind-boggling to say the least.

Glenn says

A great book looking at world history and how it has generated globalization.

Eugene Kernes says

Globalization may have expanded faster and reached more people starting in the twentieth century, but globalization itself is not new. Ever since the first explorers out of Africa came to populate the world, other explorers, preachers, traders, and warriors have interlaced various civilizations with each other. From DNA to ideas, infrastructure to cultural products, everything has its roots in various places. Now people are bound together by the very life styles requiring multiple regional specialties. An ever increasingly interconnected world has benefits, but also creates a risk that local issues become a catalyst for the issue on a global scale. The new movement is the alt-globalization, focusing on rectifying the ills of globalization without going against globalization.

Humans are superficially diverse. Having 99% of the same genetic makeup, varying only in color. The difference in color is explained via body's evolution to the sun's radiation and varying nutrients found in regional's fauna and flora. From African explorers seeking alternative sources of food, to those who find routes that reconnect the people, adventures have become common people who can now venture to other regions relatively safely.

Traders allowed not only for new products to be found in the regional places, but also for similar products to

compete. Finding that the foreigner had advanced technology caused many nations to adopt the technology. Choosing to seek out foreign innovations or seeking to keep their own had dire consequences for the future of the any kingdom.

Preachers are those who try to help people defend their own rights, keeping government accountable. History shows that religious preachers tried to convert peoples and regions for more selfish reason, but there were spiritual conversions as well. The cost of the written word, books and paper, only decreased due to an increase in demand for religious texts. To influence conversions, preachers often shared their cultures and histories, spreading the diffusion of ideas.

Globalization is not only a benefactor of the people, it can hurt many occupations. Many nations protect their people from global competition, but that protection has costs on others within the nation. Taking away the protection hurts livelihoods who become proponents of an anti-globalization movement. Ironically, for the anti-globalization movement to have communicate the message and have broad awareness required globalization. Many occupations are outspoken in their need retain subsidies but do not hear how foreigners are being hurt by the subsidies.

The book is easily read, but the context is more a survey of various histories. The majority of example are given only a paragraph or two until moving on to the next example. The quickly varying examples do help support the theme, but the lack of context makes it difficult to generalize as examples can have different explanations and understandings when taking a deeper look.
