

Spectacular cities: religion, landscape, and the dialectics of globalization

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Abstrak

Globalization is a much talked about subject in academic and non-academic circles; hence plenty has been written to understand it, describe it, and find conceptual tools to explain it. However, academic work on globalization often tends to segment it into either economic globalization in the form of flows of capital, investment, commodities, or cultural globalization in the form of fast food, Barbie dolls, and migrant landscapes, or political globalization in the form of hollowing out of the nation state and the emergence of region states. This book explores spectacular landscapes of the Akshardham temples in Gandhinagar and Delhi in India, and Atlanta, Dallas, and Houston in the U.S. to understand globalization as it unfolds in a culture economy synthesis. It critiques analysis as an approach, because of its tendency to segment and sequence reality in such simplistic ways that the very essence of reality is lost. Instead, the book adopts Marxian dialectics and attempts to understand the everyday reality of globalization as it is synthesized in the city. In this approach, culture, economy, and the city are not discrete worlds, but work in tandem to produce globalization through migrant narratives, migrant temple complexes, Vedic boat rides, sound and light laser shows, and theme park religious complexes. The book therefore is as much an exploration of the dialectical stance in social theory and geography as it is a Marxist feminist critique of the spectacular commodification of the urban.