

INTRODUCTION

by [Andrea Wolvers](#), [Oliver Tappe](#), [Tijo Salverda](#), [Tobias Schwarz](#) (GSSC)

Where and what is the Global South? If you ask people on the street, many would probably not have the faintest idea. In everyday parlance and mass media, Global South has hardly become a household term. In academic and (global) policy circles, though, the term is used with much more gusto. Politicians refer to it. The United Nations organize their statistical data in accordance with the term. Academics write books about it - or, as in our case, explicitly include the term in the name of a research center: *Global South Studies Center* (GSSC).

But what does the term entail? Who uses it and why? And what are the implications of marking distinctions between the Global South and the Global North? We thought it relevant to address these questions in more detail – after all, we work for a recently established research institute featuring the term in its name. Accordingly, we asked a number of academics, journals and academic institutions to reflect on the term. In this online issue, we share their various perspectives and critical reflections on the notion of the Global South – see also a short discussion on a number of YouTube videos we have included.

The emergence of the term Global South in its historical context constitutes an interesting process, which illustrates how the term has been charged with various shades of meaning. Some of the contributions touch on the historical genesis of the term and narrate how they experienced this process. Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Jonathan Rigg, among others, reflect on the emergence of the notion, with particular regard to the historical trajectory of defining different (poor and rich) parts of the world. Rigg explains, for example, why he used the term Global South in the title of a book. He acknowledges that the term is not perfect, yet he considers it more favorable than its predecessors, “Third World” or “Developing World”.

The urge to come up with a new term highlights not only the uncomfortable reality of previous terms, but also the political connotations of the Global South concept. It is not just a term; it also has political weight – for better or for worse. Leigh Anne Duck, who reflects on the Global South as co-editor of the journal *The Global South*, highlights the positive impact of the term. In comparison with “Third World” and “Developing World”, she considers the term Global South to carry more weight in resisting hegemonic forces. Alvaro Mendez, as co-founder of the London School of Economics and Political Science’s Global South Unit, equally highlights the empowering aspect the term has – and the unprecedented upward trajectory of its usage. In theory, indeed, it appears to be a less hierarchical – or evolutionary – term than the other two. Barbara Potthast, the speaker of our research center, highlights how this in the case of Latin America may actually lead to a reconsidering of its relationships with other parts of the world.

However, Boike Rehbein states that those choosing this terminology are mainly members of the upper classes in the Global South who profit from the political and economic reality – through expanding south-south relations, for example. Which term is used barely matters for the large majority of the inhabitants of the so-called Global South. Indeed, Felix Lamech Mogambi Ming’ate illustrates that it means little to most Kenyans – who live in a country considered to be part of the Global South.

The question remains as to the geographical boundaries of the region referred to as the Global South. It readily conjures the notion of a division between the northern and southern hemispheres of the globe. A country like Kenya would then belong to both categories. But, as Rigg also highlights, the term should not be taken too literally, with the equator dividing the world in two. Instead, it should be understood in the wider context of globalization – or global capitalism, in the case of Arif Dirlik’s reflection. In most cases it then becomes related to an economic division between rich(er) and poor(er) countries, with most people in the so-called Global South actually living in the northern hem-

isphere (for example, in India and China). Moreover, as Tobias Schwarz illustrates in his critical reflection on UN categorizations, it also spills over into other domains, such as migration.

What is evident is that it is difficult to escape the political use and consequences of the term. Dirlik and Rehbein, for example, are very adamant about the close correlation Global South has with geopolitics. As a result, it is not a static concept. With geopolitical shifts, the definition of the Global South may also change; not only with regard to the meaning of the term, but also, as Dirlik shows, with regard to which countries are considered to be part of the Global South and which are not. This implies that there is not necessarily agreement about who is part of the Global South and who is not, or about whether it is actually useful to apply the term in the first place. Rodolfo Magallanes is particularly critical of the idea of grouping together a large variety of countries and regions into one category. This, he argues, tends to obscure specific (historical) relationships between different countries and/or regions, especially when it comes to unequal power balances. Or, as Eriksen argues, it may obscure wealth differences within countries – and, therefore, similarities between the wealthy in the Global South and Global North, as well as the dire situation the poor may face all around the world.

With this set of contributions we hope to provide an interesting snapshot of opinions about the term Global South. They show that there are different opinions with regard to various aspects of the term and that it evokes different meanings for different people; meanings, moreover, that may shift over time. After all, the Global South is contextual, as most contributions highlight. In times of geopolitical uncertainty, it is hard to predict how the term will develop and/or change accordingly. One open question is whether it will actually become an obstacle to a more equal distribution of the world's gains and power or whether it might actually empower parts of the world that have a long history of disadvantage. Following this, it would imply that the mere use of the term might have implications, for better or for worse. But the increasing usage of this concept might also simply reflect changing realities, as Manuela Boatcă argues: the terms that seem convenient to describe the reality of specific historical moments are closely related to the respective socioeconomic and political structures. In reflecting on the contributions, this is up to you, the reader, to decide.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE GLOBAL NORTH AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH?

by Thomas Hylland Eriksen ([Professor at the University of Oslo's Department of Social Anthropology](#))

As a young schoolboy in the 1970s, I learned that there were two kinds of countries in the world: The industrialized countries and the developing countries. In Norwegian, they were abbreviated as *i-land* and *u-land* (“i-countries and d-countries”). As a slightly older schoolboy, I would discover that there were progressive people who had read up on the latest literature, and who distinguished between the First, the Second and the Third Worlds; the industrialized, Western countries; the Communist bloc; and the poor, underdeveloped or developing countries (make your choice). Some made it more complicated and added the Fourth World, that of stateless indigenous peoples. I had one teacher – this was in Nairobi in the mid-seventies – who even differentiated between the Third, the Fourth and the Fifth Worlds within the general subcategory of the Third: The Third World countries were those that were well on their way to becoming rich and “developed” (I think he mentioned Malaysia and possibly Algeria); the Fourth were those that struggled but had potential (Kenya was, generously, included); and the Fifth World was chanceless and mired in perennial poverty.

The idea that there were three “worlds” originates, in the Anglophone world, with the anthropologist and sociologist Peter Worsley ([The Third World, 1964](#); and [The Three Worlds, 1984](#)). However, the notion of the Third World is older, coined by the demographer Alfred Sauvy in 1952, and his reference to *le tiers monde* did not presuppose the existence of a First or Second World. Rather, when speaking of the poor countries and colonies, he explicitly drew a parallel with the third estate, *le tiers état*, at the time of the French revolution; that is, everyone who did not belong to the clergy or the nobility. He spoke of those that had potential – those who would eventually rise and claim their share. Latterly, these terms have become increasingly unfashionable. This definitely has something to do with the collapse of the Communist Bloc almost 25 years ago. But the concepts were at the outset too crude to make sense to a serious social scientist, Sauvy's loose and metaphorical

usage less so than Worsley's attempt to operationalize them. For what was Argentina? Or Turkey? Immanuel Wallerstein's concepts (from [The Modern World System, 1974–78](#)) of center, periphery and semi-periphery seemed to do the job somewhat better, and his model had the additional advantage of indicating dynamic connectedness within the global system.

It makes little sense to speak of three worlds when there is only one game in town. Instead, during the last decade or so, scholars and enlightened commentators increasingly have begun to speak of the Global South and the Global North. I've even used these terms myself sometimes, almost inadvertently, when lecturing about big and general issues, but I have invariably asked myself afterwards, slightly embarrassed, what's so global about them. Why can't we just say the south and the north; or just materially rich and materially poor countries? Or – again – center, semiperiphery and periphery?

Any conceptual investigation of these classifications must inevitably lead to ambivalence. Global diversity is simply such that it cannot meaningfully be subsumed under a few, let alone two, concepts. It is true that at a very general level, the Global North is associated with stable state organization, an economy largely under (state) control and – accordingly – a dominant formal sector. The recipients of foreign aid, needless to say, belong to the Global South. China and – again – Argentina are hard to fit in.

One attempt to produce an objective classification uses the UNDP's Human Development Index to differentiate. In brief, the Global North consists of those 64 countries which have a high HDI (most of which are located north of the 30th northern parallel), while the remaining 133 countries belong to the Global South.

The terms have become fashionable very recently. In [a bibliographic study by a group of German scholars](#), the first recorded use was in 1996. In 2004, the term The Global South appeared in just 19 publications in the humanities and social sciences, but by 2013, the number had grown to 248. The scholars who use it associate it largely with some of the ills of globalization. While the countries of the Global North not only have stable states but also a strong public sector, the Global South is, to a far greater extent, subject to the forces of global

neoliberalism, rather than enacting the very same forces.

Seen from this perspective, the neologisms make sense. The post-Cold War world is not mainly divided into societies that follow different political ideologies such as socialism or liberalism, but by degrees of benefits in a globalized neoliberal capitalist economy. This is why the prefix “Global” may be appropriate, as it signals the integration of the entire planet (well, nearly) into a single economic system – that which Tom Friedman (in-)famously described as “a flat world” (in [The World is Flat, 2005](#)). So far, so good. The Global South and the Global North represent an updated perspective on the post-1991 world, which distinguishes not between political systems or degrees of poverty, but between the victims and the benefactors of global capitalism.

But you then start to wonder how useful such huge blanket terms are at the end of the day. I certainly do as an anthropologist, but also as someone who travels and observes everyday life as I go along. In Albania some years ago, I saw dark blue BMWs and horsecarts side by side. In India, I've seen lush oases of luxury alongside struggling lower-middle class life and plain hopelessness. In Russia, the contrast between glittering St Petersburg (where I'm writing these sentences) and the surrounding countryside is dramatic. In the US, there are inner city areas where life expectancy matches that of some of the poorer African countries. And what to make of a country like Brazil? It is sometimes said that before Lula, half of the population had an obesity problem, while the other half were undernourished. The proportions have shifted somewhat after years of *bolsa familiar* and other progressive policies, but in terms of inequality, Brazil still fares just barely better than South Africa, where the GDP is excellent by African

standards, but so unevenly distributed that you literally move from one “world” to another within minutes if you enter the taxi, say, at the University of Cape Town and get out in the Cape Flats. Same thing in Nairobi. And I haven't even mentioned the Gulf States. Even in my hometown of Oslo, inequality within the city is striking. Notwithstanding Norway's reputation for being equitable and egalitarian, life expectancy between two adjacent boroughs in the city can differ by more than ten years – equal to the gap between Sweden and Morocco!

One main shortcoming of these huge, global classifications is their methodological nationalism. Entire countries, whether they are called Nauru or China – China has 150,000 times as many inhabitants as Nauru – are considered the relevant entities and are thus presumably comparable. But GDP, or HDI for that matter, for a country as a whole reveals precious little about how the poorest 20%, or the poorest 80%, or the richest 1%, live. So, obviously, what is needed are more fine-grained instruments to gauge the quality of life and the economic circumstances of a community, since most of the world's population live mainly in communities and not in states. The result of this kind of endeavor might surprise some, and it would certainly make for a more mottled and colorful map of the world than the drab monochrome surfaces produced by a planet divided into the Global North and Global South.

Thomas Hylland Eriksen has published widely on globalization and he is currently running a research project on three crises of globalization called [Overheating](#). He shares his opinions and observations on his personal blog <http://hyllanderiksen.net>.

THE GLOBAL SOUTH VIA THE US SOUTH¹

by Leigh Anne Duck ([Associate Professor at the Department of English, University of Mississippi](#), and editor of the journal [The Global South](#))

The journal *The Global South*, with its broad geographic and methodological parameters, was generated from specifically local conditions, as a range of faculty at the University of Mississippi began to converse about the significance of contemporary globalization and the history of global exchange in their research. Mindful of the historical trajectories and statistical proportions through which the Global South is often conceptualized (particularly as an heir to the term Third World), these scholars were more energized by the potential flexibility of this framework: its overt geographic imprecision. The term Global South flaunts the impossibility of simple divisions, because the blunt instrument of the equator cannot pretend fully to map the planet's socioeconomic conditions. Accordingly, it provided a particularly useful rubric for scholars situated, despite their geographically diverse research projects, in Mississippi.² A state with a history of acute racial exploitation and violence as well as continuing struggles with poverty and poor access to educational and healthcare resources – yet simultaneously located in a nation (in-)famous for its wealth and its institutions devoted to the spread of neoliberalism – this locale (arguably, like all locales) necessitates methodologies that can negotiate an array of geographic scales, from the planet to the neighborhood, with numerous spatial configurations in between. Such approaches are vital, after all, for residents of the Global South, as peoples historically and/or currently

oppressed by colonialism and global capitalism investigate their similarities to and differences from others around the globe in order to develop expressive forms and political strategies that can generate new perspectives and possibilities.

Now editing our eighth volume, we publish special issues organized through remarkably diverse cartographies. Featuring the work of authors from around the globe – and often guest-edited by scholars at other institutions – these collections also vary widely in theme. Some provide perspectives on how different continents or global regions have experienced globalization; some explore how distinct enterprises – such as Nollywood or the Panama Canal – have altered global relations; some consider how aesthetic works from widespread locales configure particular problems in globalization, and some seek to understand the relationship between the southern United States and the Global South. In these efforts, our authors mobilize varying spatial methodologies: diasporic studies, postcolonial studies, area studies, comparative studies, and urban/rural studies, to name a few. What remains paramount, from the perspective of *The Global South*, is to understand how forces that seek to impose exploitative and hegemonic economic and political forms have been and can be resisted, both in discrete geopolitical spaces and through broader collaborative networks.

¹ Thanks to Adetayo Alabi, Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra, Deborah Barker, Annette Trefzer, and Jay Watson for feedback, and thanks to the members of the working group for sharing their manuscript with me.

² Nancy Bercaw, Kirsten Dellinger, Jeffrey T. Jackson, Kathryn B. McKee, and Annette Trefzer, "A Short History of the Faculty Working Group on the Global South at the University of Mississippi", manuscript.

THE GLOBAL SOUTH

by Jonathan Rigg ([Department of Geography, National University of Singapore](#))

What term do we use when we wish to discuss the collectivity of countries that constitutes the poorer world? There are quite a few possibilities to choose from:

- The Global South
- The Less-developed World
- The Majority World
- The Non-Western World
- The Poor World
- The South
- The Third World
- The Undeveloped World

In 2007 I wrote a book with the title [An everyday geography of the global South](#) (Routledge). I could have used any of the terms listed above, yet plumped for the Global South. Why?

To answer this question it is necessary to take a short terminological journey. If I had written the book in the 1970s or 1980s I might well have titled it *An everyday geography of the Third World*. Strictly speaking, at least as it was initially formulated, the Third World was the non-aligned World, distinct from the First (capitalist) and Second (socialist/communist) Worlds. But pretty quickly the Third World became a quick-and-easy referent for the poor world. There are many great books with “Third World” in the title; most were published before 1990, and in large part they used “Third World” to denote the Poor World. Looking across my shelves as I write this piece, for example, I can see the third edition of Michael Todaro’s highly influential [Economic Development in the Third World](#) (1985), P.T. Bauer’s polemic [Equality, the Third World and Economic Delusion](#) (1981) and, at the more populist end of the spectrum, the second edition of Paul Harrison’s widely read [The Third World Tomorrow](#) (1983).

The 1980s, however, not only saw the fragmentation of the First/Second World dualism with the collapse of the former Soviet Union at the end of the decade, but also – and perhaps more importantly – the embracing of market reforms by most command economies (China in 1978, Vietnam and Laos in 1986, and the

Soviet Union in 1987, for example), which in the process became so-called “transition” economies. The Third World was always non-aligned more in word than in deed, and to add to this much of the Second World was embracing capitalism with alacrity, notwithstanding some governments continuing to pay lip service to the rhetoric of Socialism. As Deng Xiao-ping, the architect of China’s reforms, is said to have remarked, “it doesn’t matter whether a cat is white or black, so long as it catches mice”. Pragmatism rather than ideology became the order of the day.

To compound these geo-political complications, the key unifying characteristic of the Third World – that it was the poor world – was also losing its explanatory and empirical bite. Nowhere did this have more traction than among the “tiger” economies of East Asia. The East Asian “miracle”, the term used to describe the extraordinary economic expansion of Asia, began with the Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan. In fairly short order these early developers were then joined by Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, and they in turn by the late developers, namely Vietnam and – most notably – China. Many people in these countries began to push against the idea that they were part of a Third World, objecting to its pejorative undertones. They were also, self-evidently, becoming more rich than poor.

This last point, of course, also made some of the alternative terms that scholars and commentators had begun to use equally problematic: “Poor World”, “Less-developed World” and “Undeveloped World”. These terms failed to reflect the degree to which this grouping of countries was becoming increasingly differentiated and therefore less and less amenable to easy categorization.

There are sometimes quite nuanced distinctions that betray where people stand on key issues. Take, for example, the decision whether to refer to the Less-developed World, Undeveloped World, or Poor World. On the face of it these seem to be interchangeable. “Undeveloped World”, however, pays heed to the belief that the “Poor World” is poor because it has been under-developed by the “Rich (or First) World”, through processes of globalization and capitalist expansion. This links the

terminology to dependency theory. “Less-developed World” and “Poor World” are less ideologically loaded, and can be seen as largely descriptive statements turned into collective terms (critics, however, would say that this narrowness, in itself, betrays the ideology of the user by its tacit assumption that there is no history or politics to the patterns of development that we see arrayed around the globe).

In 1983 the Brandt report was published by a commission chaired by the former German Chancellor Willy Brandt. This report identified a North/South line (or Brandt line), and thus popularized another term, namely “The South”. The South is a geographical convenience based on the fact that most of the Poor World lies south of latitude 30° North. There were exceptions, most notably Australia and New Zealand, but nonetheless it worked for many people: scholars, politicians and the media. Critics, however, objected to the fact that once again it hid from view the political and economic processes and historical inheritances that rendered these southern countries poor in the first place. It portrayed their poverty as a geographical accident (although the New Environmental Determinists would argue otherwise). Within a decade, however, even the term the South was showing evidence of losing its definitional appeal because of the differentiation processes noted above.

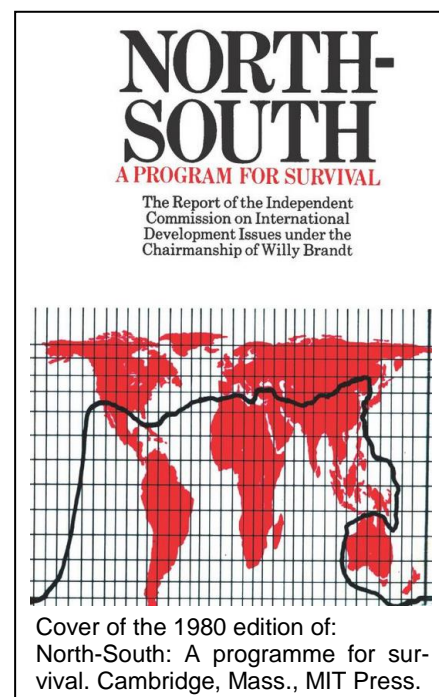
By the 1990s, then, scholars were in a bit of a pickle. We need from time to time to refer to the Third/Poor World, or some such thing, to avoid long-winded inclusions and exclusions. And yet this world was becoming harder and harder to pigeonhole as the political and economic certainties of the past were fraying. However, it is also one of those cases of “we know it when we see it”, and it can be become rather trying when people point out “Ah yes, but what about Singapore ...”, or “but Australia is also in the South”. There were a few alternative attempts to arrive at terms that downplay the poor/undeveloped character of this region of the globe. Some scholars took to referring to the “Majority World” on the basis that the South supports some 80 per cent of the globe’s population and a large proportion of

UN-recognized states. But this term hasn’t caught on, I sense because it is obtuse and its meaning is less than clear. Another option that has found favor in some quarters is the “Non-Western World”, which separates Europe and North America (the West), from the rest. This has fallen foul, I think, of its own geo-cultural inclinations.

And so we return to the question: why “the global South” rather than just “the South”? The reasoning here, as I explained in my 2007 book, is that the addition of the word “global” makes it clear that this is not a strict geographical categorization of the world but one based on economic inequalities which happen to have some cartographic coherence. It also emphasizes that both North and South are, together, drawn into global processes rather than existing as separate slices of the world. Conditions in the Global South are only understandable when they are set against those in the Global North; global processes and structures make all countries part of an increasingly integrated world.

All that said, I doubt very much that the story ends here. The Global South, too, will in time get tripped up by events.

Jonathan Rigg is the author of [An Everyday Geography of the Global South](#)



THE GLOBAL SOUTH: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO KENYA?

by Felix Lamech Mogambi Ming'ate ([Department of Environmental Studies and Community Development, Kenyatta University, Kenya](#))

The nations of Africa, Central and Latin America, and most of Asia are collectively known as the Global South. These nations are also referred to collectively as the poor world, the less-developed world, the non-Western world, and the developing countries. In fact, the Global South is the latest term used to describe the non-Western or developing countries. The term is normally used to mean countries that are faced with social, political and economic challenges – for instance poverty, environmental degradation, human and civil rights abuses, ethnic and regional conflicts, mass displacements of refugees, hunger, and disease.

The terms Global North and Global South clearly divide the world into two halves geographically. Kenya, a country through which the equator passes, could be considered to be part of both the Global North and the Global South, geographically speaking. Despite this divide, however, the term Global South is not commonly known in Kenya, most likely because the donor agencies and development partners refer to Kenya as a “developing country”. The term Third World is not common either, as most people would see it as demeaning.

However, with the current changing world landscape, in which various institutions, both of higher learning and of development, have started to vigorously use the term Global South to enhance their cooperation endeavors it is very likely that this term will start to emerge in Kenya in the near future. For instance, most universities are currently establishing centers for Global South Studies in the Global North countries, and these centers have started to attract attention from the Global South countries. Most of these centers try to capture issues related to social, economic and political development in the Global South, and in my opinion I see that through these centers new international structures and institutions are going to emerge that will create linkages between the Global North and Global South. Most likely the Global North have seen the need to change the terms they use – such as “the poor world”, “the less-developed world”, “the non-Western world”, and “the developing countries” – which they have used for several decades, so as to renew their relationship with the countries collectively termed the Global South economies.

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ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

by *Rodolfo Magallanes* ([Director of the Institute of Political Studies, Universidad Central, Caracas, Venezuela](#))

As underdeveloped countries become more visible, they are frequently referred to under the collective label the “Global South”. Despite the advantages this designation offers as a synthesizing term, I consider it ambiguous because it uses a simple geographical criteria to describe a complex social situation which distinguishes poor countries from the wealthiest. The implied North-South dichotomy has never been as geographically fixed as the labels imply. For example, Australia and New Zealand have always been regarded as southern outliers of the North. Some of the richest countries in the world (with a high GDP per capita) are classified as part of the Global South. Yet the model still rests exclusively on a “latidunal” division (see www.geocurrents.info/economic-geography/there-is-no-third-world-there-is-no-global-south).

In addition, the term Global South is ahistoric and decontextualized. It omits a critical core of dynamic variables that characterize different kinds of countries, especially historical, economic, social, cultural, and political variables, among others. It is these factors that might explain the reality of these countries as a product of a societal process, and the type and origin of the differences among them.

Independently of the aim to define or classify, the Global South concept confronts different groups of countries more than it unifies them into a comprehensive one (“underdeveloped”, “developing”, or “dependent” are better terms to define these types of countries). In connection with its static character, to which I have already referred, the concept of the Global South does not sufficiently take into account the types of relations these different countries have maintained throughout their long histories (Colonialism and Neocolonialism).

Nevertheless “developed” and “underdeveloped” countries imply one another’s existence. They are involved in unequal economic and politic relations and potentially form part of the uneven balance of world power, but they are still part of a shared dialectic reality. Besides, this static definition does not consider enough the global character by itself; this means that it does not take into account the increasing frequency of the contacts or relations among all countries that together make up the present globalized world. As policy issues become global, global or more integrative approaches at international level become necessary in order to solve them.

Rodolfo Magallanes is author of the book [Globalización de la Educación Superior. Impacto en países desarrollados y subdesarrollados](#), Caracas: UCV, 2012

GLOBAL SOUTH

by Olaf Kaltmeier ([Professor of Ibero-American History, Bielefeld University, Germany](#))

The term Global South has been of great benefit in re-introducing studies on Africa, Asia, and Latin America into the academic field. The necessary deconstruction of development in post-development approaches in the 1990s has contributed to the – probably unintended – crisis of Development Studies and Third-World Area Study Centers. The end of the “Third World” has been proclaimed, which has led to a significant reduction of studies on these areas. After the end of the bipolar world, and in the context of an accelerated globalization process, Area Studies – especially on the so called Third-World countries – have been displaced by Global Studies. With a Global South-oriented approach, areas formerly peripheral to global studies are placed at the center of attention once more.

Nevertheless, the concept of the Global South shares some of the limitations of the concept of the Third World. It evokes imaginations of a geographical North-South divide, which does not correspond to the complex entanglements and uneven developments in the real world. Areas incorporated under the label *Global South* can also be found in the geographical North. Ethnic ghettos and barrios in US American cities are one example; the “Latinoization” of the US is another. And the gated communities of the cosmopolitan elite in Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, or Santiago de Chile have more in common with their counterparts in Miami, L.A. or Chicago than with the surrounding barrios, marginales and favelas.

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WHAT I THOUGHT OF THE TERM GLOBAL SOUTH ... BEFORE I LEARNED HOW THE MAINSTREAM USES IT

by Tobias Schwarz ([Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne](http://www.gssc.uni-koeln.de/))

Before I started working at the *Global South Studies Center* I never thought much about the term Global South. Since that time, I have gradually come to realize that the term is riddled with contradictions, at least when used in the specific context that interests me most – migration studies.

In my naïve opinion, it seemed self-evident to me to use the most neutral term available to denominate the relationship between the dominant and the subaltern regions of the world. Global South, I believed, was shorthand for a complex, historically evolved configuration of global power relations. By talking about the Global South (and by implication, the North, or the other way around), one did not constantly have to stress that we currently experience a world order that grew out of European colonial domination over most of the world between, roughly, 1880 and 1914, and resulted in today's unequal distribution of economic and political power on a global scale. Likewise, it was obvious to me that this is not strictly a geographical expression (as, I would guess, most would nowadays agree).

The term seems neutral in the sense that it does not judge the whole world by the Northern paradigm of development, as did the (previous) term “developing countries”. At the same time it is inherently relational, as to talk about the South becomes meaningless without its conceptual counterpart. In that sense, I always saw very little difference between the North-South and the Core-Periphery relationships (as long as those you talked to were familiar with world-systems theory). Another term I consider largely synonymous is *Trikont* (meaning, of course, Africa, Asia, and Latin America). It was coined after the 1966 Tricontinental Conference in Havana, and denotes those regions of the world affected in a similar manner through their shared history (and present-day situation) of (post)colonial domination. *Trikont* was the term in vogue when I started to become politicized in Germany in the early 1990s, and my anti-imperialist friends used it interchangeably with

“Periphery” (if talking among students) or “Third World” (when older folks – say, unionists – were around). And we used it a lot (debating about revolutionary movements, as you might guess). In my opinion, the three expressions Global South, Periphery, and *Trikont* do have substantially different connotations (Periphery relies heavily on dependency theory; *Trikont* is about oppressors and oppressed; Global South connotes less of both), but are rather synonymous to the extent that they denote a complex global configuration with a long history. And they do of course suffer from the same shortfall, as they lump together very diverse economic and political positions and countless ways of life into one overarching category. But this is part and parcel of all such catch-all terms, and not using them would leave us ill-equipped to have discussions about anything beyond the basic assessments of macro structures that most social scientists can agree on.

At least, that's what I thought before I came to the GSSC. Now I realize that the mainstream use of my beloved (critical, post-colonial, and, yes, almost anti-imperialist) term is a mere window dressing, disguising that in fact it substitutes “developing countries”. Under “mainstream use” I include official documents of the United Nations.

As I'm working on migration control in the Western world, I draw on UN data and look at their publications from time to time. The Migration Section, within the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, maintains the United Nations Global Migration Database, which contains an abundant set of statistics on international migration. With its huge dataset and the wide reach of its publications, the Population Division has a significant visibility, and influences the perception of global migration flows far beyond the direct context of the UN, and, if I may be forgiven for quoting Spider-Man, “With great power comes great responsibility”.

In its reports and other publications, the Population Division structures the information by major areas, regions and countries of the world. Let's take a look at two recent reports ([Population Facts, No. 2013/3 Rev.1, April 2014](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/pd/datastore/population-factsheets/population-factsheets-no-2013-3-rev1-april-2014), cited as Facts 2014); [International Migration Report 2013, ST/ESA/SER.A/346, December 2013](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/pd/datastore/migration-international-migration-report-2013-st/esa/ser/a/346), cited as Report 2013). Both frequently draw on

the distinction between the global “North” and “South” – respectively the “developed” and “developing” regions of the world, stating, for instance: “Since 1990, South-North migration has been the main driver of global migration trends, but South-South migration remains the largest category” (Facts 2014, 1). While it is immediately convincing that “countries and areas are grouped geographically into six major areas” (Report 2013, vii) – hence it is easier to find them on a map – it is less clear why the total of all countries is divided into “developed” and “developing” regions (ibid.), also named “North” and “South” in the same documents.

This juxtaposition is made very prominent and runs through all of the presentations of the data in these publications (e.g. the whole first page of Report 2013). Yet nowhere do the publications comment upon the reasons for this distinction. The explanatory notes prominently and abundantly explain which country is put into which (sub)category, but do not explain why these categories are created and used at all. Therefore the question arises as to why these publications are primarily structured according to a North-South-divide.

At first glance, the reason seems to be completely arbitrary. One possible interpretation is that the terms North/South are simply reproducing the older classifications developed/developing, without evaluating their practical relevance for the issue at hand. But this is not even done by reference to empirical parameters (like the rightly criticized GDP or HDI), and ends up containing obvious contradictions. The classification that defines “all countries of Europe, Northern America, Australia/New Zealand and Japan” as “developed”, and the rest as “developing” regions classifies three out of the ten economically most powerful states as “developing countries” (China, rank 3; Brazil, rank 7; India, rank 10 by GNI, see <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GNI.pdf>). Also, in this classification, Portugal would be classified as “developed”, and the United Arab Emirates as “developing”. “Yet the UAE bests Portugal on the Human Development Index, and far exceeds it in regard to per capita GDP” (www.geocurrents.info/economic-geography/the-developing-world-and-the-developing-world#ixzz3BU48CPuM). At the same time, the broad categories lump together

into the same category “developed” countries like Romania and Albania (HDI rank of 56 and 70) – because they are in Europe – and put Singapore (HDI of 9), South Korea (15) and Israel (19) into the same category “developing” along with Afghanistan and Haiti. I simply don’t understand why these publications are not even using empirically valid classifications (i.e. the Human Development Index that is promoted by the UN, in combination with the latest World Bank data). Anyone who knows how to use an Excel spreadsheet could sort the data accordingly with a few mouse clicks.

Now, leaving aside the precise content of the categories used, my main issue is with the reasons for their application to data about global migration. When I thought longer about it, the juxtaposition of developed/North and developing/South even seemed counterintuitive to me, as the regions represented by the two categories (North and South) are of such different size and quality that any comparison is logically unfeasible. To give an example, the fact that “South-South migration is as common as South-North migration” (Facts 2014), given in absolute numbers, is next to meaningless, because it is not related to the (very unequal) size of the population in the respective areas.

I cannot help but wonder what the practical relevance of this juxtaposition is for analyzing migration on a global scale, because at first glance it seems to be arbitrary to match migration flows to the broad categories of ‘developed/developing’ countries. Unfortunately, the Population Division are silent about their underlying assumptions, and did not answer a query I sent in August 2014.

What I learned from my study of the UN publications was that outside my cozy ivory tower, not everybody agrees with me on what North and South mean. In the real world, it seems, one can get away with classifying whatever one wants as “developing”, and package it appealingly with the hip label Global South. This means that I can either surrender, and not use this term anymore, or continue to use it while remaining aware that it must be accompanied by a string of explanations. Neither alternative is appealing to me.

Tobias Schwarz is Research Fellow at the Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne, research area [Citizenship and Migration](#)

GLOBAL SOUTH

by Arif Dirlik (Independent scholar, Eugene, OR, USA)

In hindsight, the appearance of the term Global South was a significant marker of the transition in global political economy and geopolitics that has led to the contemporary situation. The term – or at least the “South” component of it – was popularized by the Brandt Commission reports published in 1980 and 1983, both of which bore “North-South” in their titles.³ Over the following decades, “global” was attached to the “South” to form the contemporary compound term. The predicate is indicative of the discourse of globalization that was on the emergence in the 1990s. The United Nations Development Program initiative of 2003, “Forging a Global South”, underlined the significance of the term and the new conceptualization of global relations it represented.⁴

The Brandt Commission was established in 1977 by then head of the World Bank, Robert McNamara of Vietnam War fame, who had reinvented himself – from the official in charge of the military conduct of the war in Vietnam to compassionate patron of the Third World as head of the World Bank (note the parallel to Paul Wolfowitz, who made a similar transition three decades later from the manager of another disastrous war – in Iraq – to the World Bank). Chaired by former Berlin mayor and German Chancellor Willy Brandt, a Social Democrat with Green affinities, the commission perceived an impending economic and environmental global crisis on the horizon, and saw the development of the South as one crucial way to avert catastrophe for humankind.

The Brandt reports anticipated the end of the Cold War by asserting the primacy of North-South economic disparities over the East-West political divide that had set the world of capital-

ism against the world of socialism. It called for cooperation between advanced capitalist and socialist states in the development of the South. The South in this formulation was a stand-in for the “Third World”, a term that had been coined three decades earlier by the French scholar Alfred Sauvy to distinguish the formerly colonized and presently neo-colonized societies of Asia, Africa and Latin America from the modernized “first” world of capitalism and the modernizing “second” world of socialism. By the 1960s, “Third World” would become a central political slogan for the radical left. The term in its origins had suggested that societies of the Third World, embarking on the long path to modernity, had one of two paths to follow, the capitalist or the socialist. Even as socialist and capitalist (formerly colonialist) states vied for influence in the “Third World”, there was a lingering assumption in mainstream Euro/American scholarship, ultimately to be vindicated, that the socialist path itself was something of a temporary deviation. Modernization discourse assigned to capitalism the ultimate teleological task of bringing history to an end.⁵ Nevertheless, given the close association of capitalism with imperialism, the socialist example exerted significant influence on the national liberation movements that the Third World idea spawned. The developmental failure of “Third World” alternatives was evident by the 1970s. The term Global South, seemingly politically neutral, proposed to incorporate these societies in the developmental project of capitalism, already named “globalization” in one of the early uses of that term, which would not acquire popularity until the 1990s.⁶

The changing usages of the term Global South and the alternative agendas different uses imply offer clues to both continuities and discontinuities over the last half century in the global positioning of the “South”, as well as in the ideological and political role assigned to it in global geopolitics. The use of the term is explained by

³ Independent Commission on International Development Issues (The Brandt Commission, after its Chair), *North-South: A Programme for Survival* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1980), and, *Common Crisis North-South: Cooperation for World Recovery* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983).

⁴ United Nations Development Programme, “Forging a Global South,” United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation, 19 December 2004. The Global South program reconceptualized and reorganized the UN Conference on Technical Cooperation that went back to 1948 in its origins.

⁵ The classic discussion of the various implications of the Third World idea is to be found in, Carl Pletsch’s “*The Three Worlds, or the Division of Social Scientific Labor, circa 1950-1975*,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23 (October 1981): 565-590. More recent discussions may be found in the special issue of *Third World Quarterly*, “*After the Third World?*” (ed. by Mark T. Berger), 25.1 (2004).

⁶ *A Programme for Survival* called for “a globalization of policies”, p. 13.

some geographically: that with two exceptions – Australia and New Zealand – the developed countries of the world lie to the North of the developing, undeveloped or least-developed ones. While the term was no doubt not intended by its coiners to be taken in a literal physical geographical sense, it nevertheless seems worth pointing out that, like all geographical designations for ideological and political spaces and projects (globalization comes to mind readily), its geography is much more complicated than the term suggests, and is subject to change over time, so that the “South” of the contemporary world may be significantly different in its composition and territorial spread than the “South” of the early 1970s, or the colonial “South” of the immediate post-World War period. The Inuit are practically at the North Pole, while some formerly colonial or neocolonial urban centers of the South are a match, in activity and appearance, for metropolitan cities at the headquarters of Capital.

With all the good intentions of the formulators that are evident in the Reports, the course development took in the Global South would be dictated by changes in its global context. The publication of the first Brandt Commission report in 1981 coincided with the beginnings of the so-called Reagan/Thatcher revolution, the appearance of East/Southeast Asian capitalisms as competitors of the “North”, and the receding of socialism, beginning with the People’s Republic of China in the late 1970s. The Brandt Commission’s global neo-Keynesianism was stillborn in its rapid replacement in the course of the 1980s by Neoliberal economic policies enforced by the US-dominated World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The transformation found expression in the late 1980s in the so-called Washington Consensus, a term that was coined with reference to US policies in Latin America, but quickly came to be associated with the shift from governmental intervention in the economy to marketization that characterized the discourse of globalization, which itself acquired prominence in the 1990s. The South had no choice but to seek development in the global capitalist economy. This also signified an important shift in the content of development – away from an earlier emphasis on development as national development (or the development of the whole nation). It is quite evident in hindsight that under contemporary conditions national

economic development no longer means the development of the whole nation, but rather only of those sectors of the economy and population that can participate successfully in the global economy, usually in urban networks that are components of a global network society.

The uneven development of the Global South since the term was coined has rendered the geography of the term even more complicated – to the point where it may have become an obstacle to understanding the contemporary global situation. Some of the societies covered by the term – such as the People’s Republic of China, India, Brazil, Turkey – have benefited from globalization to become more assertive in global relations – with the PRC aspiring to world leadership and hegemony. These days South-South relations are quite likely to be relations of exploitation reminiscent of colonialism. Internally, too, development under the regime of neoliberal globalization has created inequalities within individual nations. The same tendencies toward economic (and, therefore, political) oligarchy in the developed capitalist world are visible also in the “Global South”. Major urban centers in developing societies increasingly serve as nodes in the global networks of capital, distanced from their hinterlands by the concentration of wealth and power. Regional inequalities are accompanied by sharpening class differences in societies across the globe as wealth is accumulated in ever fewer sectors of society. The result is economic, political and cultural division and fragmentation, a far cry from the vision of equality between and within nations, with economies serving national development and integration, that inspired societies of the Global South in the aftermath of decolonization after World War II, when “Third World” suggested the possibility of viable alternatives both to capitalism and “actually existing socialism”. The term may still serve to delineate the developed from the developing world, but the line dividing the North from the South presently runs right through the north, the south, and across both.

*Arif Dirlik is the author of [Global South: Predicament and Promise](#). In: *The Global South* 1 (1), S. 12–23.*

DISCUSSION ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

by Alvaro Mendez ([co-founder London School of Economics](#) and [Political Science's Global South Unit](#))

The Global South has embarked on an unprecedented upward trajectory. Already, the output of the developing world's three leading economies (Brazil, China and India) is close to equaling the combined output of the longstanding industrial powers of the North – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Even smaller countries like Bangladesh, Chile, Ghana, Mauritius, Rwanda and Tunisia are experiencing rapid economic development. According to the [2013 UNDP Human Development Report](#), it is estimated that 80% of the world's middle-class population will be living in developing countries by 2030.

This surge of the emerging economies is now in process of reconfiguring the political and economic geometry of the international system. New modalities of engagement in international development, from the state-led capitalism of Asian economies to the world-bestriving operations of global market-savvy Southern multinationals, are replacing the once-dominant North-South aid and investment paradigm.

The dynamic global actors driving this process are pressing for a greater voice in the international system, and introducing norms and practices that are reshaping – or that aim to reshape – both the formal and the informal institutions of global governance. The world is being flipped on its axis – a redress that promises huge opportunities for potential development, whilst also posing major challenges, and indeed dangers. With material progress comes huge responsibility for effective human and social development.

At the heart of this ongoing global transformation is a phenomenon known as “South-South cooperation”. Once consigned to the margins, South-South cooperation is coming to occupy an important place in the changing theory and discourse of development. Originally bound up in the response of the developing countries to the destabilising politics of the Cold War, South-South cooperation gave voice to aspirations for a development path untainted by ideological conflict, and to an acknowledgment that relations between developing countries should be a crucial means of achieving these aspirations.

Against the backdrop of continuing growth in Southern economies – in the teeth of the concurrent economic travails afflicting the donor countries of the North – South-South cooperation has finally come to the fore. It has been formally recognized by the OECD-DAC in late 2011, at the Busan High Level Summit on Aid Effectiveness, as a dynamic form of engagement contributing to a rapid transformation of the developing world. Its patterns are far from homogenous, and each emerging economy – be it a potentially great-power BRIC country [Brazil, Russia, India and China] or a smaller CIVETS country [Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey, and South Africa] – functions in a variety of ways.

Alvaro Mendez is a senior lecturer in international relations at Regent's University London. More on the Global South Unit can be found here: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/internationalRelations/centresandunits/globalsouth/GShome.aspx>

NOT HAVING NEUTRAL TERMS DOES NOT EQUAL HAVING NO TERMS AT ALL

Interview with Manuela Boatcă ([Professor of the sociology of global inequalities, Institute for Latin American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany](#))

Tobias Schwarz: In your work you have frequently commented on the term “The West”, criticizing – very correctly, I think – the “idealized distinction between Western (modern) cultures and non-Western (pre- or non-modern) cultures” ([M. Boatcă, Grenzsetzende Macht. Berl. J. f. Soz. 20 \(1\) 2010, p. 23–44](#)). On the other hand, you seem to take the “global North-South divide” for granted. To my understanding, there is a commonly shared understanding of “The West” that does not significantly differ from the “Global North”.

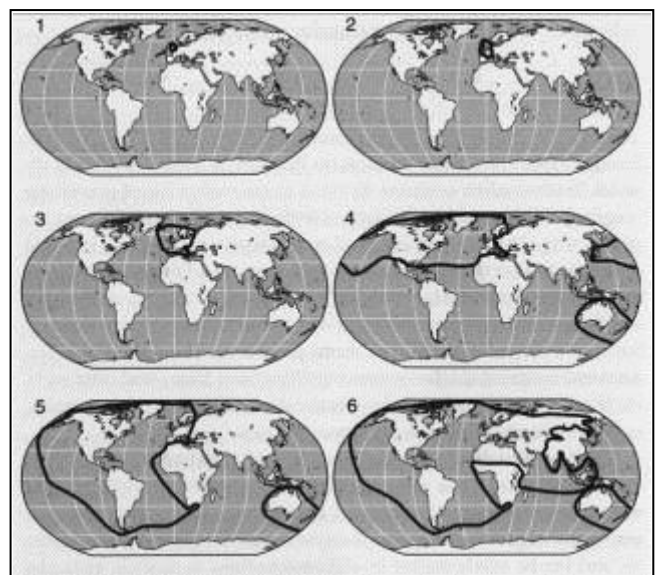
Manuela Boatcă: I disagree. There are many different understandings of “The West” depending on the time period on which we focus when referring to it and the criteria used as a basis for defining “Westernness”. In their 1997 book “The Myth of Continents. A Critique of Metageography”, Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen distinguish no less than seven versions of the West, from a standard minimal West limited to Britain, France, the Low Countries, and Switzerland, through the historical West of medieval Christendom around the mid 13th century (where the criterion of belonging is religion) or the Cold War Atlantic alliance formed by Europe and its settler colonies in the twentieth century, and up to the greater “cultural West”, which groups the criteria of language, religion, and “high culture” together into a version of the West that also includes Latin America and South Africa (see maps below). By contrast, there are not nearly as many different understandings of “Global North”, which points to its much more recent history.

TS: My first question referred to the current use of the terms North and West, and to me it seems that both are taken as basically meaning the same in everyday speech. Did I understand correctly: You argue this is a misunderstanding and that instead there is an important conceptual difference between the “North-South” and the “West-Rest” divide?

MB: Rather than a misunderstanding, this is a conflation of two distinct, yet related geopolitical strategies of naming and mapping, operating at different moments in time. Both the conceptual difference between the “North-South” and the “West-Rest” divide and the analytical uses we make of these terms become clear once we historicize and contextualize the moments of their emergence and the time span to which they most likely apply.

TS: What do you think is the main advantage of using “the North” (and “South”) instead of talking about “the West”? Is it primarily that “North/South” connotes significantly less of a dichotomy between “modern/traditional” and “civilized/primitive” than did “the West”?

MB: The “West vs. Rest” is by far the older divide, going back to the 15th century expansion of Europe into the Americas and operating mainly on cultural criteria. By contrast, the “North-South” divide comes into play at the end of World War II and uses primarily socioeconomic criteria. The “North-South” distinction emerged in close connection to another classificatory scheme: The First, the Second and the Third Worlds. With the virtual disappearance of the socioeconomic and political reality of the Second World, as well as with the proclaimed “end of history” of opposing political conflicts after 1990, the North-South dichotomy resurfaced even more forcefully – all the more so, as it was precisely the socioeconomic disparities it



Versions of the “West” (in Lewis & Wigen 1997, [The myth of continents. A critique of metageography](#). Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 50)

expressed that were and have been growing worldwide since the 1990s. In other words, whereas at the basis of the “West vs. Rest” divide lies the “civilized vs. barbarian” binary opposition, “North-South” is one that distinguishes rich vs. poor (regions and countries, rather than individuals). So this is less about advantages and disadvantages and more about the fact that the terms refer to different, though partly overlapping disparities.

TS: Do you think there is a sufficiently precise understanding of “Global South/North”, which can be used in a meaningful way? (And is this widely shared?) Could you give a brief definition of the way you use it?

MB: Again, a historically contextualized understanding of “Global South/North” is quite precise, but it is not widely shared, because there is an insufficient engagement with history, i.e., with the *longue durée* of the current world-system, in many of today's social scientific works.

TS: You also refer to “The South” as a metaphor for the “global periphery”. I agree that we need terms that point to very general, very broad global power relations, somehow as shorthand for the diversity of current relationships and the long history of colonization and of Western dominance. But, at the same time I feel uneasy with the generalizing tendency of terms like the “Global South”, “global periphery” or “Western dominance”. With a container concept like the “the South” we group very different historical experiences and current realities together into one homogenizing category. Do you have good arguments for using such a generalizing category, as “the global periphery” or “the global South”? What do you think are the pros (and cons) of such broad categories?

MB: Historical patterns (as well as their absence) are in the eye of the beholder. If we never ask ourselves the question of whether or not the countries and regions formerly colonized by Western Europe retain economic, cultural and political commonalities that relate to the experience of colonization, as well as a position in today's global power structures that reflects that experience, we will not receive an answer to such a question. We might thus miss one of

the most important common denominators shared by many countries and regions of the world today. Economically, and despite the much-hailed (but overrated) examples of successful growth as in the BRICS, yesterday's colonies have tended to become today's peripheries. This is not to say that there is a simple line linking Europe's colonial expansion to the colonized countries' economic, political or cultural condition today. But situations of military, economic, political, and cultural domination can and have been enforced in the absence of colonial administrations, and they have historically tended to outlive formal colonial rule. This is what Aníbal Quijano has termed “coloniality” ([A. Quijano, Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America, Nepantla: Views from South 1 \(3\) 2000](#)) – a set of political, economic, and sociocultural hierarchies between colonizers and colonized emerged with the conquest of the Americas in the sixteenth century that is distinct from pre-modern forms of colonial rule in that it translates administrative hierarchies into a racial/ethnic division of labor; and it is more encompassing than modern European colonialism alone, in that it transfers both the racial/ethnic hierarchies and the international division of labor produced during the time of direct or indirect colonial rule into post-independence times. The problem therefore is not having excessively general concepts, since concepts can always be refined and debated, but rather relinquishing the possibility of assessing historical trends and perceiving broadly shared patterns.

TS: I sympathize with Heriberto Cairo's attempt to promote the “Decolonization of Area Studies”, published in a volume that you edited in cooperation with E. Gutiérrez Rodríguez and S. Costa ([“Decolonizing European sociology. Transdisciplinary approaches. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010](#)). My reading is that he suggests a rethinking of all geographical labels that we come up with when we describe the world system, because they emerged together with (or were the results of) concrete geopolitical strategies – military, imperial. But his decolonization critique leaves us with no terms at all. Is there a way out of this dilemma?

MB: The problem lies in the fact that the very gesture of classification (whether of humans, the animal realm, or regions) as well as the

emergence of modern European cartography were intimately linked to Western Europe's colonial and imperial expansion. So it is true that there are no “innocent” geographical labels, as well as no neutral ones. But not having neutral terms does not equal having no terms at all. As explained before, as long as we historicize and contextualize our concepts and our geographical labels, they are (imperfect) analytical tools that further the debate and locate our knowledge production within a particular cultural geopolitical space. Understanding that the European name for the “West Indies”, which has now become a general geographical reference, comes from Columbus’ wrong belief that he had reached India and that the name “Latin Ameri-

ca” was linked to France's geopolitical project of promoting *latinité* in the Americas in the eighteenth century against the growing influence of the United States does not leave us with no terms. It leaves us with precise, but unsatisfactory terms on the one hand, and with the need and duty to excavate, discuss and hone more precise ones, on the other.

Manuela Boatcă is author of [of Global Inequalities Beyond Occidentalism](#), Ashgate Publishing, 2015.

The interview was conducted by Tobias Schwarz.

YOUTUBE AND THE NOTION OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

by [Oliver Tappe](#) and [Andrea Wolvers](#) (GSSC)

While the contributions to this issue of *Voices from around the World* feature a variety of perspectives on the term Global South, a wide range of (public, academic and other) opinions is also available on the internet. A quick search on the popular video platform YouTube yields numerous video contributions by different individuals and institutions that reflect varieties of, and controversies about, the term Global South. We have collected links to some exemplary videos to broaden the scope of our discussion. While some discussions in these videos tie in with topics raised in the written contributions to this issue, others point at diverging perceptions of the concept, and at stereotypes and clichés dominant in the public usage of the term Global South. In the following we would like to introduce the video snippets with a little context and critical reflection.

The London School of Economics (see as well the written contribution by Alvaro Mendez) has produced a range of videos which feature conference presentations and discussions. The following contributions focus basically on economic and development issues concerning the Global South and its rise:

[The Rise of the Global South](#)

[The Challenges of the Global South: Defining a Strategic Agenda toward 2050](#)

The focus of these videos corresponds with two documentaries from the TV channel Aljazeera that also deal with economic aspects of the Global South. They critically discuss the notion of the Global South and address questions of economic transformations and global market integration. Moreover, they also raise the question of whether the Global North can actually learn from the Global South:

[Rise of the Global South](#)

[Inside Story Americas - The rise of the global South](#)

Another video that concerns economics and global trade features voices from the Global South which criticize the EU trading policies and present alternative options:

[Trade Justice: Alternative Visions from the Global South](#)

The content of these videos does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial board. Rather, we decided to include them to emphasize their variety, specific political agendas, and to raise the awareness to the impact of the internet on global knowledge transfer. What happens if a Google search leads to biased results and delivers only specific viewpoints? How can we avoid undifferentiated or stereotypic usages of concepts such as the Global South? The confusion of the Global South concept with Third World or Developing World, for example, remains a critical issue, in particular for academic institutions like ours who dedicate themselves to identifying and analyzing questions relevant to the people in the Global South. As already discussed in our general introduction, the project constitutes a platform that aims to connect different means of knowledge transfer and debate; and internet sources – given their wide distribution, whatever their quality and heuristic value might be – should be reckoned with.

FIRST WE HAD THE 'THIRD WORLD', THEN THE 'DEVELOPING WORLD' AND NOW THE 'GLOBAL SOUTH'. WHICH TERM DO YOU PREFER?

Video interview with Barbara Potthast ([Professor of Iberian and Latin American History, University of Cologne, Germany](#))



Video: <http://gssc.uni-koeln.de/node/475>

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL SOUTH?

Video interview with Boike Rehbein ([Professor of Society and Transformation in Asia and Africa, Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, Germany](#))



Video: <http://gssc.uni-koeln.de/node/477>

THE NEW SOUTH PROJECT

Photographs by Brooke C. White ([Department of Art, University of Mississippi](http://art.olemiss.edu))

The New South Project investigates the ways that identity and place are affected by the economic and technological changes taking place within specific regions of the Global South, such as South Central Asia and the southern United States. Through the use of photography, digital mapping technology and short film animations, *The New South Project* makes transnational comparisons that are crucial for understanding the cultural and geographical impact of globalization on some of the most disadvantaged regions of the world.

Each geographic location in *The New South Project* faces many challenges due to globalization, including for example environmental degradation, displacement, and political instability. This project began in Bangalore, India, known as the “Silicon Valley of India”, where I was a Senior Fulbright Scholar in the fall of 2012. It has grown to include the deep south of the United States and focuses on four common themes that evolved while photographing: Expansion, Cultivated Spaces, Oil and Water. Each one of these themes can be traced throughout regions of India, Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama, and demonstrate the various ways that the global economic market impacts the landscapes of *The New South Project*.

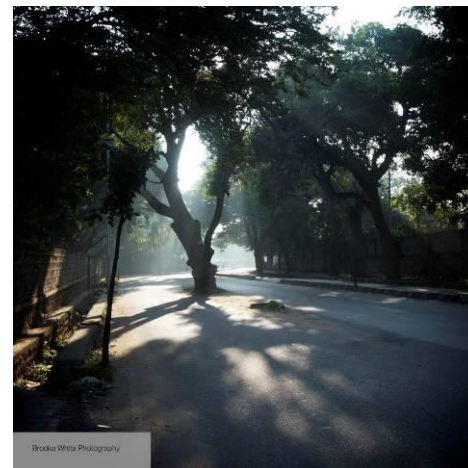
More work of Brooke White:

<http://art.olemiss.edu/2012/07/09/brooke-white/>

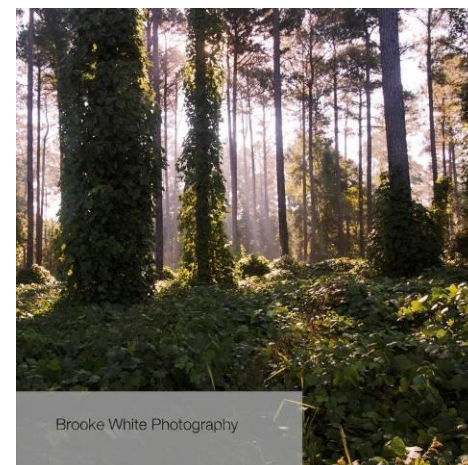
CULTIVATED LANDSCAPES



Bangalore Shopping District, Cultivated Landscapes, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012.



Downtown Bangalore, Cultivated Landscapes, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012.



Levee, Louisiana, Cultivated Landscapes, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012

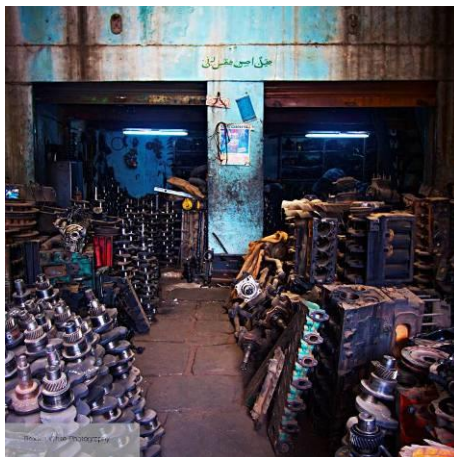


Kudzu, Mississippi, Cultivated Landscapes, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012

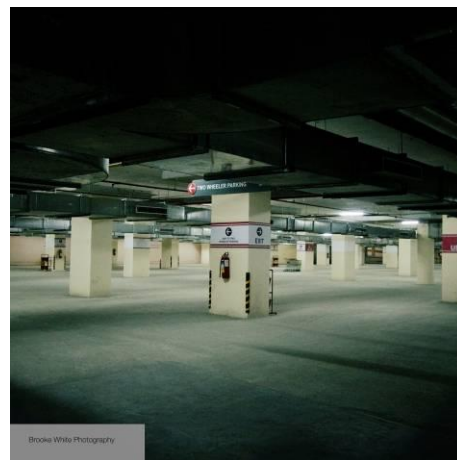


E-city, India, Expansion, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012

EXPANSION



Recycling, India, Expansion, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



New Mall, India, Expansion, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012

OIL



Flyover, India, Expansion, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



Oil Refinery, India, Oil, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



Oil Jack, Mississippi, Oil, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



Ganesh Aftermath, India, Water, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



Oil Rig, Louisiana, Oil, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



I See, India, Water, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012

WATER



Danger, India, Water, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012



Guide Post, Louisiana, Water, Archival Pigment Prints, 12"x12", 2012