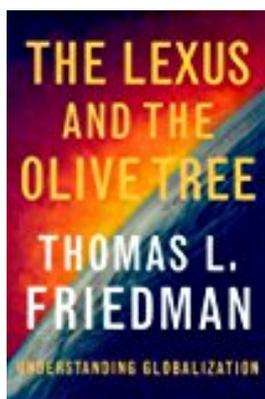


# [PDF] The Lexus And The Olive Tree

Thomas L. Friedman - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

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**Description:**

One day in 1992, Thomas Friedman toured a Lexus factory in Japan and marveled at the robots that put the luxury cars together. That evening, as he ate sushi on a Japanese bullet train, he read a story about yet another Middle East squabble between Palestinians and Israelis. And it hit him: Half the world was lusting after those Lexuses, or at least the brilliant technology that made them possible, and the other half was fighting over who owned which olive tree.

Friedman, the well-traveled *New York Times* foreign-affairs columnist, peppers *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* with stories that illustrate his central theme: that globalization--the Lexus--is the central

organizing principle of the post-cold war world, even though many individuals and nations resist by holding onto what has traditionally mattered to them--the olive tree.

Problem is, few of us understand what exactly globalization means. As Friedman sees it, the concept, at first glance, is all about American hegemony, about Disneyfication of all corners of the earth. But the reality, thank goodness, is far more complex than that, involving international relations, global markets, and the rise of the power of individuals (Bill Gates, Osama Bin Laden) relative to the power of nations.

No one knows how all this will shake out, but *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* is as good an overview of this sometimes brave, sometimes fearful new world as you'll find. --*Lou Schuler*

**From Kirkus Reviews** A brilliant guidebook to the new world of "globalization" by Pulitzer-winning New York Times columnist Friedman (From Beirut to Jerusalem, 1988). Like El Nio, globalization is blamed for anything and everything, but few understand just what it really is. In simplest terms, Friedman defines globalization as the world integration of finance markets, nation states, and technologies within a free-market capitalism on a scale never before experienced. Driving it all is what he calls the Electronic Herd, the faceless buyers and sellers of stocks, bonds, and currencies, and multinational corporations investing wherever and whenever the best opportunity presents itself. It is a pitiless system richly rewarding winners, harshly punishing losers but contradictory as well. For nations and individuals willing to take the risk, globalization offers untold opportunity, yet in the process, as the Electronic Herd scavenges the world like locusts in the search for profit, globalization threatens to destroy both cultural heterogeneity and environmental diversity. The human drive for enrichment (the Lexus) confronts the human need for identity and community (the olive tree). The success of globalization, Friedman contends, depends on how well these goals can be satisfied at one and the same time. He believes they can be, but dangers abound. If nation states sacrifice too much of their identity to the dictates of the Electronic Herd, a backlash, a nihilistic rejection of globalization, can occur. If nation states ignore these dictates, they face impoverishment; there simply is no other game in town. Friedmans discussion is wonderfully accessible, clarifying the complex with enlightening stories that simplify but are never simplistic. There are flaws, to be sure. He is perhaps overly optimistic on the ability of the market forces of globalization to correct their own excesses, such as environmental degradation. Overall, though, he avoids the Panglossian overtones that mar so much of the literature on globalization. Artful and opinionated, complex and cantankerous; simply the best book yet written on globalization. (First printing 100,000) (Author tour) -- *Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

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