

"opened" economies to unregulated short-term capital flows. This has produced a series of market-induced financial crises (see **contagion effect**), beginning in Mexico in 1995, and spreading to East Asia in 1997 (see **Asian crises**), then to Brazil and Russia, and, at the turn of the century, Argentina. These financial crises externalize the problem of overproduction of fictitious capital via global financial markets, victimizing states low in the global currency hierarchy. They also destabilize developing economies, leading to a growing, and dangerous, dialectic of state repression of direct **democracy** initiatives (citizens taking economic matters into their own hands – such as in Argentina), as a pretext for loan rescheduling from the international financial institutions.

In sum, structural adjustment reformulated the terms of economic management, presaging the movement from the development project of the 1940s-1970s to the **globalization** project of the 1990s onwards. Political, military and business elites in developing countries certainly collaborated in this enterprise, often for the same reasons they had promoted development financing in previous decades. They are usually well placed to benefit most from infusions of foreign capital, some of which is used for patronage. Meanwhile, the debt burden is borne disproportionately by the poor. The global consequences are that **inequality** within and between states has grown exponentially.

See also: adjustment with a human face; capitalism; debt; debt crisis; debt relief; globalization; International Monetary Fund (IMF); inequality and poverty; world trends; neo-liberalism; poverty; privatization and liberalization; World Bank

Further reading

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structural violence

Structural (or "indirect") **violence** is defined by Johan Galtung (1969; 1996) as those socio-economic **institutions** and relations that oppress human beings by preventing them from realizing their potential. By broadening the definition of violence from physical or "direct" violence, Galtung and other students of peace research have sought to shift the focus away from the state (see **state and state reform**) and the military (see **military and security**) dimension of **security** toward individuals, social groups and their needs (see **human security**).

According to the "maximal" approach introduced by Galtung (1969) in his seminal work entitled "Violence, Peace and Peace Research," peace did not just mean the absence of **war**; it was also related to the establishment of conditions for **social justice**. In making this point, Galtung distinguished between personal and structural violence. Violence, for Galtung (1996:197), is all those "avoidable insults to basic human needs, and more generally to *life*, lowering the real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible." Direct violence, according to Galtung, is an event; structural violence, on the other hand, is a process with ups and downs. Patterns of exploitation are likely to remain steady unless identified and addressed.

In addition to distinguishing between direct violence and structural violence, Galtung also

defined "cultural violence" as those mechanisms that render acceptable both direct (as in killing, repression, or delocalization) and structural violence (exploitation, penetration or **marginalization**). Then, Galtung turned both the use of violence and the ways in which that use is legitimized by the society, into a subject of study, for students of peace research also had, until then, adopted a narrow and negative conception of peace (the absence of war) and studied conflict resolution with almost exclusive focus on the superpower relationship. Peace research, from the 1960s onwards, increasingly looked at the dynamics of economic exploitation and the economic, political and cultural dimensions of the North-South relationship.

Galtung underlined the futility of the task of trying to achieve peace without tackling the structural causes of the security of individuals, social groups and states. Distinguishing between "negative" and "positive" peace, Galtung argued that peace defined merely as the absence of armed conflict is "negative peace." Positive peace, maintained Galtung, means the absence of both direct (physical) violence, and indirect (structural and cultural) violence. Galtung emphasized that to attain positive peace, it is not enough to seek to eliminate violence; existing **institutions** and relations should be geared toward the enhancement of dialog, cooperation and solidarity among peoples, coupled with a respect for the environment. In the study of contemporary world politics, students of critical security studies have embraced Galtung's notion of structural violence to call for a comprehensive approach to security.

See also: human security; security; social justice; violence

Further reading

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sustainable development

Sustainable development (SD) has come to mean the achievement of **economic development** at the same time as protecting **environment** and **natural resources**. The most famous definition was that achieved by the **Brundtland Commission**, in its publication *Our Common Future* (1987), as: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." But there is no unique or universal definition for SD. Part of the reason is that first, the word "development" itself lacks a unique description. Second, sustainability appears to mean different things from different perspectives. In general, SD is presently used to draw attention to the limits imposed on the extent of human economic activities by considerations of the stability of the natural environment and continuation of their crucial ecosystems' services. At the core of the concept is the question "How much economic activity or what level of material consumption by how many people can the Earth sustain?"

The concern for sustainability had found regular expressions in various forms since the 1960s. The publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson in 1962 drew wide public attention to the negative impacts of uncontrolled technological development on the natural environment and especially the pesticide, DDT. This book is hailed by many as a turning point in the growth of global environmental concern. One of the earliest uses of the term "sustainable development" is found in The World Conservation Strategy prepared by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (1980). However, it was the **World Commission on Environment and Development (WCEID)** – or **Brundtland Commission** – that gave this term a global popularity, and created the most famous definition above. The IUCN, UNEP and WWF in 1991 described sustainable development as improvement in "the quality of human life while living within the **carrying capacity** of supporting ecosystems." However, the environmental concerns are facing serious challenges from the technological optimists who believe that technological