11. Globalization’s Impact on States

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Chapter: (p. 282) 11. Globalization’s Impact on States

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This chapter discusses globalization's impact on states. There is no topic more controversial in the field of global political economy than the impact of globalization on the accountability, autonomy, capacity, and sovereignty of the nation state; and the controversy has only intensified since the onset of the global financial crisis. Arguably, the democratic character of governance in contemporary societies is at stake in such debates. The chapter reviews the extensive controversy that surrounds such questions, focusing attention on the principal mechanisms in and through which globalization is seen to impact upon the nation state and the empirical evidence that might either substantiate or question the existence of such mechanisms. It also provides a detailed assessment of the case for and against the globalization thesis, examining the extent to which global economic integration might be seen to restrict the parameters of domestic political autonomy. Moreover, the chapter differentiates between the politics of globalization and the globalization of politics. It concludes by considering the complex and sometimes paradoxical relationship between globalization, democracy, and the nation state.