



# Global California: Rising to the Cosmopolitan Challenge

*Abraham F. Lowenthal*

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## **Global California: Rising to the Cosmopolitan Challenge** Abraham F. Lowenthal

California is at the cutting edge of technological change, demographic transformation, and international engagement. It has the country's largest population, and is its biggest producer of agricultural and manufactured goods, its main exporter and importer, and a leading center for higher education, research, the media, and philanthropy. Its population is the most international; more than a quarter of the state's residents were born in another country. But habits of thought and structures date from the mid-twentieth century, when California was turned inward. California today lacks ideas, institutions, and policies commensurate with its global stakes and clout.

*Global California* addresses an important subject: how the citizens of a state with the dimensions and power of a nation are affected by international trends, and what they can do to identify and promote their own interests in a rapidly changing world. In this fresh, well-informed, and balanced analysis, Abraham Lowenthal deals with numerous thorny issues—from globalization, trade, and infrastructure to immigration, environmental pollution, climate change, and California's ties with neighboring Mexico and the dynamic Asian economies.

A recognized authority on foreign affairs, Lowenthal argues that the real choices are not whether to cheer globalization or condemn it. Rather, Californians need to think strategically and act effectively to gain as much as possible from international engagement while managing its risks and costs. They need to build "cosmopolitan capacity" to understand and respond to global challenges and opportunities.

Too much is at stake for California—its citizens, government, firms and non-governmental organizations—to leave thinking and acting on international affairs to the federal government and to East Coast think tank experts. This volume shows Californians how to succeed in an ever more interconnected world.

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