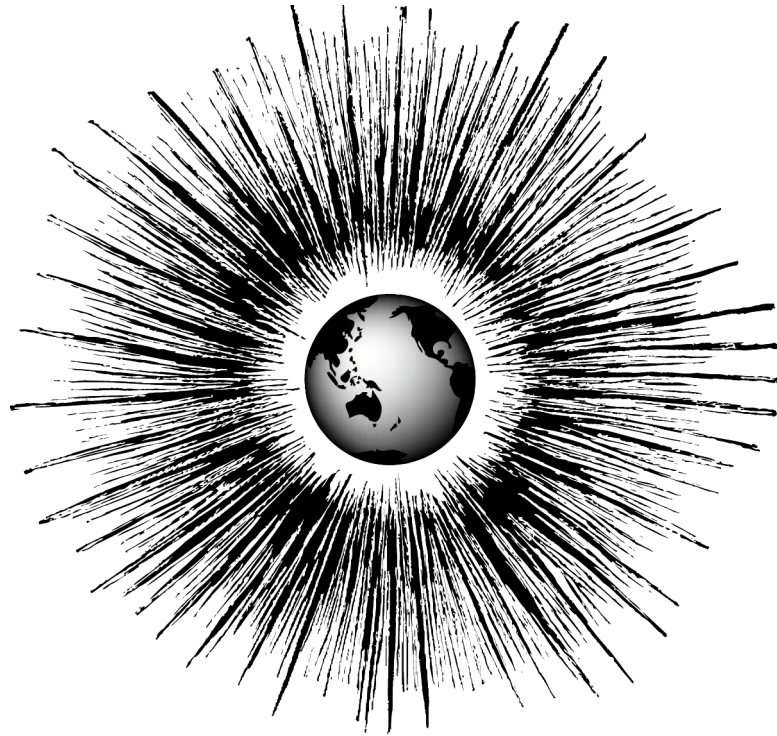


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## BOOK REVIEWS

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George Modelski

*World Cities: -3000 to 2000*

Reviewed by Christopher Chase-Dunn & Daniel Pasciuti

Alison Brysk, ed.

*Globalization and Human Rights*

Reviewed by Emanuel G. Boussios

Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort, Eds.

*The Postnational Self, Belonging and Identity*

Reviewed by Paula Chakravartty

George Modelski. 2003. *World Cities: -3000 to 2000*. Washington, DC: FAROS 2000. 245 pages, \$20.00, ISBN 0-9676230-1-4. <http://www.signature-book.com/Books/modelski-wc.htm>

George Modelski's main fame stems from his studies of the rise and fall of great powers in the modern world system (Modelski and Thompson 1988, 1996). His recent book *World Cities: -3000 to 2000* shifts the focus of attention to human social evolution over the past 5,000 years. It is a formulation and testing of a theoretical model of human social evolution that focuses on the growth of world cities, and it also presents results of a huge empirical effort to expand our knowledge of the population sizes of the largest settlements on Earth since the Bronze Age. Modelski utilizes the data on city growth to evaluate his new theory of social evolution. The growth of cities is a useful indicator of world system evolution because the ability of a society to produce and maintain a large settlement is a major accomplishment. We can trace the emergence of social complexity by knowing where the largest human settlements are at any point in time. Beginning with Uruk, the first "world city" five thousand years ago, Modelski traces the emergence and spread of large cities from Mesopotamia and Egypt to East Asia, South Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Modelski's evolutionary approach focuses on a single world system that begins with the first cities and states in Mesopotamia 5,000 years ago and spreads out to become global. In focusing on this single system he ignores the differences between regions and civilizations that are of interest to other world historians, but his focus on world cities across large expanses of time allows him to see patterns that other analysts miss.

Regarding the city population data, Modelski has extended and improved the work of that most-eminent coder of city sizes, Tertius Chandler (1987). For students of urban and world history this work is of immeasurable value. Modelski has labored hard to produce the best comprehensive compilation of estimates of city population sizes now available.

Modelski's careful improvement upon earlier efforts to estimate the population sizes of ancient cities is a huge step forward. He uses estimates of the built-up area of a city and a population density factor (see p. 11 and Note 5 on p. 17) to estimate the population sizes. He adds considerable depth, especially to the coverage of the Bronze Age. These data are presented in the new book under review, and early versions of the data from the ancient period and from East Asia are available from Modelski's [Evolutionary World Politics web site](#).



In the "ancient era" (-3000 to -1000) world cities are defined as those that reach a population size of 10,000 or more. In the following "classical era" (-1000 to 1000) cities must be at least 100,000 in population size to count as world cities. And in the modern era (since 1000) the cut-off point is one million.<sup>1</sup> Modelski observes a phenomenon, also noticed by Roland Fletcher (1995), that a few cities are the first to reach a whole new scale, and then a size ceiling is encountered during which cities in other regions catch up to the new scale. The current maximum seems to be around twenty million and the phenomenon of catching up is now occurring. Some of the world's largest cities are now in developing countries such as Mexico, Brazil and India.

Modelski's study of the phases of urbanism is convincing regarding the contention that urbanization has been neither random nor linear. Instead it has followed a recurring pattern of rapid growth followed by slow growth or decline. A phase of fast growth concentrated in one or a few regions is followed by slower growth and the diffusion of large cities to other areas. Rapid and concentrated growth is followed by leveling off and dispersal due to "countervailing forces." These countervailing forces emerge from what Modelski terms the "Center-Hinterland" divide of a regional world system. The first growth phase emerges in a center that eventually encounters limits to growth from resource exhaustion, environmental stress and "failures of knowledge." The leveling process occurs as these limits are reached, weakening the old center. Incursions from the hinterland increase, taking advantage of the center's weakness. This allows the semi-hinterland, a region adjacent to the old center with smaller cities, to catch up to the urban scale of the old center.

Modelski also compares his phases of urban growth with existing estimates of overall population size and growth. He finds that the overall population growth phases correspond in time with the urban expansions of the three eras. This study leads to what Modelski calls a "manifest case of evolution." The three phases of urbanization correspond to periods of world-system evolution: cultural, social and political. The ancient cultural phase saw the creation of a learning structure based on cities, writing and calendars, resulting in a platform for sustained and intensified human interaction on a large scale. The classical

<sup>1</sup> These cut-off points are used by Modelski to determine the list of world cities during each era, rather than the more conventional approach of studying the largest ten or twenty cities on Earth. The only problem with Modelski's approach is that at the beginning of each of his eras the number of cities above the threshold are few, so information is missing from his dataset on large cities that may be just under the threshold but still among the largest cities on Earth.

social phase brought about a more extensive, inclusive and integrated system. Expanding during Karl Jaspars's "Axial Age," the cities of the classical period can be grouped according to the world religions that dominated social structures during that era. The modern political phase poses choices regarding an evolutionarily stable structure of world organization. Modelski predicts that the future fourth phase will be an economic one that will see a "stabilization and consolidation of the economic and material basis" of world society.

While this learning model of human social evolution may seem a bit too functionalist or Whigish to some, it has original theoretical elements, such as the center-hinterland dynamic, that have been absent from most earlier evolutionary models. This, plus its monumental empirical contribution, makes Modelski's *World Cities: -3000 to 2000* an extremely valuable step forward toward our comprehension of the human experiment with complexity.

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George Modelski's "Evolutionary World Politics" web site is at:  
<http://faculty.washington.edu/modelski/worldcities.html>

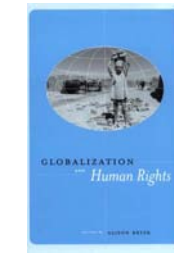
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Alison Brysk (ed). 2002. *Globalization and Human Rights*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. 311 Pages, ISBN 0-520-2328-0 paper.  
<http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/9595.html>



Alison Brysk and several of Ms. Brysk's colleagues from academia have demonstrated substantial original research in this book. The authors are specialists in political science, women's studies, international law, and related fields. The focal point of this work is on the struggle of human rights since the advent of globalization. This work emphasizes the contradictions of globalization and gives thoughtful insights for those who specialize in this area or who consider reading in this area.

The introductory and concluding essays contain fitting context and analysis of the "threats and realities" of the globalization era. The main substance of the book is divided into the first section with two articles, and three sections containing three articles each. There also is a considerable bibliography for those interested in additional reference material.

Kristen Hill Maher, in the article on citizenship in the first essay, essentially states that the demand for cheap labor in the U.S. and Europe is a form of "neocolonialism". The resultant consequences may generate negative implications for the rights of "illegal" workers, their families and society. In the second article, Amalia Lucia Cabezas addresses the topic of sex tourism in the Dominican Republic and discusses the controversy of the corporate domination of trade, economics, and the tourist industry down to the realities of the exploited male and female workers who often turn to sex to augment their low standard of living. Interestingly, Ms. Cabezas demonstrates how such resourcefulness has empowered these "sex workers" when encountering long-standing cultural prejudices. The controversy around the sex worker organizations and unionization does not go unnoticed, as Ms. Cabezas does well in addressing the movement toward organized labor rights for sex workers, in essence reshaping the definition of the sex worker in this article.

The next section of "Commodification" is a contribution about global markets. Richard Falk scrutinizes the shortcomings of "globalization from above" by applying a more populist view of democratic and capitalist notions, in reasoning that democratic forces through the process of "globalization from below" would best benefit people. Wesley T. Milner's quantitative study contends that a higher level of economic autonomy results in an increase in inequality and therefore has a harsh effect on "subsistence rights" for individuals in low-income nations. Raul C. Pangalangan believes that international labor standards are

needed to combat the terrible sweatshop conditions that are prominent in these nations. Applying Mr. Pangalangan's arguments would indicate that there exists a 'linkage' between actors and policy among labor and human rights advocates; however, he would argue that this relationship is altered given that these Third World nations are typically governed by corrupt rulers who rule for their own private gain. The section on "Communication" is begun with a stimulating article by Shane Weyker who discusses certain "tactics" that have aided the struggles of oppressed peoples in these troubled nations. The "tactics" include the use of the Internet and other forms of electronic communications, which is essential to understand the dynamics of modern technology and the struggles of oppressed peoples. The important contrast presented here is the flip side—that technology has been used by authorities for surveillance and disinformation of oppressed peoples and others. Clifford Bob, in his article, presents criteria which international actors utilize to determine international intervention in troubled nations. Clifford Bob also mentions tactics used by such groups which elicit world attention by direct lobbying such as press coverage and actions calculated to attract journalists. Lastly in this section, James N. Rosenau's research attempts to grasp an understanding of human rights in an era of globalization. The article is shaped by a discussion on authority crises, an important and necessary contribution to the study of globalization, whereby in the complex world of globalization public leaders and those in the private sector struggle to generate compliance by those over whom they hold authority. Rosenau proposes how certain conditions, including the forces of globalization and the performance of certain actors, contribute to the human rights struggle. The last section is on the topic of "Cooperation." Jonathan Fox focuses on the World Bank's Inspection Panel and its successes and failures but also that the dynamics of the Panel demonstrate the power of people to initiate institutional change. Wayne Sandholtz's work clearly demonstrates the politics surrounding humanitarian intervention. In part Wayne Sandholz challenges the 'idealist' notions which would dictate international intervention in crises in that international norms are being violated in the nations in crisis. As is pointed out, this may outline the necessary conditions for justified intervention but are not the only criteria. Wayne Sandholz hopes that international law might soon recognize humanitarianism, not the typical security concerns which are the main focus initiating most interventions, as a just cause. Jack Donnelly's "Human Rights, Globalizing Flows, and State Power" article is the most innovative in Brysk's work. Mr. Donnelly's approach is to reestablish the value of the nation-state in the globalization era power struggle. Donnelly's contribution here is a focus on the growing power of multinational corporations, which undermine state power and the social fabric of nations which is effectively impeding on the

rights of workers, impoverishing workers, and polarizing class relations. States may be run by corrupt rulers, and states may abuse their power, but Donnelly clearly argues that to maintain a balance of power only the state has the means to redistribute wealth. By doing so, this ensures human rights and the long-term viability of the society.

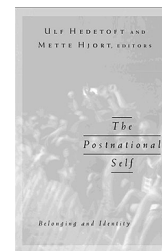
I commend Ms. Allison Brysk on a fitting and inspiring collection of articles with rather distinct viewpoints on human rights which are necessary given the disparity of opinions in this struggle. Ms. Brysk's focus on law, politics, sociology, history, and philosophy in this collection of articles allows this work to broaden its' appeal to not only higher-level academics but also to professionals and others. I congratulate Ms. Brysk in this work and highly recommend this book.

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Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort, Eds (2002). *The Postnational Self, Belonging and Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 360 pages, ISBN 0-8166-3937-X paper, ISBN 0-8166-3936-1 cloth.

[http://www.upress.umn.edu/Books/H/hedetoft\\_postnational.html](http://www.upress.umn.edu/Books/H/hedetoft_postnational.html)

*The Postnational Self, Belonging and Identity* is a provocative if uneven volume in the rapidly growing field of globalization and politics, with the objective to consider the tensions associated with the meaning of 'home' and political belonging as both pre-political (ethnic) identity and political (civic) identity overlap in transnational political and social arenas. In their introductory essay, the editors argue that in the preceding era, ethnic and the civic identities were negotiated through discourses of citizenship within the nation-state. In the post-national order—primarily relying on the cases of supranational Europe and the multicultural US and Canada—ethnicity and identity are fractured and belonging becomes part of the purview of political debate. Contributors to the volume, largely from Anthropology, Political Science and Sociology, make sense of belonging in terms of national and ethnic identity in a globally integrated and uneven, but markedly, cosmopolitan world, where the "globe is not our home" (xx).



The first part of the book covers the macro political economic context of national belonging in a globalizing order. The opening essay by Juergensmeyer is perhaps the most problematic piece in the volume. Following developmentalist arguments crafted by liberal scholars from Benjamin Barber to Samuel Huntington, Juergensmeyer contends that the rise of late-20<sup>th</sup> century “ethno-religious nationalisms” fill the vacuum left by globalization. The US has taken the “brunt of religious and ethnic terrorist attacks in recent years, in part because it so aptly symbolizes the transnational secularism that the religious and ethnic nationalists loathe.” The evidence for this claim is the US’ “long history” of “defending secular governments” and bringing secular modernized culture—MTV and Hollywood—to “remote villages” (9). Whether ethno-nationalists behave like the more “moderate” BJP in India or the Taliban is an open question, concludes the author. This chapter not only fails to take the geopolitical history of the US’ direct support of fundamentalist governments against secular nationalists into account, it simplifies the complex postcolonial legacies of ethno-religious difference within and between national borders.

Other contributions take up varied points of view. Taras argues in Chapter Two, for example, that ethno-nationalism of the 1990s has to be understood as a result of the “nationalizing paradigm” constructed by US foreign policy and supported by Western powers following the end of the Cold War, concluding that George W. Bush’s “War on Terror” has made US interests in geopolitics more naked and apparent; “As never before, the United States squarely aspires to be the hegemon of this order (32).” Hall and Jenkins both present the requisite skeptical perspectives about the fully realized impact of globalization. Hall argues that the US, while promoting globalization, remains globally unintegrated. Despite claims about multiculturalism and postnationality, Hall argues that the US continues in its traditional course towards assimilation based on rather shaky empirical evidence—the inter-marriage rates of “Hispanics” (specifically Cubans), the fact that in practice symbolic ethnicity in the form of dress (for example, wearing a sari) is more socially acceptable than practicing ethnic difference (for example, practicing caste privilege) and the fact that Afro-Americans have few ties today to Africa. In arguing against the transnationalist perspective, Hall claims that there was “more diversity in the 1920s with the vibrant European language press” compared to today, when ethnicity is celebrated despite the tendency for a “nationalizing homogeneity” (61–62).

The strength of *The Postnational Self* is found in Part II of the volume where the empirically rich conceptual discussions of citizenship in an uncertain globalizing world have the most to offer for similar questions and concerns outside of Europe and North America. In this section Benhabib offers an insightful analysis of the debate on transnational citizenship between radical open

borders and universal human rights discourse, on the one hand, and the claims of communitarian thinkers for whom citizenship is rooted to deep cultural belonging and closed societies. Benhabib examines the unsustainable tension between the growing trends towards the liberalization of immigration policy within the EU alongside the increasingly precarious position of “third country residents” for whom political membership is limited due to domestic opposition, resulting in varied legal standards between EU member nation states. Arguing against Michael Walzer’s influential position, Benhabib contends that it is a “fundamental human right to exit as well as to seek admission into a political community” (105). She sees this as a moral claim as opposed to a legal right, distinguishing admittance as opposed to membership. For Benhabib, the treatment of foreigners is a “crucial test for the moral conscience and political reflexivity of liberal democracies” that must negotiate between popular sovereignty and respecting universal human rights.

Other essays in this section follow in the same theme. Kastoryano shows how the emergence of transnational communities does not undermine the nation-state and follows Benhabib’s lead in highlighting the tensions between EU versus national immigration policies. Soysal uses the “claims-making” experiences of immigrant Muslim communities in Europe as examples of post-national citizenship. Tully argues that the politics of identity and difference should be understood as new forms of engagement rather than fragmentation, and that a culturally diverse society will not overcome fragmentation by imposing “difference-blind policies” and emphasizes that the issue of *which* identities matter should be decided through public deliberation and not theoretical reason alone.

In contrast, the third part of the book is an eclectic conclusion about memory, culture and identity. While the intent of the editors was to examine belonging and identity between globalization and nationalisms, the striking absence of discussions about these very same processes in the globalized regions of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America leave many questions unasked. Both Parts I and III suffer from this absence and seem, therefore, less relevant as debates about (post)nationalism and identity in the current context of the “War on Terror.” Nevertheless, the volume begins an interesting discussion about transnational politics that will likely stimulate further debate on these important topics.

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