

15 Films & Videos on Globalization!

Filmmakers around the world

look at **economics, development,
human rights, & cultural change**

*For a comprehensive and constantly
updated list of films on globalization,
please visit:*

<http://frif.com/subjects/global.html>

**FIRST
RUN 
ICARUS
FILMS**

First Run/Icarus Films
32 Court Street, 21st Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Website: www.frif.com
Toll-Free: 1-800-876-1710

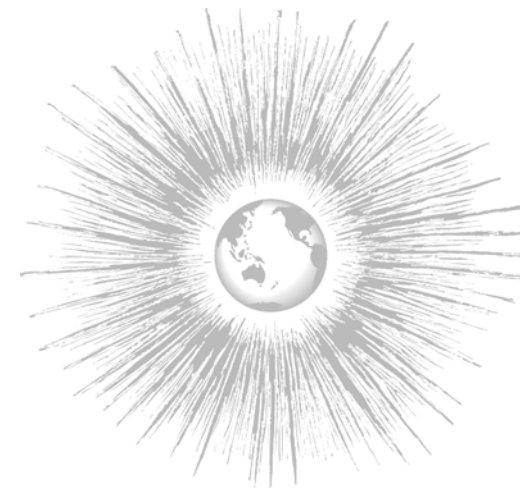
BOOK REVIEWS

John Tomlinson
Globalization and Culture
Reviewed By Albert J. Bergesen

David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt, and Jonathan Perraton
Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, and Culture
Reviewed By David M. Mednicoff

Robert A. Denemark, Jonathan Friedman, Barry K. Gills, and George Modelski
World System History: The Social Science of Long-Term Change
Reviewed By Richard E. Lee

Veena Das, Arthur Kleinman, Margaret Lock, Mamphela Ramphela, & Pamela Reynolds
Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery
Reviewed By James V. Fenelon



Tomlinson, John. 1999. *Globalization and Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 238 pages. ISBN 0-226-80767-3 Cloth, ISBN 0-226-80768-1 Paper.
<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>

This is a very good book on globalization and culture. The author does a great job reviewing the existing literature. But there is a tendency to reinvent the wheel: globalization, “complex connectivity,” is, in some very real sense, what we mean by “world-system,” and that is not a phenomena that began in the last quarter of the 20th century.

One of the main topics is “deterritorialization”—having one’s experiences “mediated” by the signs, symbols—culture—of the global system. Well what about the culture of Roman law, politics, and religion. How did the Gauls, Britons, and German tribes feel about Roman “global” culture? The Roman Empire may not have been global, but it was the world for those within it.



So how new is this globalization of culture? Sailing to the Americas must have been deterritorializing for the Europeans, or the Silk Road in its time no doubt compressed space/time. Expansion and intensification of long-distance connections may be larger and quicker now, but since we are already used to a certain shrinkage the added quickness might not be as dramatic, or deterritorializing, as earlier shrinkages were.

Some of this shock at “globalization” may be a consequence of distance from the change in question. So for French social critics McDonald’s and Disneyland seem to be shallow, non-real, a simulation of “real” experience. For me, growing up in California, these artifacts are just a place to get a bite to eat or to take the kids. Perhaps foreign artifacts seem more alien, which gives you a perspective on them, making it easier to theorize about their operations. So postmodern theories tend to originate more often in Europe. The closer they are, the more you just live them and do not see them as different, strange, let alone alien and shallow. I enjoy my Big Macs. We read postmodern theory and are told we are living alien lives. It doesn’t feel that way. Think what people from the provinces must have felt entering Rome or Beijing and seeing all those imperial buildings, guards, different clothes, and the rest. Email and the Silk Road are different. But “complex interconnectivity” goes back further in history than most of the theorists of globalization realize.

Globalized culture is often depicted as inauthentic. So, whose authentic experience was the Baroque? Are Baroque churches in Latin America “shallow” or “fundamentally artificial” as one critic of today’s globalization calls our culture (p. 100)? They would seem to fit the globalization problem: “globalization fun-

damentally transforms the relationship between the places we inhabit and our cultural practices” (p. 106). Well, that would seem to go for the Peruvians now doing Christianity in Baroque churches. And what about the Vikings who set up governmental institutions in Russia, or the Spanish conversion of the Indians in Mesoamerica, or Roman law administered to the peoples at the edges of the empire. These were transformations of the relationships between the places people inhabit and their culture. In fact, “having” to watch CNN in Togo or Cairo somehow does not seem that extreme..

If it is not really new then what can we conclude about “globalized culture”. Well, some of the analysis is out of date. For instance, there was a discussion of “Westernization,” which is fine, except in the world of popular culture, which assimilates much quicker than high culture, socializes the young, and therefore more clearly acts as a conduit for social values, things seem to be moving East to West as much, or more, than the other way around. Pokemon, video games, TV series, anime, action figures, and many other cultural products have invaded the West from Japan. This popular culture is replacing the old Superheros of the West. Is this a new global culture of postOrientalism?

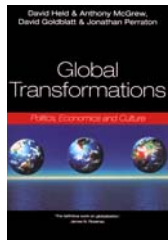
But saying we have been globalizing all along does not address the present moment, so let me conclude by suggesting something else. It may be that there is a Hilferding process in culture as well as in economics. That is, the rise of finance capital was a cyclical move in the world economy and cultural globalization may also be a spasm of cultural spread of a particularly symbolic nature that leads people to believe that we are in a unique period, when in fact, we are just going through a cyclical undulation. I think there is something to this notion of a cultural cycle, but I also believe that the long-term trend of world-systemic cultural life is ever further integration, even if the process may spike and decline now and again.

Albert J. Bergesen
 Department of Sociology
 University of Arizona
albert@email.arizona.edu
<http://fp.arizona.edu/soc/>
 © 2002 Albert J. Bergesen

Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. 1999. *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

515 Pages, ISBN 0-8047-3625-1 Cloth, ISBN 0-8047-3627-8 Paper.

<http://www.sup.org/>



This book at once commands attention as a strong candidate for the leading social scientific synthesis and analysis of contemporary globalization theory.

Chock full of graphs, clear definitions, historical context, useful data and methodological rigor, *Global Transformations* is a welcome addition to a literature which can be mired in imprecision and indeterminacy. World-systems scholars will take special note of the book's account of globalization's roots in global empires in Chapter 1 and its broader argument that contemporary globalization is both distinct from and continuous with prior periods of globalization. (p. 429)

Yet the work touches on nearly every major field of inquiry in which globalization exists as a current buzzword.

Held and his co-authors organize the vast array of issues grouped under the rubric of globalization into a series of discrete trends and arguments. The aim of the book is to balance conceptual clarity without simplifying the multifaceted nature of the subject. In pursuit of this aim, the authors describe globalization in four distinct dimensions, and then proceed to discuss in successive chapters how these describe global flows in the areas of politics, arms, trade, finance, corporations, people, cultures and the environment. This organizational approach pays off in allowing for a nuanced consideration of the diverse and potentially disparate subject areas often taught or lumped together under the heading of globalization without sacrificing a common theoretical apparatus.

Held and his collaborators delimit the four dimensions of globalization as (1) the *extensity* of global networks, (2) the *intensity* of global interconnectedness, (3) the *velocity* of global flows and (4) the *impact propensity* of global interconnectedness (p. 17). To phrase these in simpler terms, looking at the number, activity, speed and influence or weight of global networks seems useful to Held because it invites both quantitative and qualitative measures. In other words, Held has explicitly adopted a framework that he hopes can embrace a wide variety of social scientific research and data on globalization. This methodological choice means that this volume successfully integrates an extremely comprehensive set of works on globalization into its text.

The danger of such inclusiveness is in the potential for the book to lose or lack an individual voice or conclusion. To some extent, this concern is not unfounded.

The book recognizes that “no single coherent theory of globalization exists.” (p. 436) Since Held and company attempt to synthesize and connect a wide variety of previous work relevant to globalization, their book does not itself aspire to be a single coherent theory. Unlike more bold recent tomes like the Manuel Castells trilogy or Michael Hardt's and Antonio Negri's *Empire*, *Global Transformations* is not the book to pick up for sweeping assertions about the centrality of information networks, the end of nation-states or the emergence of new socioeconomic forms of imperial repression. Instead, the book's conclusions are moderate, often couched in qualifications and open to divergent future trajectories.

On the other hand, the book's marriage of theoretical comprehensiveness and caution pay off handsomely in three distinct ways. First, since the authors recognize explicitly how different opinions can be about globalization, they are able to depict these divergences systematically, in terms of three basic tendencies. They see globalization as either radically changing the world away from nation-centric (“hyperglobalizers”), representing nothing really new (“skeptics”) and engendering significant, if not revolutionary changes (“transformationalists”). If from previous paragraphs in the review, the reader can safely assume that Held and company place themselves squarely in the third camp. They maintain the distinction among these camps throughout their volume, not as a way of trivializing the other perspectives, but instead to underscore the importance of continued contentiousness about the meaning and consequences of globalization.

A second benefit of the authors' approach is the wealth of data in the book itself. This data is primarily of two kinds – typologies of the above three approaches to globalization or the four aforementioned dimensions of globalization with respect to particular subject and specific empirical evidence about a certain type of global flow. The graphs, charts, maps and tables aggregating this data are so useful as to be worthy of publication in their own right. But they connect to the third benefit of the book's approach, which is the effort to draw conclusions, however tempered, on important questions.

Thus, *Global Transformations* contains some clear assertions at its end. Is globalization fundamentally new? Perhaps not in nature, but definitely in degree, argues the book (pp. 429–431). Does contemporary globalization mean the impending death of the nation state? Not necessarily, but states' roles are changing, avers the book (pp. 443–444). Does globalization suggest the need for very different ideas of national and international politics in the years to come? Definitely, asserts the book (pp. 444–452), in its boldest conclusion. Each of these conclusions, and the long empirical and winding theoretical road to them, lacks the seductive language, intellectual brashness or historical simplicity of some of the more popular volumes on globalization. However, the inherent honesty and

depth of underlying analysis in Held's book are ultimately of great value to any with an abiding interest in the subject.

The book has several flaws. First of all, one may quibble a bit with the choices made by the authors on which subjects to stress. Held and company deserve credit for devoting entire chapters to migration and the environment, two subjects that often receive short shrift in other books. On the other hand, the authors' choice to enfold their treatment of international law into their more general first chapter on state politics serves to de-emphasize an important piece of their argument that globalization is moving the political world away from the unchallenged authority of nation-states. Discussing more specific examples than the human rights regime (pp. 65–70) of the increasing globalization of law and legal institutions might allow Held to amplify his conclusion about the possible shift towards the cosmopolitan global political order (pp. 448–451) that is embraced in his other books.

Two more serious concerns are the book's orientation towards advanced industrial societies and its slow-going, jargon filled text. These problems may be inter-related to the extent that contemporary Anglo-American social science more generally tends to privilege data of the sort often reliably available in advanced industrial societies and a dispassionate, scientific tone. One misses both the perspectives and passion of postcolonial and subaltern works on globalization, grounded as these works generally are in humanities disciplines. *Global Transformations* admits that it is looking primarily at globalization's effects in what it calls "SIACs" ("states in advanced capitalist societies"); yet this emphasis leaves out some, albeit by no means all, of the arguments about injustice and disproportionate power in much of the critical scholarship on globalization. Indeed, this is evident in the book's omission of globalization critics in its typology of hyperglobalizers, skeptics and transformationalists. This is an important omission, given the possibility that some of the hostility behind the September 2001 terrorist attacks may connect to a broader anger against the socioeconomic and political inequities of globalization.

With its ambition to be inclusive of major social scientific scholarship published in English on globalization, it is perhaps inevitable that *Global Transformations* is full of jargon, such as the terms in the above paragraph. The authors are keenly aware of this, and write in a style that is quite readable, as long as one has some social scientific background and reference to the table of acronyms at the beginning of the book (pp. xxi–xxiii). As clear, cogent and compelling as its analysis is, the plentiful jargon means that *Global Transformations* is not an easy book. It will be read more by professors and social science graduate students than the public at large [I should mention, however, that both a supplemental

reader and a simplified introductory volume, edited by Held, are likely to work in tandem with the volume under review to reduce this problem, at least for the undergraduate university population].

With these limitations, and in contrast with many other major works on globalization, especially those that may be more familiar to non-academics, Held's volume is the book equivalent of a well-designed Japanese car. Comparatively unstylish and far from trendy, it will reward its consumers with reliability and a depth not necessarily apparent from the outside. Indeed, the care of its construction means that it is likely to outlast significantly its more glittery competitors.

David M. Mednicoff
 Department of Legal Studies
 University of Massachusetts
mednic@legal.umass.edu
<http://www.umass.edu/legal/Mednicoff/Mednicoff.htm>
 © 2002 David M. Mednicoff

Robert A. Denemark, Jonathan Friedman, Barry K. Gills and George Modelski.
World System History: The Social Science of Long-Term Change. London and New York: Routledge, 2000. xxii + 345, ISBN 0-415-23276-7 (cloth), ISBN 0-415-23277-5 (paper). <http://www.routledge-ny.com/books.cfm?isbn=0415232767>

The papers comprising this collection were presented at a special conference in 1995 at the University of Lund in Sweden. The world(-)systems community is indeed indebted to the organizers of the conference, the authors, and the editors of the volume for the subsequent refinement of the individual chapters in light of the discussions that took place at the meeting, the remarkable degree of cross-referencing displayed, and especially, the commitment to clearly delineate the formulations presented, including the relationships among them. The volume is structured around four general perspectives on "world system history." As the editors note (xxii), Part I presents each of these theoretical approaches in a separate chapter. Part II illustrates instances of key processes in a set of transdisciplinary regional and temporal studies; Part III considers a set of global macro processes; and Part IV is concerned with comparison, cumulation, and future development of the field.

The first approach, spelled out by Andre Gunder Frank and Barry K. Gills, posits a "world system continuity thesis," which amounts to the idea of a "continuous history and development of a single world system in Afro-Eurasia for at



least 5,000 years” with the dominance of the West “only a recent, and perhaps a passing event” (3). Their advocacy of a humanocentric, rather than Eurocentric, history expresses the normative aspiration to “rechannel the impulses of rebellion so prevalent in the present world crisis situation in a more positive direction” and “learn to accept our differences while recognizing our common history and working toward our common future” (23).

The second approach, delineated by George Modelski, conceives world system change as the “product of an evolutionary process, or better still, of an array of evolutionary processes” (24) at “three major levels of analysis: institutional, organizational, and agency” (53), in contrast with “both rational choice, and functionalism” (31). The evolution that Modelski is talking about is the “story of humans learning to be human” and his world system is “a form of species organization” (24–25).

The third approach, outlined by David Wilkinson, recognizes civilizations as world systems and, generally, world systems as civilizations. His civilizations are “not identical to a culture, a language, a religion, a race, a class, a state or a nation” but are macrosocieties “whose boundaries ordinarily include many national, state, economic, linguistic, cultural and religious groups”; at present only one civilization “exists on Earth, of global scope, without a periphery into which to expand further” (61).

The fourth approach, described by Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall, takes “world-systems, properly conceptualized and bounded, [as] the fundamental unit of analysis of social change” (85). This makes possible comparisons, which can lead to the “study of both differences and transformations as well as similarities and continuities” (108). Their “eventual goal” is to “address the real problems and possibilities of the contemporary system” (110).

The detailed studies, many marshaling exhaustive empirical evidence, would be of value in themselves even if they did not contribute to an understanding of the parameters of the field.

In Part II, Andrew Sherratt makes a call for a “new kind of discipline” that would “see the world as being made up, not of cellular units of culture, but of growing arenas for competing regimes of value” (116) and suggests that “[l]ong-lasting structures which expand through time (the calyx image) seem to be a better representation of important phenomena as they can be reconstructed over long periods than does the more passive image of successive layers” (119). While emphasizing “strong systemic continuity in world systemic history,” Jonathan Friedman also recognizes that “there are important structural transformations as well, even if the latter do not change the basic parameters of the system” (133). He goes on to discuss similarities in economic organization (e.g., Greek capitalism) and continuities in modes of cultural identification— “not worlds apart

from the modern world system” (152). In the first part of a longer study, Kajsa Ekholm-Friedman begins by stating that a contemporary problem of “today’s global system is the lack of political control over the globalized economy” while realizing that “this lack of political control is exactly what has made the international economy so dynamic for thousands of years” (153). Positing 5,500 years of continuous evolution of the global system with recurrent regional shifts and local collapses, this chapter follows the evolution of the state in southern Mesopotamia.

David Warburton applies Keynesian principles to ancient Egypt—classifying its economy as “a kind of nascent capitalism, for we have wage labor, a market for land, production for the market, and state involvement” (173)—to illustrate how Egyptian fiscal policy, rather than simply a system of slavery in the service of the state, created significant “wealth, employment and economic growth” (169) from surplus production and investment. In an important critique and reformulation of Frank and Gills, Stephen K. Sanderson, while remaining convinced of “their contention that the commercialization of economic life was much more significant in the early historic societies and civilizations than has generally been thought, and, moreover, that there has been a long-term process of expansion,” nonetheless disagrees first, with the argument that “it makes little sense to talk of distinct modes of production ... and of historical transitions” between them, especially that from feudalism and capitalism (185) and second, that “the claim that there was nothing distinctive about Europe, is false” (189). Like them, he “embraces a strongly materialist view of historical change”; however, “the whole process cries out for much more extended study, and undoubtedly such study will reveal that “human history is a world-historical evolutionary process operating simultaneously on the economic, demographic, political, technological, and ideological planes,” even if the economic has been dominant (197).

William H. McNeill, opening Part III, argues, from the archeological and historical record, that “paying attention to information networks offers a more promising way to understand human history” than contending that “matter exchanges...were what created and sustained world systems” (201). Sing C. Chew draws attention to how “one factor that is overlooked in the study of world system history is the dynamic-exploitative relationship between the process of accumulation and Nature” (216) in an overview stretching from the ancient world to the present. Arguing empirically from pre-Columbian Andean history as well as the contemporary world, the central focus of Alf Hornborg is “capital accumulation.” Claudio Cioffi-Revilla “examines the puzzle of scales in long range analysis” (271), e.g., scales of belligerence (war versus warfare) and scales of process (macro versus micro). The “structure, connectivity and degree of differentiation of the world-city system is shown to have increased by Andrew Bos-

worth. He hopes that the study will attest to the “merits of evolutionary theory for formulating and testing hypotheses of long-term, large-scale social change” and, finally, that “there are advantages in retiring nations as primary units of analysis in favor of species-wide structures like the world-city system” (283).

Each of the four approaches presented, and the substantive research associated with them, has previously given rise to serious questions and reservations, to which authors have provided appropriate rejoinders. Although each chapter of this book would deserve a deepening of an already extensive critical engagement, this is not the place to rehearse those debates. The significance of this book, rather, lies in the effort to present a field, a field repeatedly alluded to in the singular. On the one hand, as William R. Thompson affirms, these four approaches, and the empirical studies they ground, share a “commitment to the idea that contemporary structures and processes are embedded in a long-term, historically contingent context” and agree that “1500 is not *a* or *the* basic watershed” (287, 288). On the other hand, however, Thompson goes on to carefully describe the seemingly irresolvable differences; indeed, “the deeper one probes, the more superficial the similarities begin to appear” (296). Nonetheless, Robert A. Denmark argues that convergence and cumulation are taking place, particularly “in terms of the asking of like questions” (302).

One is still left with the nagging impression that the constitution of the “field” may have some other, unspecified pedigree. Perhaps, one might argue, in the spirit of fraternal debate, that it could be conceived as constructed in opposition to an absent “other,” “historical social science,” for which neither economic structures such as trade networks, political structures such as empires, nor socio-cultural structures such as civilizations, however seemingly extensive and long-lasting, suffice singly to characterize the unique nature of the contemporary world. This might legitimately be assumed from Thompson’s assertion that 1500 does not represent a fundamental caesura for these authors, as it does for those that view the contemporary world in terms of a historical social system whose spatial and temporal dimensions have been defined by the extent of analytically differentiable, but existentially inseparable, relational processes—of production and distribution, decision making and coercion, and cognition and intentionality—all of which are conceived as co-constitutive of the system and therefore none of which is dominant, and thus none of which are reflective, superstructural, or epiphenomenal. Although the issues are real, especially as regards research agendas and social action, unfortunately they cannot be pursued here. What does seem certain is that this excellent compendium will find a place on the syllabi of those of us who “teach the debates.”

Richard E. Lee

Department of Sociology and the Fernand Braudel Center
State University of New York at Binghamton

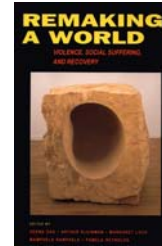
rlee@binghamton.edu

<http://sociology.binghamton.edu/faculty/lee.html>

© 2002 Richard E. Lee

Das, Veena, Arthur Kleinman, Margaret Lock, Mamphela Ramphela, and Pamela Reynolds, Editors. 2001. *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 294 pages, ISBN 0-520-22330-6, Paper. <http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/8897.html>

There are a growing number of social scientists linking “psychological” trauma issues, including historical and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) issues, with larger social group conflicts, often of great injustice. In this “post September 11th” world that we now live in, questions such as these are especially relevant, whether working on the global or local level. And in respect to the disproportionate amount of social suffering carried by women during and after the violence, and their central placement in recovery and family formation, we need look no further than our indigenous populations in North America, or as far away as the Taliban treatment of women, with Afghanistan proving to be a window into the worst of fundamentalist gender subordination. “Remaking a World” illustrates these and other issues with an ironic and timely poignancy.



This work fills a void in the world-systems literature—the relationship of violent domination (and) in the nation state global systems and subsumed populations within those states, usually “minority” groups. An important “voice” for indigenous peoples is also established within this paradigm that ranges from predictable results of warfare, including nuclear, to the often-subtle effects of long term systemic dominance that used violent oppression to maintain social order.

This work also illustrates the dark underbelly of (these) incorporation processes, including those of “internal” or “post” colonialism, as the violent and socially disruptive acts they commonly are to the societies and the peoples experiencing domination. Moreover, they typify both forms of “cultural resistance” and “social survival” through discussing the often remarkable efforts these people make in “reconstituting” their worlds, however distorted or destroyed they have become.

Although *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery*, does not specifically illustrate a broader world-systems analysis in terms of how struggles

tend to transform many macro interactions, and at times even informs us about micro resistance to global stratification, case studies such as are presented and analyzed in the book demonstrate the processes very well.

When discussing the “distressing consequences of murder, rape, torture, molestation, and other forms of brutality” as an ongoing “marginalization” of oppressed peoples in their case studies, the authors discuss how “collective memories” are constructed both to retell history and toward resisting and perhaps adjudicating their current struggles. For instance, in the Cree in Canada, (Adelson), or the Kui in Thailand (Chuengsatiansup) chapter case studies, being “excluded from participation in the collective life of the polis” connects to “their history has been incorporated into that of other states” so that they are seen as “wild” leading to an expression of nationhood, subaltern or otherwise, so as “to contest the hegemony of the state” historically and currently.

The Kui make a strong example of how “political marginality” is induced by state structures, (pgs. 34, 36-39) “in a systematic way to deprive its citizens of their memory.” Similar to Indians from the Americas, they are pan-ethnically re-categorized under the name of “Suai” or “tribute people” further fragmenting their “official” identities in Siam historiography. “Modern Siamese national history was thus fabricated to demonstrate emphatically the submissive links by which the peripheral realms were subjugated to the center” (pg. 42). This fascinating discussion of how state structures marginalize indigenous peoples is then posed as “counter hegemonic practice” (pgs. 54–58) that must be excluded or suppressed, as a voice would “potentially subvert the moral and political legitimacy of the dominating centers.” This is an important analysis for indigenous metaphors for globalized resistance, as framed in a Gramscian “cultural-ideological hegemony” with a distinction between globalized corporatism as a state-building process against movements for true “nation” building or civic society.

The Cree make the case for the “yoke of colonialism” in Australia and Canada as a “cumulative effect of two hundred years of racism, hatred and white arrogance” that produced internally colonized nations with traumatic histories and institutionalized racism. Original occupancy of land and “ethnocultural distinctiveness” are ironically seen as the “two most important issues at stake for the sovereigntists and the Cree nation alike” in Quebec. The definition of aboriginality itself becomes locked into an authenticity of history as the “people continue to reimagine and renegotiate their cultural and political worlds” in a changing global struggle.

Remarkably similar sets of issues further inform the analysis of long-term, protracted suffering, such as with “atom bomb” women survivors and effects on reproduction in Japan (Todeschini), compared with “spirit possessions” as “mechanisms of coping and remembering” in Sri Lanka, (Perera), and the impor-

tance of boundaries and naming within communities of Bombay, (Mehta and Chatterji). Each of these cases also examines the “complicity of men” in the state militaries, warfare and ongoing cultural dominance, at least in terms of their ineffectuality with a resistance goal of a healthy community.

Reproduction, including that arising from systemic rape, as with enslaved African-American women and genocidally removed Native American women, and lately women from Kosovo, remains the perfectly poignant example of long-term violence, social suffering and recovery, precisely because it often involves biracial or multicultural offspring, or the lack of birthing. Dominant groups tend to exercise their hegemony in this sphere by not recognizing citizenship toward these children, or perpetuating their subordinate, marked position as a minority group. Fear, in these situations, can lead to avoidance of giving birth by potential mothers as well as internalized oppression, evidenced in how in-group members persecute themselves.

Whether avoiding the stigma of giving birth to the products of war (essentialist “gender war”), attempting to resurrect the memory of the dead or one’s way of life lost under total domination, and/or engaging in struggle over demographic boundaries or naming processes of communities, world-systems analysis needs to deal with the hegemonic issues of social group reproduction. Analysts doing historical-comparative work tend to refer to these as revitalization movements, specifically for indigenous peoples in the Americas, with no better example than the relatively infamous Ghost Dance of the 1890’s United States. That this was the first large-scale pan-ethnic indigenous movement to cross gender lines, for the purposes of reconstructing both individual and communal identity as “healing” activity, signifies the relevance of these three case studies. Childbearing and socialization under such conditions of oppression are perfect metaphors for recovery from the violence spawned by hegemonic domination.

The women’s testimony from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Ross), last of the case studies in *Remaking a World*, illustrates all of the above analytical premises, adding two more important issues—how gendered interweaving of stories can be forgiveness, creating new contexts for the perpetrators, witnesses and survivors. That the sets of interactions arising from this remarkable discourse also arose from the quite literal turning around of a world where the dominant group was a demographic minority and the oppressed were in the majority, albeit without the power to direct or even to name their own communities, bespeaks volumes in favor of giving voice to those who survive social suffering on such a massively historical scale.

The “black” women of South Africa, products of over a hundred years of violent colonization, and deeply institutionalized racism, represent the “pernicious effects of apartheid on domestic life, families, intergenerational relations, and

gender roles.” They also see the future of healing—communities where the “physical abuse of women in detention” and their previously silenced testimony on the state-induced “absence of men from family life”—can be slowly and painfully redressed. In these narratives on “the depths of apartheid” we observe “destruction of kinship...the power of economies in shaping experience, the intrusion of the state. Their stories bear testimony to attempts to create and maintain families against all odds” (pg. 270) in remaking a world that was produced in the violent destruction of conquest, exploitation and ongoing racial subordination, itself a product of global expansion of post colonialist capitalist economies.

These selections, and the editorial comment, demonstrate an under-told result of war and systemic violence—the destructive effects on families, usually disproportionately on women. In these days of “collateral damage” and “unintended” target damage such effects must be analyzed in depth and brought out into the open, similar to the testimony and case study conclusions discussed in this text. Whether in Canada, Thailand, Japan, Sri Lanka, India, South Africa, or Afghanistan, these voices must be heard.

Finally, the combined analytical weight of these case studies should now be applied in rigorous analyses of cases such as the trial of Milosevic for genocide in Bosnia and Kosovo, and United Nations official acceptance of the noted systematic rape of women as “crimes against humanity” and the families that make-up the oppressed groups in those social systems. In a re-made world, with a focus on healthy communities and healing processes for those who survive the violence, testimony from a global conference on racism, or on reparations for groups trying to revitalize, re-build and re-enter their world as partners in its future, books such as this one can remind us of the importance of family, of women, of testimony, and the “voices of the oppressed” in any true recovery.

James V. Fenelon
Department of Sociology
California State University, San Bernardino
jfenelon@csusb.edu
<http://csbs.csusb.edu/sociology/>
© 2002 James V. Fenelon