

# INTERNATIONAL THIRD WORLD STUDIES

# JOURNAL & REVIEW

VOLUME 14

2003

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# THIRD WORLD STUDIES JOURNAL AND REVIEW

Volume 14 • 2003

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## FOREWORD

In this issue, we are pleased to have three articles and seven book reviews covering a wide range of theoretical issues, analytic methodologies, and geographic regions. From an over-flight of issues related to globalization and culture to a statistical analysis of land and education reform in South Africa to a study of the media representation of a militant indigenous movement in southern Mexico, the articles demonstrate the complex variety of problems included in Third World Studies in general and the *ITWSJ&R*'s publication program in particular.

Building on many years of experience in Third World countries, Alvin G. Edgell takes a look at the relationship between globalization and culture. In a broad survey of recent works on the subject, he presents studies that depict various understandings of culture and the variety of ways in which culture is implicated in globalization. Within the frame of his own definitions, Edgell characterizes the "state of play" on the subject by looking closely at the contributions to Huntington and Harrison's *Cultural Encounters*, as well as Berger and Dore's *National Unity and Global Capitalism* and Dani Rodrik's *The New Global Economy*. Edgell's overview of his subject nicely complements the more narrowly focused contributions of Irogbe and McCowan.

Kema Irogbe explores the issues of land and education as they intersect with the racial disparities in post-apartheid South Africa. In education, he identifies efforts to reverse decades of racial exclusion from key universities, noting the uneven results of reform evident in various tables of social statistics. On the issue of inequities in land distribution, Irogbe highlights three programs of land reform: land restitution, land redistribution, and land tenure reform. He finds modest signs of progress toward a more equitable system, yet much remains to be done to fulfill the promises of the Mandela and later Mbeki administrations. In particular, Irogbe critiques attempts to correct past injustices on a market basis (e.g., "willing buyer, willing seller" in real estate) arguing that the distortions in access to both land and education are unlikely to be redressed adequately without a proactive policy.

Turning to Clint McCowan's study of the early 1990s Zapatista self-representation through Subcomandante Marcos and its appropriation by the international media and Mexican economy is an excellent example of the struggle for signs and symbols, in this case between a more powerful national political and military structure and a regional (Chiapas) indigenous movement. McCowan's analysis lies at the level of representation. Through Marcos, the latter were represented as a people fighting for their land; over the years, his rhetoric has employed varying degrees of socialist rhetoric. Critical questions remain about extent to which the voice of the indigenous peoples of the Zapatista movement has been overlooked under the dominant and media savvy presentation of Marcos.

The Book Review section of this issue includes seven reviews. Rory J. Conces reviews Fatos Tarifa's *Culture, Ideology and Society* (Smiet, 2001); Paul Allen Williams reviews Asma Barlas' *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (University of Texas Press, 2002); Ali Kamali reviews Robert Holton's *Globalization and the Nation-State* (St. Martin's Press, 1998); David T. Jervis reviews Princeton Lyman's *Partner to History, The U. S. Role in South Africa's Transition to Democracy* (U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2002) and also Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian's *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies* (Duke University Press, 2002); Tanweer Akram reviews Abbas Alnasrawi's *Iraq's Burden: Oil, Sanctions, and Underdevelopment* (Greenwood Press, 2002); and Owen G. Mordaunt reviews Dinesh D'Souza's *What's So Great About America* (Penguin Books, 2002).

The editorial staff of the Journal invites you to continue manuscript submissions for consideration in future issues. As always, *ITWSJ&R* is a refereed publication and is open to articles and book reviews addressing any aspect of Third World studies. Articles examining the concept of the Third World are equally solicited. In addition, future issues will include reviews of films, translations, book notes, discussion notes, and interviews. Submissions should be mailed to the address printed in the Information for Contributors section of this issue.

In an attempt to make the journal more readily accessible, the editors are examining the prospect of providing an online version of the paper journal. Whether the journal moves to an online-only format will be determined by the success of this experiment.

The contents of Volume XIII (2002), Volume XIV (2003), and the Information for Contributors can be found on the journal's website. The journal's homepage is maintained by the Department of Philosophy and Religion at <http://www.unomaha.edu/ITWSJ-R>. For information on the annual Third World Studies Conference at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, see the Twenty-Seventh National Meeting notice in this issue and/or go to the Third World Studies Conference note on the website.

— *Paul Allen Williams*

## INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

*International Third World Studies Journal and Review* (ISSN 1041-3944) is an annual interdisciplinary journal of scholarship in the field of Third World Studies. The Editors welcome submissions that contribute to the understanding of the Third World. *International Third World Studies Journal and Review* publishes research conducted in several disciplines including economics, history, literature, philosophy, religion, political science, anthropology, environmental studies, and public health.

Articles and book reviews intended for publication should be sent to Dr. Rory J. Conces, Editor, *International Third World Studies Journal and Review*, Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182-0265. Books for review should be sent to Dr. Owen G. Mordaunt, Book Review Editor, *International Third World Studies Journal and Review*, Department of English, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182-0175. Manuscripts should conform closely to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th ed., and be typewritten in English on one side of white paper (8-1/2" x 11") using 1" margins on all sides. Contributors should submit the original and four copies. Computer-generated manuscripts *must* be of letter quality (*not* dot-matrix). All text, including notes and block quotations, should be double-spaced. The manuscript should be reasonably subdivided into sections, and if necessary, sub-sections. First-level subheadings should be in full capitals, boldface type, and typed flush left; second-level subheadings should be in initial capitals, boldface type, and flush left; and third-level should be in initial capitals, boldface type, and set at the beginning of the paragraph and followed by a period. Subheadings, except the third-level, are each set on a line separate from the text. Notes, kept to a minimum, should be marked in the text at a point of punctuation, and listed consecutively at the end of the article in a section entitled "Endnotes." **Do not use the automatic footnote feature of your word processor.** Bibliographical references will not be published unless they are given as endnotes. Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all quotations and for supplying complete references. Manuscripts should be accompanied by biographies of no more than 200 words describing each author's current and recent academic and professional affiliations, research interests, and recent publications, as well as an abstract of the article (not exceeding 200 words). All manuscripts accepted are subject to editorial modification.

The Editors prefer articles of 15-25 double-spaced, typewritten pages (approximately 250 words per page). Longer articles will be evaluated in terms of whether their scholarship and importance warrant the additional space required for publication. Book reviews as well as film reviews will be considered, especially if they are under 10 double-spaced, typewritten pages (approximately 2000 words).

The Editors regard submission of a manuscript to *International Third World Studies Journal and Review* as an implied commitment to publish in the journal. Authors submitting manuscripts should not simultaneously submit them to another publication, nor should manuscripts have been published elsewhere in substantially similar form or with substantially similar content.

To help defray the costs of publishing the journal, a nonrefundable submission fee of \$45.00 is required for each unsolicited manuscript. Checks should accompany the manuscripts and be payable to the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

For information regarding advertising, please contact the Editor.

The *Journal* is a peer-reviewed publication. All manuscripts considered appropriate for the journal are reviewed externally by at least two referees. In order for the referees to review manuscripts without knowledge of the author's name or institutional affiliation, the Editors request that information be provided in the cover letter, and not on the manuscript itself. The Editors attempt to inform authors of their decision within eight months of receiving a paper. Authors of accepted submissions will be asked to provide a final version on a 3.5" disk (IBM formatted-WordPerfect 5.1-8.0 is preferred) together with the hard copy typescript. Page proofs are sent directly to the author. Typescripts of rejected articles and book reviews will not be returned. Contributors of articles (in case of joint authorship, the primary author) will receive a copy of the *Journal*; book and film reviewers will receive an offprint of their review. **The deadline for manuscript submissions for Volume XV (2004) is April 1, 2004.**

For further information concerning the journal, please contact Dr. Rory J. Conces, Editor, *International Third World Studies Journal and Review*, Department of Philosophy and Religion, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE 68182-0265. (402) 554-2947. FAX: (402) 554-3296. [rconces@mail.unomaha.edu](mailto:rconces@mail.unomaha.edu)

# **TWENTY- SEVENTH NATIONAL MEETING**

The University of Nebraska at Omaha is pleased to announce the 27th National Third World Studies Conference, an interdisciplinary format devoted to the widest possible combination of scholars, practitioners, and participants. It will take place October 2004.

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# Globalization and Cultural Encounters

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## Introduction

This paper intends to frame in broad-brush fashion the huge canvas where globalization encounters present day Third World cultures, an engagement that will be of critical importance to Third World aspirations and prospects. It will, of course, be hard to give a *measured* place to culture in any model, given its uniqueness to every society, its penetration of all levels of experience and because of its unconscious, emotional and long lasting prevalence in each society. So the first part of this paper is explicitly about the *development* role of culture. My thesis is that culture is embedded in all of the economic, political and social institutions of the Third World nations being prescribed for. This is not to say that culture is a straight-line determinant of where countries stand in the regularly published development league standings. Too many other interacting variables are present in each nation's unique constellation of influences.

For present purposes I will *not* be dealing with Third World cultures as they were before substantial contact with cultures of the western explorers, traders, imperialists and entrepreneurs of salvation. The cultures that I have in mind are those we find today. But I believe that every culture has some lingering addictions to more or less ancient traditions, most commonly those associated with religions, in the blend.

The material on culture's role that I draw on in the following, is largely taken from the multiple articles in editors Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington's *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*, a collection of numerous conference papers.<sup>1</sup> While tilted toward the editors' point of view, there is a wide range of positions, including some complete opposition. In some papers the word *culture* seems to have been slighted, although one can readily infer that it lurks behind many commonly cited "determinants" such as social institutions, human and social capital, quality of the work force, even forms of governance. The very complexity of culture's interactions with other variables should challenge scholars to further work at sorting out these interactions, since culture is too commonly only off-handedly acknowledged as present and is of some relevance for socio-economic development.

## Culture

I define culture for my purposes as values, attitudes, beliefs, mindsets, central tendencies, worldviews and orientations that are prevalent in a given society. It is emotionally held and long lasting rather than instrumental short-term behavior and "pop culture." Orlando Patterson con-

tends that culture is what one must know to be effective in one's own environment, and it is transmitted over the generations and is influenced by peers and evolved by trial and error.<sup>2</sup> Michael Fairbanks and Stace Lindsey seem to substitute "mental models" for what I take as culture, and they claim, "Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action."<sup>3</sup> With equal sweep, Mariano Grandona says that by choosing a "value system," one chooses to develop or not.<sup>4</sup> However, one must ask, in what sense does a *society choose* a value system?

## Culture is Always There

Culture is always there, however mediated by other, more proximate determinants. The following citations give a sense of culture's elusive role, but one not to be ignored, however variously perceived. Lawrence E. Harrison says: "There is an intense interplay of cause and effect between culture and progress, but the power of culture is demonstrable."<sup>5</sup> Nathan Glazer notes the confusing overlap and embeddedness of culture in other variables.<sup>6</sup> David Landes says, "Determinants of complex processes are invariably plural and interrelated."<sup>7</sup> Among the modifiers and dissenters, Jeffrey Sachs argues that the macro-statistics and assumptions are unconvincing about culture having an explanatory role.<sup>8</sup> Earlier, he identifies geography, "social systems" and "positive feedback" as helpful explanations "to account for the growth puzzle."<sup>9</sup> Sachs gives heavy weight to geography: its tropical diseases, degraded soils, discouraging landforms and locations, echoing Paul Harrison.<sup>10</sup>

Sachs's concept of *social systems* is more expansive, including political, cultural and economic factors. He looks at various large regions and concludes that in all of them, culture's—including religion's *slight*—role is subsidiary to political and economic determinants, and that economic success comes from increasing use of scale, positive feedback—which seems to mean momentum and chain reaction—and critical mass of technology and ideas.<sup>11</sup> Thus, he seems largely concerned with relatively *proximate* influences, without looking behind these variables to check *their* etiology. Sachs does admit the impossibility of "dise ntangling" culture's role and the ambiguity of its influence as he scans the major regions.<sup>12</sup> But, per Sachs, "[c]ontrolling for such variables [presumably politics, economics and culture] sharply reduces the scope for an important independent role of culture." It seems clear that Sachs is using an idiosyncratic definition of culture, which he never specifies. If cul-

ture is embedded—not to be disentangled—in political and economic institutions, as I and others maintain, it is hard to give credibility to his *separating* and “controlling of such variables.”<sup>13</sup> Sachs seems to leave “social change” interpretable as fundamental for arriving at the right policies for growth. Yet he concedes that we haven’t found a “general theory of social evolution.”<sup>14</sup>

The “designated skeptic” Richard Shweder in Harrison and Huntington (H&H), resents *any* effort to measure cultures against one another on any grounds.<sup>15</sup> If one must account for modernizing successes, he would point to the following: some having guns, some having Jews, for some immigration policy, in some freeing of serfs, in some availability of fossil fuel, the weather, willingness to trade with outsiders, good colonial masters, high consumer demand and luck.<sup>16</sup> He completely opposes “cultural developmentalism,” which he sees as the message of most of his fellow contributors, “the new evangelists.”<sup>17</sup> Shweder sees “other cultures as sources of illumination,” not as evidence of “our moral superiority over the rest.”<sup>18</sup> Let me quote his definition of *culture*, which I find difficult to summarize.

By culture, I mean community-specific ideas about what is true, good, beautiful and efficient. To be ‘cultural,’ those ideas about truth, goodness, beauty and efficiency must be socially inherited and customary; and they must actually be constitutive of different ways of life.<sup>19</sup>

He allows an alternative definition by Isaiah Berlin: “goals, values, and pictures of the world that are made manifest by speech, laws and routine practices of self-monitoring groups.”<sup>20</sup> This latter definition is very close to my own above.

While Schweder does accept some universal values, e.g., “justice, beneficence, autonomy, sacrifice, liberty, loyalty, sanctity, duty,”—and just “too many” more—they have many specific forms and cannot be reduced to common denominators.<sup>21</sup> For Shweder, progress, or decline, is determined by *more*, or *less*, of what is good and desired, as defined by the culture itself, and that is arbitrary.<sup>22</sup> He seems to leave some room for *his* judgment, when he refers to “genuine” cultures, implying that there may be cultures that are *not genuine*, by his definition.<sup>23</sup>

Shweder’s agnosticism outrages Carlos Alberto Montaner over his blindness to suffering and oppression in some cultures. Montaner, quite willing to be judgmental, says that it is all very well to blame national leadership and elites, but that these reflect the norms of society, with few exceptions.<sup>24</sup> Note that this contradicts Sachs’s *separating* of culture from politics. Thomas Weisner, too, is ready to set criteria for judgment: “Cultures should be judged on their ability to provide well being, basic support and sustainable daily lives for children and families.”<sup>25</sup> Shweder might accept this as conforming to his idea of “genuine” culture.

## Culture as Shaper and Filter

While deep culture may be obscured in visible polities, its influence is clear to many observers. Daniel Etounga-Manguelle of Cameroon tells us that since culture guides institutions, cultural inhibitors of desired change must be addressed. Among the most inhibiting and generalizable African characteristics that he finds are fixed hierarchies of wealth and power.<sup>26</sup> Lindsey offers: “Cultural values matter because they form the principles around which economic activity is organized.”<sup>27</sup>

Fukuyama uses “social capital” as critical for economic growth, and defines it as “informal values and norms shared among members of a group...[which] permit them to cooperate. Trust is the ‘lubricant.’”<sup>28</sup> He concedes that social capital cannot be measured yet, but says that it cannot be developed without reasonable economic distribution and civic participation.<sup>29</sup> Fukuyama claims that *formally* prescribed institutions require undesirable enforcement costs, not needed by *informal*—for which one can read ‘culture-based’—institutions.<sup>30</sup>

Lawrence Harrison, with his enthusiasm for cultural determinism, rules out dependency and imperialism in preference for his favorite explanation, as causing the development status among the Third World countries.<sup>31</sup> Harrison asserts that similar cultural patterns have had similar *consequences* in different parts of the world, for example, where British colonialism (imperialism) has had a major role in reshaping cultures.<sup>32</sup> Evidence for this seems mixed at best.

Tu Wei-Ming throughout his chapter refers to Confucian cultural influences that underlie East Asian successes, i.e., alternative forms of modernization. This suggests that culture often filters and modifies imported institutions.<sup>33</sup> Suzanne Berger and Ronald Dore support this, saying that technological determinism is diluted by national (may we read cultural) modes of organization and management, institutions and structures, causing *varieties* of capitalism.<sup>34</sup> Doesn’t this mean that modernization and westernization are not quite the same?

## Non-Cultural Variables

A great number of variables can be strung out that have affected, and may affect, any particular society’s socio-economic development, but I think a few are more universally involved and can embrace many, and varied, specifics. Aside from the always-present *culture*, a consensual list should include:

- Technology, sources and access
- The world economic structure, for which *globalization* now seems central
- The imbalances in world political and military power
- The *cluster* of domestic governance, leadership and policy
- The geographical location, natural environment and resources
- History, military conquests and colonialism

And here are some other comments on causal elements. As noted above, Sachs offers three broad explanations for developmental growth: geography, momentum and social system. His more or less unique contribution is in the importance he places on *geography*, and he knocks his fellow economists for ignoring this and the rest of his big three and for being locked into “convergence” assumptions. He goes on to spell out the more limiting aspects of geography: soils, erosion, water control; location, land locked, mountainous; tropical conditions with agricultural pests and spoilage; animal and human diseases.<sup>35</sup> Sachs also observes that colonialism was a poor preparation for Third World capitalistic development. However, Daniel Etounga-Manguella asserts that Africa is no longer justified in blaming colonialism for its plight.<sup>36</sup> Michael Porter also looks at locational factors, and in considering a list of successful nations, he says that they reveal “wide and subtle cultural differences associated with improving economic circumstances that further belie a *simple* connection between culture and prosperity.” He does see importance in the right cultural behavior at the right time and in the right situation.<sup>37</sup>

## Cultural Lag; Values That Once Worked

Probably present in every society, in greater or lesser degree and importance, are beliefs and practices that were once entirely functional—or believed to be. Having been deeply assimilated, they are no longer questioned for present relevance, or even possible self-wounding. V.S. Naipaul seems to capture some of this when he recalls that at an “early age” in Trinidad:

wondering whether the culture—the difficult religion, the taboos, the social ideas—which in one way supported and enriched some of us, and gave us solidarity, wasn’t the very thing that disposed us to defeat.

Richard Silberg finds a basic need for “positive affect,” the comforts of secure tradition and an unquestioned religion, which are eroded by modernization, and which seem to account for the tenacity of cultural lag.<sup>38</sup> Psychologist Kenneth Kenniston discusses social conditioning as related to social change, and he notes the cross-generational transmission of values, interpretable as supporting cultural lag.<sup>39</sup>

Robert Edgerton observes that all cultures are somewhat maladaptive, but that the spectrum is broad; and that while many cultures may have evolved originally for environmental mastery, they are also “maintaining beliefs, values and social institutions that result in senseless cruelty, needless suffering and monumental folly.”<sup>40</sup> The fact that many societies have come to assume that cultural beliefs and practices are sacred, with religious sanction, also underpins resistance to change. Ronald Inglehart finds that historical values color present values in spite of changes.<sup>41</sup> And Weisner says since cultural traits are *emotionally* learned, they resist change.<sup>42</sup>

## Cultural Change

Bronislaw Malinowski told us that cultural traits exist to serve institutional functions. If aspirations require new institutions, traits, as central tendencies, must shift to support them, or they become cultural inhibitors.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Weisner says that successful societies must at times somehow change culture to persist intact.<sup>44</sup> Harrison argues plausibly that values change more slowly than attitudes. This seems reflected in changes in the *form* of governments, particularly in ostensibly adopting “democracy,” a widespread and applauded recent phenomenon,<sup>45</sup> while the content and practical effects are strongly skewed by persisting, deeper values that undermine the ideal.<sup>46</sup>

Assuming for the moment, that culture is central to socio-economic growth, and that it should change appropriately where and if this aspiration and expectation is present, then, just how does culture change and how can it be *induced* to change? Or is every national context so situational, so unique, that only quite abstract strategies and tactics can be identified, and that those generalities then need super-sensitive, thoughtful adaptation and policy selection in each case?

All I offer here are some plausible suggestions of others, which may often sound like truisms or platitudes, but could still lead to further specification for unique, concrete national circumstances. Porter argues that cultures are changeable through education (well, OK—but what kind?). He adds that it also can come from the dedicated efforts of groups, which may be small in number, on behalf of their special interests.<sup>47</sup> Others have of course pointed to the cultural influence of rising minorities, often driven by a sense of their earlier cultural disadvantages, e.g., the Scots in Great Britain and the Samurai in Japan. In Edgerton’s view, “Large changes...are typically imposed by some external event or circumstance...invasion, epidemic, and drought. In the absence of such events, people tend to muddle through by relying on traditional solutions that arose in response to previous circumstances.” Edgerton goes on to observe that even promising risks are often avoided; people settling, rather, for just *acceptable* results;<sup>48</sup> something observed, to their frustration, by many an American agricultural extensionist in Third World peasant-farmers’ fields. Sachs is one among many to see social change usually coming from major trauma, largely external shocks, including past defeat and oppression.<sup>49</sup>

Harrison uses the example of Singapore and Lee Kwan Yew to illustrate how strong leadership can shape culture.<sup>50</sup> Porter also observes that, “A strong government can impose a productive *economic* culture, at least for a time, but that these values must be absorbed by business leaders and their allies in order to be sustained.”<sup>51</sup> The two Koreas illustrate how one culture can be twisted, on the surface at least, to produce two quite different polities. But the resurgence of the Orthodox religion in Russia after the long endured Soviet suppression suggests how temporary or superficial

the official “disappearance” of core cultural values may be. Ataturk’s “take no prisoners” reshaping of Turkey, culture and all, bears reflection. While many of his secularizing reforms persist, there has certainly been major stress on them as Islam has come back strongly, arguably held in check only by the Ataturkist military.

China scholar Lucien Pye notes how traditional regimes in China limited the scale of business to immediate families. Mao of course nixed all private economic entrepreneurship. But all the while Chinese in the Diaspora, in permissive overseas settings, were flourishing commercially, largely by building extensive family-like trading networks. Deng and his successors reversed the economic policy of Mao, and China now seems to be taking off.<sup>52</sup> This pattern fits with Tu Wei-Ming’s assertion that Confucian cultural values underlie an alternative approach to modernization achievement once they are allowed to follow once suppressed aspects of that value system.<sup>53</sup>

Sachs assumed that international contacts of the wide variety now available would inevitably change Third World cultures, with such camels’ noses under the tent as music, clothing, and fast food—popular western culture in general—appearing to lead the way.<sup>54</sup> My question is: How superficial are these intrusions? Will deeper values on more fundamental fronts present surprising, continuing resistance which will catch the globalizers off guard and frustrate overconfident initiatives, even foster angry backlash?<sup>55</sup>

George Foster held that contact with other cultures is the most common stimulant to cultural change; but, again, imitated *form* (visibility) may not have the same *meaning* in the new context. He cites newly Christianized societies considering Christian saints as identified with pagan icons of similar attributes.<sup>56</sup> Everett Hagen also looks at the contact variable, but he sees its influence ranging from almost nothing to substantial, depending on cultural receptivity or necessity.<sup>57</sup>

Berger and Dore find that cases where industrial development has taken hold have resulted from external market and political pressure meeting with internal “pull” to *shape* the particular development,<sup>58</sup> leaving the impression that culture does play a ‘filtering’ role to influence variant forms of modernization.

## Cultural Traits That Affect Development

Lucien Pye says that since many contextual variables influence cultural effects in different ways, universal good and bad traits and weighting of variables are impossible. To illustrate this match or mismatch of cultural patterns with changing contextual events, Pye cites recent Japanese experience. Economic growth based on *relationships*, with a minimum of legal regulation and transparency, and accepting cronyism and elements of corruption, worked in good times. But hard times called for formal regulation and other (outside) economic models. However, the Japanese ‘culture’ of faith in the long term, and even in the heroism of suffering for the long term, inhibited *prompt*, necessary adjust-

ments.<sup>59</sup> Fukuyama seems to agree with Pye’s analysis.<sup>60</sup>

In spite of these wise considerations, others have had the courage, or temerity, to present more specific cultural traits that in their view foster or inhibit economic and/or social development. Harrison may be the most prominent and fearless of these. He gives ten values and attitudes of progressive cultures to consider, condensed and paraphrased here:

1. Time orientation; future oriented, hopeful, not fatalistic.
2. Work is a good; creativity, achievement and self-respect ensue.
3. Frugality, saving is the mother of investment and financial security.
4. Education is the key to progress.
5. Individual merit for advancement, not family connections.
6. Radius of identification and trust must go beyond family.
7. Rigorous ethics are found in advanced countries.
8. Justice and fair play to be objectively (law) determined.
9. Authority should be dispersed and horizontal, not vertical and concentrated.
10. Secularism best in civil life, and heterodoxy and dissent encouraged.<sup>61</sup>

Expanding on Harrison’s list, Grandona gives us a typology of 20 value-attitude categories.<sup>62</sup>

For his part, Etounga-Manguelle presents a quite grim picture of African cultural traits, which he argues are widely generalizable:

- Hierarchies of power and wealth are fixed generationally, even contrary to current law; overthrow is the only alternative option.
- Uncertainty, passivity, pro-status quo; religion the only certainty; fatalistic.
- Regarding time; follow own relaxed rhythm, focus on fabled past; no future concern.
- Unseen powers; leaders are sanctified or overthrown, magic used for explanations, authority figures Lordly in manner and image.
- Family and immediate community over the individual as chief trait, as context of identity; ancestral beliefs fundamental, oral traditions trusted; mid-level officials least trusted, no delegation.
- Conflict resolution evaded; rather social celebrations and ceremonies, without thought of cost; friendship more important than business; whenever conflict resolution is unavoidable, it’s done in secret.
- Efficiency of little concern; consumption favored over saving; economic success shared out with extended family.
- High cost of irrationality; sorcery central; narrow clan loyalty; witchcraft and magical sects assure believers with fantasies; leaders sometimes use witchcraft advisors.

- Metaphorical cannibalism, with the lawmakers the violators; collective progress of no concern; achievement through work resented, limited trust; an “authoritarian way of life.”<sup>63</sup>

My own experience in Africa, Nigeria and Somalia, suggests that this is hardly a perfectly balanced view, even if there are strong elements of truth. For example, among the Igbo, I found strong entrepreneurial qualities, including close concern for the best use of time.

A wide “radius of trust,” in Harrison’s formulation, seems to be most universally recommended trait, and everything that compromises this is seen as negative. Inglehart finds the data suggest that trust is fostered by “horizontal institutions,” such as a common religion.<sup>64</sup> Trust is the “lubricant” for Fukuyama.

Tu describes an ideal Confucian polity, to explain its constituents’ success. The principal elements of that polity include the following:

- Government leadership in the market for well-being and order
- Law needs “organic solidarity” for stability and for necessary “sense of shame” for misconduct
- Family structure, with reciprocity, as core value
- Civil society with interplay between family and state and private and public
- Education as quasi-religion to build character for “social capital” and linkages
- Self-cultivation as core of civil society.<sup>65</sup>

One of the most fundamental and influential cultural antinomies is the *impersonal*, exemplified by the western “rule of law,” on the one hand, and the *personal*, exemplified by transcendent family/group loyalty (labeled *relational* by Tarik Banuri).<sup>66</sup> The latter may be associated with “amoral familism,” seen by Harrison *et al.* as anti-developmental. But it seems to have a place in Confucianism, which has been linked to East Asian successes. Is it possible that our sacred rule of law is a *Western* cultural artifact, not necessarily a universally valid value, outside *our* system, where indeed it may be essential? After all, sometimes, even in the West, the “law is an ass”!

Amartya Sen, the Indian Nobel Economics Laureate, seems to take the Western part when, under the heading “reach of reason,” he says that Western values amount to “reasoned humanism.” However he cannot resist noting that they were anticipated in India by the Emperor Asoka before the Common Era and by the later Moghul syncretizer, Akbar.<sup>67</sup> This line of inquiry is beyond further exploration here but shouldn’t be cast aside.

## Globalization

Here globalization is defined as the present pressure for a uniform world economic system, primarily capitalistic, market-centered, as evolved and practiced in, and favorable first and foremost to Westernized nations, now spear-

headed by the U.S.; and *carried* by apparently unstoppable—barring catastrophic acts of nature, or mankind—marvels of technology. This present *content* will evolve and might even shift direction to counter or modify capitalism’s guarantee of great wealth gaps. Accordingly, Huntington feels this movement should be aimed at human progress, defined as “economic development, material well being, social and economic equity and political democracy.”<sup>68</sup> For both moral reasons and practical long-term interests of the rich, I believe that the growing enthusiasm, at least rhetorical, for reducing poverty must be vigorously acted upon.<sup>69</sup>

## Key Institutions

The prime mover institutions in this movement of tectonic proportions are of course the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), all with preponderant influence wielded by the U.S. and its followers in the rest of the capitalist First World. (Ironically, most of the specific trade disputes before the WTO are between the U.S. and Europe.)

There have long been rumblings that the IMF and World Bank have been doing little but harm in the Third World, and certainly their impact on poverty has been disappointing. The recent United Nations Conference in Monterrey, Mexico on “Financing Development” in its “Monterrey Consensus” report, goes some modest way in recognizing the problems, raised by economist Dani Rodrik (see below), resulting in unfair global wealth distribution sustained under the above definition of globalization, the “Washington Consensus” of long practice. But this smoothly written Monterrey report still in the main supports that “consensus,” seeming to modify only “comparative advantage,” in favor of diversified exports. And, of course, advocating action against poverty.<sup>70</sup> Some observers see in this the emergence of a *neo*-Washington Consensus.

I will focus at this point on the WTO as the highest development of the present globalizing institutions. The WTO, which has inherited the long evolving GATT legacy, is the agency of concrete rule-making for international trade, the main arena for legally enforcing globalization through rules and procedures for adjudicating and sanctioning violations.

The First World has dominated the GATT rule making and does so now at WTO in Geneva headquarters by several means, most simply by having full specialist staffs with the expertise, information sources and detailed studies which can overawe many weakly staffed, poorly funded Third World missions (not even always present) there. This has resulted in the big boys generally writing the rules, without the presumed equal weight participation of all members, a situation recognized in the Monterrey report.<sup>70</sup> Usually this results in the rule formulations being presented for the Third World nations’ representatives’ approval. This usually is forthcoming, because the latter’s analytical skills are often—though improving—inadequate, and in this hesitation they feel the pressure to go along with the powerful, or abstain, thus permitting the new rules to pass through the process.<sup>71</sup>

The WTO gives its purposes as sustainable economic development and reduction of poverty for all members, approximately 140 in number, through an open, free, equitable and fair trading system to maximize and distribute the world's tradeable productive potential. The economic assumptions have been neo-classical, the "Washington Consensus," traditionally relying on each trading country's *comparative advantage* as leading toward *convergence* by everyone benefiting through "*openness*" (e.g., lowered tariff and other barriers) to expanded trade via the "market mechanisms."

Poor nations, which typically see cheap labor and absence of regulation as their comparative advantages, suspect the introduction of such standards would serve as further protectionism by the First World against Third World exports, already a source of Third World complaint. First World protection of "intellectual property rights" (patents, etc) is also an area of contention. However, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, a Thai, is scheduled to replace Mike Moore from New Zealand as Director General of WTO on 1 September 2002. It is understood that Supachai will place much more concern on issues important to the poorer countries. The "one nation, one vote" decision-making arrangements may also become more fully realized, with growing Third World skills, perhaps shifting but not radically changing the Western domination of WTO focus.

In the (*Manchester*) *Guardian Weekly* (26–31 May 2000), Gregory Palast reported on the meeting of the TransAtlantic Business Dialog, a meeting attended by 100 of "the most powerful CEOs in the West." Among other matters, they provided—the reporter didn't exactly say *dictated*—agenda items for the WTO. Regular Davos-type meetings of the Great and the Good of the world to confer on the mega-economic issues seem influenced largely by the globe's top CEOs and other First World champions of unfettered capitalism.

## Yes, But . . .

In *The New Global Economy and the Developing Nations: Making Openness Work*, Dani Rodrik accepts the trend for globalization and its *potential* advantages for the Third World.<sup>72</sup> He feels that the WTO *could* provide guides that might motivate the Third World, and that openness encourages civil and political freedom. But he is concerned over the many ways things that could go wrong, perhaps not for the First World, but for the Third. A running concern of his is that enthusiasm for globalization, in my first definition, is becoming a form of uncritical "groupthink," where it is seen as an unquestioned, inevitable good, and must be pushed forward with unhampered speed, brushing doubters aside.<sup>72</sup>

To the question about who assesses and acts to critically affect the globalized economies, their worthiness, and the quality of a Third world nation's economic conditions and policies, Rodrik answers, "foreign investors, country

fund managers in London and New York, and a relatively small group of domestic exporters." For them, assets are valued in "expectations," with the potential for leading to "bubbles." So a poor nation's policy makers must often guess what will please the international money movers, rather than address clear domestic needs. Herd contagion among money managers can lead to severe cross-border volatility.<sup>73</sup>

## Whatever Happened to Sovereignty?

One very big question is that of choice, if any, for Third World nations in the face of globalization. Can a state follow its own development design, or must it attempt to make the best of working within the "rules" of the globalization regime? Dwight Perkins says,

Small and poor developing economies can opt out of the system or can be treated as exceptions, but the nations of East and Southeast Asia are not small and they are no longer poor. . . . They want and need access to the markets of Europe and North America.<sup>74</sup>

What may have worked well for them in the past won't sustain them in the emerging world economic environment. To me, this implies that the *personal* relationships ("Asian values") way of doing business must change to the Western designed *impersonal*, rule of law centered modality.

Rodrik puts the question his own way: How can "developing nations . . . engage the world economy on their own terms, not on terms set by global markets or multinational institutions?" In answer, he argues that international governance must recognize and allow for unique development styles if general benefit is intended. "Countries have rights to their own aspirations and special institutions, and these arrangements will vary across nations because of our differences in *norms* (my italics), historical *traditions* (mine, too) and levels of development. A suitable international economic system is one that allows different styles of national capitalism to co-exist with each other—not one that imposes a uniform model of economic governance."<sup>75</sup> But Rodrik notes that many policy makers claim that the Third World has *no* choice in the global economy, for there is no place for idiosyncrasy; only to "privatize, open up and attract DFI" (more commonly called FDI, Foreign Direct Investment).<sup>76</sup> Rodrik tells us that investment is crucial for exports and growth, and for this, poorer nations will need their *own* government's help, and he warns that over enthusiasm from early success with FDI can have a dependency and vulnerability effect, perhaps leading to a backlash.<sup>77</sup>

As noted above, Berger and Dore see national modes of organization and management, institutions and structures as causing *varieties* of capitalism.<sup>78</sup> On the other hand, Porter expects *convergence* in structures of production and economic policies, a convergence on a core set of values, attitudes and beliefs to underpin his "productive paradigm," in which case *this culture* will be important and positive.<sup>79</sup>

## Challenging the ‘Consensus’

Rodrik finds overwhelming evidence that alternatives, even opposition, to the Washington Consensus (on openness, privatization, market freedom, etc.) have worked quite successfully, notably in East Asia. South Korea’s government in the 1960s directed and led in high domestic investment policies. The government of Taiwan similarly led internal investment, in their case largely by tax breaks. Both governments were very controlling and centrally directive, and many industries were publicly owned.<sup>80</sup>

Compared to more open policies, *import substitution* (ISI) was found by Rodrik to have worked well in East Asia until the mid-1970s. Even today, “Experimentation with a certain dose of import substitution policy in a few sectors of the economy may also prove productive,” especially until a “mature” (his term, used elsewhere) economy is achieved.<sup>81</sup> The downturns there came from external shocks, mainly oil prices; ISI had little to do with the crisis. However, the failure to *promptly* adjust macroeconomic policies led for a time to the following: inflation, foreign exchange shortages, external payments imbalances, black markets in currencies, and debt. Is this cultural lag persisting in the economic, perhaps *via* the political? From Rodrik, I understand that privatization works best in economies that have already become mature and modern, as demonstrated by Hong Kong, present day South Korea and Taiwan.

It occurs to me that for Taiwan and South Korea, earlier import substitution policies probably prepared the way for later success with more open, export-led policies. This interpretation supports the view that different economic policies, rather than a universal prescription, must be appropriate for different domestic and macro contexts. But the ability and willingness to *quickly* make difficult policy shifts seems critical. In my own view, cultural lag may play a spoiler role here.

## Domestic Conflict Management Institutions

A major prescriptive theme appearing regularly in Rodrik concerns a developing nation’s ability to manage domestic conflict arising from inevitable external shocks; when harsh policy decisions are faced, which often lead to, devaluation and reduced social expenditures, and the resultant unfair distribution of pain (among other things). “It is the quality of the *domestic institutions* of conflict management that determines a country’s capacity for [such] macroeconomic adjustment” when necessary.<sup>82</sup>

To escape such conflict and pain in the 1970s, Turkey (where I lived in the late 1960s), for one, perhaps insecure about the adequacy of their domestic conflict management institutions, borrowed heavily and soon faced collapse, leading to very distasteful IMF medication, which arguably encouraged the military coup in 1980.

South Korea did manage to recover quickly at that time with IMF aid, apparently because, despite protests, they did have better quality institutions for conflict management. For

Rodrik, domestic conflict management capability is a *sine qua non* for sustained economic development, not least where there is uneasiness between different ethnic groups. It is not hard to see the roots in culture of the relative presence or absence of this capacity.

## Over-Confident Prescriptions

Rodrik finds the neo-liberal economists’ mantra of “*openness*,” to be dangerously over simple. At the very start of his book he announces, “The relationship between growth rates and indicators of openness—levels of tariff and non-tariff barriers or controls of capital flows—is weak at best.”<sup>83</sup> He notes that the East Asian shocks of 1997 were most painful in *open* trading countries such as South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia, but that democratic Korea and Thailand did best at recovering with civil society’s acquiescence, while openness itself contributed little. Openness must be fitted, he says, as only one part, into an embracing national development strategy.<sup>84</sup> And he warns us that openness can widen inequality by powerful special interest groups or those highly skilled at appropriating the benefits, and that openness to trade can trap a nation in low growth specialization.<sup>85</sup>

Rodrik’s first priority, by far, regarding imports is capital goods and others related to production, but he quickly adds ideas, institutions and services to capital in his list of priority imports, the first two of which are somewhat less *proximate*.<sup>86</sup> He offers a cautionary note, that capital imports by foreign investors can crowd out domestic investment, and credits, especially short term, when pushed by international lenders. This played a role in the earlier debt crises such as are still not resolved; and more recently played a significant role in the East Asian crises of the late 1990s.<sup>87</sup>

Obviously, as Rodrik observes, high tariffs on *investment* goods are a “fatal mistake.” Trade widens the *possibility* of technological capability and growth, but does not guarantee it, and it can trap a Third World nation in low technology production.<sup>88</sup> Lindsey and Fairbanks agree that a presumed comparative advantage strategy of keeping wages low as a competitive device is to simply stay poor.<sup>89</sup> Porter says that to become effectively competitive, cheap labor is not a resource.<sup>90</sup> Endowments for comparative advantage are of course notoriously unequal, and comparative advantage can easily change (be lost or gained) through new technology, raw materials demand, and other factors.

## Final Reflections

Although I have pointed to the underlying influence of culture on many of the globalization issues discussed, I suspect that readers are able to make the connections noted and others on their own, however convoluted and still imprecisely mapped the paths of linkage. Given this imprecision, plus the multitudinous other dimensions of globalization, it is “too soon to tell” (in the words of Cho En Lai on the effects of the French Revolution) where the tracks of globalization will lead.

Will convergence be advanced on the rules favored (and imposed?) however subtly, and indirectly, by the First World policies, or will distributional injustice persist, or even worsen and fester until some disaster eventuates? Of course we may get some degree of convergent justice sooner by other means, a genuine commitment to raise those in poverty to security in their basic needs. Whatever the handicaps impeding the economic development of Third World nations, there seems no absolute bar to escaping perpetual poverty. The few countries which have fairly recently left that condition behind are the exemplars of that possibility.

## Asymmetry

The uneven starting points and advantages are obvious: great disparities in wealth, market power, information, experience, technology, science, natural resources, along with cultures with fundamentally different worldviews. Whose “World” is being asked to change most quickly and wrenchingly? The Third World must move (more likely, lurch) to become compatible with the First World’s system: the latter having had two centuries to reach this presumed pinnacle. Berger and Dore recognize that: “Everywhere asymmetries of information and power, organizational factors, different social infrastructure and effects of scale” mark the economic constraints on convergence.<sup>91</sup> As Rodrik noted, only mature, modern economies are likely to benefit from the policies prescribed by globalization *a la* the Washington Consensus, and most of the Third World is at a youthful, early stage regarding modernization. To quickly conform and be at all competitive, in many cases they probably cannot afford efforts at poverty reduction and social programs, even those necessary to build the essential human and social capital.

The prescribed openness may simply become a welcome to the First World to pursue its own competitive interests with fewer restraints, with the Third World salvaging what little it can in the *neutral* market process. After all, the market is only concerned with process, not the results. As to the blind, unbiased application of the rule of law, the law is usually drawn with a tilt to and by the most powerful. Where then is the symmetry?

## Really Final Reflections

If I have a ‘policy’ message in all this, it is that globalizers of all sorts should deeply assimilate the cautionary tales and issues sketched above; that without the closest understanding of cultures, including one’s own, efforts to push global change on others—and on one’s own—may encounter unexpected setbacks and even conflict, in one form or another.

My own wish is for a “capitalism with a human face.” *For our time*, capitalism has proven the most productive general paradigm. It would be best partnered with a democratic socialism similar to that pursued in northern Europe—until today’s rightward drift there. That is, let us use capitalism’s productive superiority for its capacity to make

the goods needed in a more just distribution of its benefits and a higher level of general welfare. It would still be nice for alternative experiments to have room if capitalism cannot bend to accommodate *justice* along with its, often abused, *freedom*.

## Appendix: Apologia

About my own credentials for my presumption to address these issues, I was 69 years old before coming to teach (and that part time—actually, I prefer “Adjunct”)—in academic USA. Immediately before coming to Kent State, I did teach college, for the first time, full time, for six years in Belize, part of the Third World. For some 25 years before my Belize teaching, I was involved in specific, on the ground, projects in the Third World: Korea (in the 50s), Turkey, British Honduras (becoming Belize in 1981, six years before my teaching there), Nigeria, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Belize again, Somalia, and Belize again.

My bent toward the relevance of cultures in development evolved almost unconsciously, and I believe I never articulated it until, in the library of the University College of Belize, I found and read Lawrence Harrison’s *Underdevelopment Is a State of Mind*. That seemed to kick all my subliminal observational learning into consciousness. A review of my field experience, with this new consciousness, significantly advanced my understanding of my years working in Third World polities. Having personally continued to spend time analyzing my own and other recorded observations in this cultural context, I have come to feel Harrison’s insights opened the door to more sophisticated analysis of culture’s very complicated influence in the Third World’s efforts to benefit from globalization, or somehow come to terms with it.

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# **Transformation in South Africa: A Study of Education and Land**

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## **Introduction**

This paper examines the problems of education and redistribution of land in post-apartheid South Africa. The concern is to determine whether the land and the educational policies pursued by the post-apartheid black majority government have been effective in meeting the needs of the landless, economically dispossessed, and educationally deprived black people who had endured enormous hardship caused by the infamous apartheid system. The cornerstones of apartheid system in South Africa were the unequal distribution of land and the educational perversion designed to create racial and class bondage. These contentious and central issues have been the focus of debates in government and academia worldwide. In the post-apartheid era, how much of the roughly 87% of the land controlled by 5,000,000 white settlers has been made available for more than 30,000,000 black majority who had been occupying only roughly 13% of the land? What have been the reactions of the black majority on the government's market-driven policy on land reform? Is the interest of black majority including black women who till the land being considered? Most importantly, on whose terms is the issue of land reform being determined? These questions are addressed in the paper.

Education is the foundation of national development. The races, under the apartheid system, were educated separately in order to prepare them for their predetermined place in society. Education had played a major role in preparing whites to lead the economy and in simultaneously preventing blacks from occupying influential positions in the labor force. Education for whites was free and compulsory until the age of sixteen. White schools were provided excellent facilities, and a large percentage of the white minority under the apartheid system had diplomas in higher education at the government's expense. In contrast, educational opportunities for blacks were limited; it was neither free nor compulsory. As the then Minister of Native Affairs of the apartheid white minority government, Hendrick Verwoerd, once said:

...there is no place for him (blacks) in the European community above the level of certain forms of labor. Until now he has been subjected to a school system which drew him away from his community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze. Who will do the manual labor if

you give the Natives an academic education? Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life.<sup>1</sup>

With that in mind, a well-regulated technical education system was imposed on the black majority rather than an academic education.

The paper sketches the pattern of transformation of education in the post-apartheid era. Efforts have been made to present the South Africa's Ministry of Education strategies for effecting changes in both the governance and the funding of education. Performance indicators are introduced to highlight enrollment gaps experienced by the black majority, and performance indicators are also utilized to determine the extent of the improved education for blacks under the existing majority rule. How can a market-based educational system provide equal access to a black majority who had too long been deprived of acquisition of capital and academic education? To what extent are the traditional black and traditional white universities created by the infamous apartheid system being integrated? What are the hiring practices of graduates of both categories of schools? Is there a concerted effort towards a balanced racial composition of faculties and staffs in higher education of learning in the new democratic dispensation that may prevent the further development of intellectual servitude and cultural alienation? Until now, education in South Africa had been subjected to academic ethnocentrism, devoid of non-Western cultural discourse. Is it realistic to rely on the same white faculty and staff members who had long defended the apartheid system to provide meaningful education for the black majority? These are some of the immediate and legitimate concerns.

## **Higher Education in South Africa**

Before 1990, the formulation of education policy in South Africa was an exclusive preserve of the white minority government. The government maintained control in ways that were bureaucratically centralized and politically authoritarian. All of this changed on 2 February 1990, when the then President Frederick W. de Klerk announced the unbanning of the liberation organizations, the release of political prisoners and the acceleration of movement towards the first nonracial, democratic elections of April 1994. Since 1990, a flurry of education policies was unveiled in anticipation of the formal legal termination of apartheid by a num-

ber of stakeholders including the private sector, through the Private Sector Education Council (PRISEC) and then the early National Training Board (NTB); the labor movement, through the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU); the broad democratic movement, through the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI); the self-reforming apartheid state, through the Education Renewal Strategy (ERS)—in two versions—and A New Curriculum Model for South Africa (CUMSA); the international aid community, through multiple, self-funded sectoral reports; and the non-governmental sector, through a range of different program and policy positions and alignments. All these actors jostled for position at the starting line in 1990 as they prepared to develop signal policy positions for a “democratic South Africa.” The interactions that resulted among these various internal and external sectors formed the basic foundations for education policies after apartheid. However, the apartheid state, the business community, e.g., the Urban Foundation and the Anglo American Chairman’s Fund, the international aid community, e.g., United States Agency for International Development, the think tanks and other non-governmental organizations were very influential in the formulation of education policies during the transition to democracy.

The initial proposal by the ANC to institute free education at all levels and to bring education and training under a single coordinated system was generally supported by most black groups but was rejected by the white minority. Faced with internal and external pressures, the ANC decided to reexamine its position on education and appointed Cheryl Carolus and Trevor Combe to work out a compromise model. The Carolus Committee, among other things, recommended: (a) no free higher education in South Africa; (b) financial aid is needed to help some students pay the private costs of their education; (c) the scheme must be for financially needy students only, where need is determined by a national means test which contains no population-based criteria; (d) the scheme cannot be a demand-driven one, financial aid will be rationed on grounds of affordability.<sup>2</sup> The suggestion to apply a market-driven approach for the attainment of higher education was endorsed mostly by the white minority population, the business community, non-governmental organizations, and the international community. In the end, higher education in South Africa is essentially based on the option of who can afford it! But why was the policy of free education at all levels that the ANC had promised during the liberation movement not adopted? There are several theoretical and practical explanations.

Although the armed struggle, economic embargo, the collapse of Soviet Union, the withdrawal of Cuba’s influence in the region, the discreditation of communism, the psychological exhaustion of the white minority settler regime, and the material exhaustion of black liberation organizations provided the impetus for both the black majority and the white minority to come to the negotiating table for a peaceful settlement, the national liberation through the armed struggle which the ANC and other black groups sought did

not result in forced removal of the white minority government from power to allow a free reign of the black majority. Generally, while policymakers try to be innovative they also seek for precedents and consultations. Unfortunately, in the absence of a legitimate government, the ANC, before coming to power, had to rely on think tanks and non-governmental sector dominated by the white minority. Also, the protracted conflict resulted to a political fatigue of black leaders who had hoped that a negotiated settlement could produce accelerated changes. So, the difficulty that the payment of school fees can create should not be viewed only in a racial perspective, the focus of the paper, but it is also related to gender and class issues.

While the gender and class discourse is relevant to South African politics, it should be addressed adequately elsewhere and should not occupy our time here. Suffice it to say, however, that the school fees policy cannot provide access to education for many blacks and other poor South Africans with merger incomes. Under the market approach to educational reform, some well-connected black students could obtain financial assistance through public agencies that are supported by the taxpayers. It provokes a critical question: is it right for some students to be treated fairly and others unjustly even though they may have the same identical intellectual ability, productive capacity, universal recognition, and marketability of discipline? It is elitist in that the requirement for school fees—in a society whose black population had long been denied any meaningful educational and economic advancement—gives opportunity to a few blacks that may become an appendage to the status quo rather than become advocates for a change. While the school fees may be of little consequence to the few well-to-do black families, it creates enormous hardship for the majority of poor black parents who may have to make a choice between sending their young men or women to higher education. Based on African cultural experience, the choice is clear. Women’s education will be sacrificed for “holy” matrimony. We should also remember that during the apartheid era, many white students were able to attend colleges or universities of their choice at the state expense. It is therefore instructive that the black majority government should consider the interests of all segments of the society in the educational transformation.

Until 1994, there were 21 universities. Nine of these universities were created to serve non-whites (Blacks or Africans, Coloreds, Asians, and Indians) by discriminatory legislation. Historically, black universities did not enjoy academic freedom and autonomy. They were regarded as outposts of the National Department of Education.<sup>3</sup> Although white English universities (Natal and Rhodes, as well as the universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand) practiced open admissions, blacks were required to obtain a permit from the Minister of Education for admission. Also, some blacks considered *persona non grata* by the state were not admitted. Indeed, the horrors of apartheid, which are well documented, need not occupy too much space here, except to serve as a backdrop to our understanding of the nature of

the problems created by apartheid until 1994. What is needed is a presentation of the challenges to transformation. In doing so, black performance indicators are compared to other racial groups to demonstrate the enormity of the problems that the majority government has inherited.

One major challenge of a post-apartheid government is to find a way to increase the number of blacks in various academic disciplines, particularly in science and technology. As shown in Table I—Number of First Bachelors Degrees According to Field of Study and Population Group: 1980, 1986, 1989—the number of graduates in the natural sciences for blacks was a total of 502 compared to 11,964 whites. For the years specified, 1,928 (17%) blacks received degrees in medicine in comparison to 4,261 (72%) whites, while Asians accounted for 429 (7.3%) and coloreds numbered 191 (3.7%) of the degrees awarded in the field. In the humanities, black graduates numbered 4,894 (18%), while whites numbered 18,172 (67%). Coloreds numbered 2,036 (7.5%) and Asians 1,929 (7%). The table clearly highlights the gulf of racial disparities by field.

In another gloomy picture for blacks, Table II—Racial Distribution by Occupation, 1991—shows the enormous disparity among the races. Blacks were disproportionately underrepresented. In architecture, for instance, only four blacks were qualified compared to 1,370 whites. In astronomy, biochemistry, biology and biophysics, the table shows lack of black representation.

As shown on Table III—University Enrollments in Natural Sciences and Engineering Versus Social Sciences and Humanities (Post-Graduate)—there is a heavy concentration of Africans (blacks) in the social sciences as opposed to the natural sciences and engineering. Also, Table IV—South African Post-Secondary Enrollments in 1991—further demonstrates that blacks, though the majority in the country, still lag behind other groups.

Furthermore, income inequality, which is a social reality in South Africa, places a severe limit on the ability of many blacks to provide their children with quality education. Between 1975 and 1991, the income of the poorest 60% of the population dropped by about 35%. By 1996, the

**TABLE I**  
**Number of First Bachelor's Degrees**  
**According to Field Study and Population Group**  
**1980, 1986, and 1989**

<i>FIELD OF STUDY</i>	<i>Whites</i>	<i>Coloreds</i>	<i>Asians</i>	<i>Blacks</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>NATURAL SCIENCES</b>					
1980	3,160	70	127	87	3,444
1986	3,653	133	192	166	4,144
1989	3,881	162	313	249	4,605
<b>HUMAN SCIENCES</b>					
1980	5,738	359	465	572	7,134
1986	5,898	738	805	1,648	9,089
1989	6,535	939	659	2,674	10,803
<b>MEDICINE and RELATED FIELDS</b>					
1980	1,298	30	77	103	1,508
1986	1,415	61	141	347	1,964
1989	1,548	100	211	578	2,437
<b>COMMERCE &amp; ADMINISTRATION</b>					
1980	2,021	42	146	75	2,284
1986	3,392	107	162	213	3,874
1989	4,400	142	309	353	5,204

Source: C. J. Sheppherd et al. "Education statistics according to development region 1980, 1986, and 1989," HSRC, December 1992.

**TABLE II**  
**Racial Distribution by Occupation—1991**

<i>OCCUPATION</i>	<i>Whites</i>	<i>Coloreds</i>	<i>Asians</i>	<i>Blacks</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>EDUCATION</b>					
Teacher	60,107	35,081	11,599	139,184	245,980
<b>HOUSING</b>					
Architecture	1,370	39	9	4	1,422
Quantity Surveyor	2,164	55	140	45	2,404
Town Planner	713	11	6	10	740
Surveyor	261	26	24	58	369
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>					
Agriculturalist	1,818	12	19	649	2,498
Agronomist	211	0	2	23	236
Forester	187	27	0	2	216
Horticulturalist	874	8	15	19	916
<b>BUSINESS</b>					
Public Accountant	7,803	90	268	211	8,372
Management Account	13,131	486	746	616	14,979
Articled Clerk	6,663	169	310	278	7,420
<b>ACADEMIA</b>					
University Faculty	10,622	410	417	893	12,342
Technikon, Teacher Training	8,122	803	345	1,800	11,070
<b>HEALTH</b>					
Doctor	21,511	687	2,586	1,576	26,360
Dentist	4,194	173	258	450	5,075
Pharmacist	4,354	51	247	77	4,729
Physiotherapist	1,738	383	119	471	2,713
Radiographer	2,541	404	247	699	3,891
Veterinary Sciences	1,330	3	9	136	1,478
<b>SCIENCE</b>					
Astronomer	4	0	0	0	4
Biochemist	113	7	0	0	120
Biologist	26	0	0	0	26
Biophysicist	4	0	0	0	4
Chemist	1,526	72	175	96	1,869
Computer Analyst	6,373	340	405	186	7,304
Computer Programmer	5,433	427	573	223	6,656

**TABLE II**  
**Racial Distribution by Occupation—1991**  
**(continued)**

<i>OCCUPATION</i>	<i>Whites</i>	<i>Coloreds</i>	<i>Asians</i>	<i>Blacks</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Engineer	15,151	141	183	204	16,579
Geologist	1,488	5	12	42	1,547
Mathematical	1,361	128	16	79	1,584
Metallurgist	1,379	3	14	17	1,413
Physicist	289	6	2	5	302
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>					
Engineering Technician	27,655	1,507	1,171	1,553	31,896
Agricultural, Forestry & Food Technologists	245	22	14	28	309
Biological Science Technologists	617	46	111	176	950
Natural Sciences Technologists	173	9	15	20	217
Physical Science Technologists	230	23	32	17	302
<b>PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR</b>					
Director General	155	0	0	11	166
Director/Deputy	4,952	27	33	57	5,069
Executive Official	223	4	6	18	251
Government Administrator	827	21	3	224	1,075

Source: Manpower Survey, 1991, Occupational Information, Central Statistical Service, March 1993.

gap between rich and poor had grown even larger. The poorest quintile received 1.5% of the total income, compared to the 65% received by the richest 10%. The extreme income inequality suggested in Table V—Annual Household Income in Rands, 1996—limits the ability of individuals and households to finance the enhancement of skills, education, and training that are critical pre-requisites for improved participation in the labor market. Another critical area of social inequality relates to occupation and education. Two measures of equity are applied here: equity in the occupational structure and equity in education. In both cases the measures are disaggregated by race. The key result is shown in Figure 1—Black Representation by Occupational Category—that shows blacks are still grossly under-represented in the top occupations such as managers, senior officials, and professionals; they are over-represented in the low-level occupations classified as elementary occupations, non-permanent employees, and plant and machine operators and assemblers. This inequity calls for an aggressive government-assisted educational and training programs, not a piecemeal window-dressing approach, to bridge the gaps between black and white in the different occupations.

The Department of Labor Employment Equity provided qualitative indicators of barriers to employment equity in the labor market, for example, in the areas of access to training, recruitment, practices, succession, planning, performance appraisal and job grading systems. Despite the fact that blacks are under-represented in critical areas of labor force, in general, discrimination is still present in the labor market. One study that highlights the hidden discriminatory practices is the HRSC (Human Resource Strategy Center) Study of the first employment experiences of 1,806 graduates who graduated in the period 1991 to 1995. The study shows that the labor market discriminates against university graduates with respect to population group and academic institution. African (black) and other graduates from historical black universities (HBU's) were more likely to struggle to find employment. Although graduate unemployment is low at only 2%, the respondents graduating from the historically white universities (HWU's) who found employment immediately was 65%, as opposed to 28% of the respondents from the HBU's. With the exception of the Medical University of South Africa (immediate employment at 80%), all the HBU's fared worse in terms of immediate

**TABLE III**  
**University Enrollments in Natural Sciences and Engineering**  
**Versus Social Sciences and Humanities**  
**(Post Graduate)**

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
<b>HONOURS NS&amp;E</b>								
White	2020	2149	2110	2182	2296	2195	2262	2250
Colored	67	68	73	89	76	78	103	108
Indian	47	67	75	123	112	130	119	130
African	132	249	225	388	417	465	538	565
<b>MASTERS NS&amp;E</b>								
White	4781	5240	5413	N/A	N/A	5807	6016	6155
Colored	67	88	97	101	130	134	154	148
Indian	264	346	348	324	366	413	444	505
African	170	187	209	266	311	411	485	533
<b>DOCTORAL NS&amp;E</b>								
White	1572	1648	1737	1660	1789	1806	1830	1864
Colored	22	23	27	29	32	33	40	49
Indian	41	40	46	54	63	62	71	80
African	25	28	35	39	43	51	65	75
<b>HONOURS SS&amp;H</b>								
White	11081	11908	11558	12307	12441	12671	13128	13541
Colored	833	847	846	991	1292	1419	1595	1387
Indian	1175	1412	1457	1479	1309	1412	1546	1618
African	2254	2825	3326	4201	4890	5091	5820	7331
<b>MASTERS SS&amp;H</b>								
White	8991	7866	8257	8741	8885	9179	9542	9726
Colored	225	222	218	250	428	444	504	509
Indian	231	248	304	307	N/A	269	455	513
African	342	409	524	677	756	967	1235	1328
<b>DOCTORAL SS&amp;H</b>								
White	2356	2503	2547	2608	2453	2461	2490	2536
Colored	31	36	38	36	58	62	63	59
Indian	32	32	49	54	66	81	85	81
African	91	87	101	109	110	149	180	212

**TABLE III**  
**University Enrollments in Natural Sciences and Engineering**  
**Versus Social Sciences and Humanities**  
**(Post Graduate)**  
**(continued)**

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
<b>TOTAL NS&amp;F</b>								
White	8373	9037	9260	9207	9735	9899	10108	10269
Colored	156	179	197	219	231	243	297	305
Indian	352	453	469	501	541	605	634	715
African	327	464	469	693	771	N/A	1088	1173
<b>TOTAL SS&amp;H</b>								
White	20428	22276	22360	23656	237	243	297	305
Colored	1089	1105	1102	1277	1776	1925	2162	1955
Indian	4438	1692	1810	1840	1794	1862	2086	2212
African	2687	3321	3951	4987	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Science & Technology Policy, FRD, Pretoria: Draft Data for SA Science and Technology Indicators, 1995.

employment than the HWU's.<sup>4</sup> This discriminatory practice based on school affiliation can only be eradicated by an effective desegregation policy that undermines the historically white or black institutions. Without such a policy to dismantle the remnants of apartheid, blacks would continue to feel inferior and remain subordinated in the land of their ancestors.

It is also imperative for the government to use planning and funding mechanisms to encourage education and training institutions to transform the racially skewed character of the staff compositions. One measure of inequality is the extent of change in the racial composition of students and staff at South Africa's education and training institutions. Table VI shows the latest results for students in Higher Education and Training (HET). Black students (African students) are now in the majority in South Africa's HET institutions. This is an encouraging trend, but inequalities in the staffing of the institutions still prevail. In 1998, whites still constituted 80% of academic staff in HET, with Africans at 12%, Coloreds at 3%, and Indian academic staff at 5%. In the Technical Colleges during the 2000 period, whites still constituted 61% of academic staff, with Africans at 28%, coloreds at 8%, and Indians at 3%. This clashes markedly with the student composition that has changed dramatically in the past five years. Student enrollment in Technical Colleges now shows Africans (71%), Whites (18%), Coloreds (9%), and Indians (1%).<sup>6</sup> To prevent cultural alienation and educational servitude, HET institutions staff, faculty and administrative personnel must reflect the student enrollment

by population group. Without an aggressive affirmative action program to recruit staff, faculty, and administrative personnel in direct proportion to student enrollment by population group, blacks would greatly be shortchanged. More importantly, blacks would face the danger of being "miseducated" (i.e., education that perpetuates the subordination of blacks) because there are no indications that the white minority settlers have completely gotten rid of their apartheid mentality. The apartheid system of education was an agenda for cultural suicide and the displacement of indigenous systems of knowledge. Despite the decades of the nefarious system, the black majority has survived the academic and political tyrannies culminating in the rejection of the language of their oppressors: Afrikaans. In the post-apartheid era, the academic institutions should be thoroughly administered to salvage the indigenous cultures and the national heritage because salvation of a people is dependent upon education. Any meaningful educational reform must recognize this social reality.

In June 1999, the Ministry of Education presented a report to the incoming Minister of Education following the second democratic general election of that year. The Status Report, as we will call it, was more or less a compact yet informative review of the transformation of education since the advent of democratic rule. The Status Report highlighted, among other things, the five years of change (1994–99); the transformation of learning opportunities; and the policies, Acts of Parliament and regulations that constitute the legacy of the country during the last decade of the last millennium.

**TABLE IV**  
**South African Post-Secondary Enrollments in 1991**

Population Group	Total PSE Enrollments per 1,000% of 1991 Population	University Enrollments per 1,000% of 1991 Population	Total PSE Enrolled as % of Population Aged 18 – 122
White	51	35	60
Colored	13	7	11
Indian	35	25	33
African	9	6	9
<b>AVERAGE</b>	18	12	17

Source: National Education Policy Investigation, 1992:21.

Certain undeniable achievements and irreversible changes have been made between 1994 and 1999 under the administration of Nelson Mandela. The administration unleashed profound forces of democratization that could not but leave a significant imprint on the country's education and training system. An examination of the main thrusts of the changes, which are still far from dismantling the legacies of apartheid education, is as follows:

1. The complex disestablishment of nineteen apartheid education departments was initiated and completed. The pre-1994 education dispensation was replaced by a unitary, nonracial system of provincial education management and administration. Over time, the nine provincial departments, together with the national department, started the complex task of functioning as a single national system of education and training.
2. Without regard to race, class, religion or creed, South African children and university students were brought under one roof. These changes in the school and higher education sectors were brought about in compliance with the provisions of the South African Schools Act

of 1996, the Further Education and Training Act of 1998, and the Higher Education Act of 1997.

3. Some of the landmark developments associated with the South African Schools Act were the introduction of compulsory school attendance for all children between the ages of six and fifteen, as well as the establishment of elected and representative school governing bodies in public schools throughout the country.<sup>7</sup>

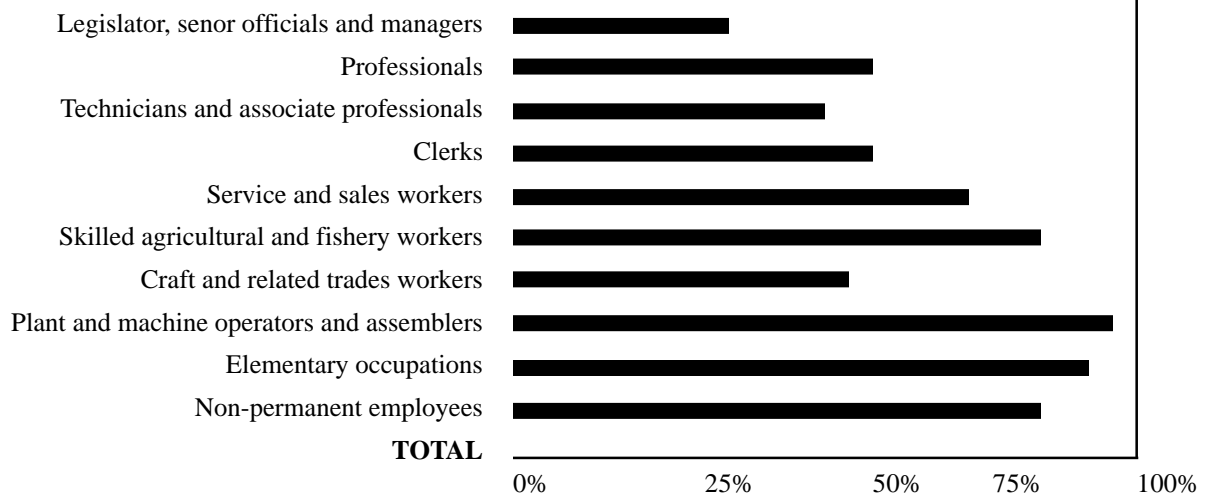
The teaching profession in South Africa has always been characterized by divisions of race, ethnicity and gender and steeped in inequality. Table VII shows that a substantial amount of money was allocated, for example, in 1991, to historically white universities compared to historically black universities. The universities in South Africa were not only segregated by enrollment, they were also governed separately according to race under the apartheid system. By 1999, all teachers were brought into one governing body by one Act of Parliament (Employment of Educators Act, 1998) and one professional council, namely, the South African Council for Educators (SACE).

**TABLE V**  
**Annual Household Income in Rands, 1996**

Income Bracket	African	White	Colored	Asian	Average
Poorest	2,383	29,549	8,214	17,878	3,572
41-60%	9,120	83,506	25,967	49,569	15,624
61-80%	19,183	134,821	46,463	80,882	36,797
81-90%	37,093	207,243	77,866	125,962	78,620
Richest 10%	108,568	406,091	168,005	258,244	222,734
<b>AVERAGE</b>	21,180	119,818	42,359	71,662	42,048

Source: Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa: A Nation at Work for a Better Life for All. HRSC Publishers, Pretoria, 2000, p.7.

**Figure 1**  
**Black Representation By Occupational Category**



Source: Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa: A Nation at Work for a Better Life for All. HSRC Publishers, Pretoria, 2000, p. 8.

Another significant legislation to come out of the first democratic Ministry of Education was the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act of 1995.<sup>8</sup> The enactment established the process for admissions of students and hiring of personnel into the higher institutions of learning.

Although a series of legislative acts were enacted to transform the educational system and to ensure a unitary, nonracial, nonsexist and equitable education of sustainable quality, the implementation of the laws have been problematic. During the early days of 1995 of the Government of National Unity (GNU), the National Party (NP) under Frederick W. de Klerk mobilized stakeholders such as the governing bodies to adopt certain politically preferred positions on many important education matters. Indeed, the education authorities in the non-ANC-controlled provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape believed they had a right to hold on to as much of the policy-making power as they could. Even certain civil society organizations appeared uncertain about the right of the Mandela administration to govern. At the heart of the rather acrimonious debates about the educational transformation was a perennial struggle for power, i.e., the power to make policy and thereby eradicate the racial inequalities of the past. Although the Mandela administration somehow succeeded in the passage of some legislative enactments in an effort to achieve the persistent pattern of racial educational inequity, there was little success in their implementations. This is in part because the administration met stiff opposition to effect changes and in part due to inadequate black educators to manage strategic areas in the education department. The various key units of the Ministry of Education are still controlled by the white minority. As a consequence, the gross inequalities in education persist.

## Redistribution of Land in South Africa

The cornerstone of apartheid was the unequal distribution of land and the consequent dispossession and economic disempowerment of the black majority, the legal underpinnings of which had been dismantled. On the eve of the new democratic South Africa or the post-apartheid era, various viewpoints regarding the explosive issue of land reform dominated most discussions. The NP insisted on a “willing buyer, willing seller” policy with a priority of preserving the existing commercial agricultural sector and safeguarding existing property rights. On other hand, the African National Congress led by Nelson Mandela emphasized “making land available to the land hungry masses” but without reducing production. After much debate, a market approach of “willing buyer, willing seller” was adopted. The question now is how much of the roughly 87% of land area previously reserved for about 5,000,000 whites has been made available for more than 30,000,000 blacks who had occupied only approximately 13% of the land? What resources have been made available to poor farmers to enable them to obtain and utilize land?

## Background

The institutionalization of racial inequality during apartheid South Africa was rooted through a land program. Although apartheid did not become the official policy of the South African government until after the NP was elected to a majority in the Parliament in 1948, a number of laws designed to control the land already existed. The President of the Chamber of Mines in 1912, one year before the first of

**TABLE VI**  
**Student Headcount in HET by Population Group, 1993–95<sup>5</sup>**

POPULATION GROUP	1993	1999
White	44%	29%
Indian	7%	7%
Colored	6%	5%
African	40%	59%

the Land Acts, had this to say:

What is wanted is surely a policy that would establish once and for all that outside special reserves, the ownership of land must be in the hands of the white race, and that the surplus of young men, instead of squatting on the land in idleness and spreading out over unlimited areas, must earn their living by working for a wage.<sup>9</sup>

This view led to the 1913 Natives' Land Act. It codified in law the white expropriation of the bulk of the land, including the richest farming and grazing lands, the forest, and all areas with known mineral deposits. No black could own or purchase new land in these parts, only in the reserves. The 1913 Act designated only 7.9% of the country as African reserves, an area subsequently deemed too small to be workable. The Native Trust and Land Act of 1936 accordingly revised the land allocation provisions to 13.7% of South Africa's land area, largely by incorporating territory that was still effectively under African occupation.<sup>10</sup>

The 1913 Land Act also abolished "farming-on-the-half," a system whereby Africans who owned their own plows and oxen agreed to cultivate, graze stock, and live on a white landowner's property in return for giving him half the harvest. The abolition of this system uprooted thousands of black Africans, forcing them to wander around the country without giving them any place to establish new homes. Secretary of the ANC in 1912, Sol Plaatje, described black Africans' plight: "Awakening on Friday morning June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1913, the South African Native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth."<sup>11</sup> According to Francis Wilson, an economist at the University of Cape Town:

[F]ew laws passed in South Africa could have been felt with such immediate harshness by so large a section of the population. The system of farming-on-the-half, which had flourished ever since whites gained control of the interior, was dealt a blow for which it never recovered. The next three decades were to see the almost total elimination of that class of rural Africans who...had once been fairly comfortable, if not rich, and who enjoyed the posses-

sion of their stock, living in many instances just like Dutchmen.<sup>12</sup>

After the passage of the 1913 Land Act, the areas set aside for black Africans became reservoirs of labor for the mines, towns, and white farms. Consequently, the land wars of the nineteenth century were also labor wars. That is, black Africans, having lost access to their land by force, were permitted to draw sustenance from it as laborers, herdsman, tenants, or renters. According to C. W. DeKiewiet:

dispossession and collapse of the tribal system, erosion, and drought, cattle diseases and taxes...all these conspired to accelerate the change from independent tribesmen to a servile group. Because the 19<sup>th</sup> century created a great class of Black workers upon the farm and in industry, the impression was easily created that white society had won a special position for itself, elevating all of its members beyond the reach of the forces which govern the life of the natives.<sup>13</sup>

Following the two Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 and their descendants, the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 (1950 Act), later consolidated by Group Areas Act 36 of 1966, residential segregation by race in South Africa was imposed. The 1950 Act provided the State President to set out specific rural and urban areas exclusively for ownership and occupation by members of particular racial groups: whites, colored, and indians. There were no areas designated specifically for black South Africans who were prohibited from occupying or owning land in areas designated for other groups.

By the 1980s, the legislative acts discussed above had geographically separated white and nonwhite South Africans, and effected a large-scale dispossession of land by blacks. The legislation accomplished this separation and dispossession through the group areas system, dividing blacks and whites in both rural and urban locations.<sup>14</sup> The acts also created several types of areas reserved solely for black South Africans. Four such areas were rural: the independent homelands of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Ciskei, and Venda. Other homelands included the self-governing although not independent homelands, or national states of

**TABLE VII**  
**Human Research Expenditure by University**  
**Grouping (Rands in thousands) 1991**

Grouping	Government Sector	University Funds	Private Bursary	and Foreign	TOTAL
HWU	4,439	10,1761	8,783	82	115,065
Afrikaans	(62%)	(43%)	(52%)	(9%)	(44%)
HWU English	2,348 (34%)	79,056 (33%)	7,872 (47%)	745 (70%)	90,121 (34%)
HBU	130 (2%)	25,496 (11%)	98 (1%)	120 (13%)	25,844 (10%)
UNISA	104 (1%)	30,070 (13%)	N/A	N/A (12%)	30,174
<b>TOTAL</b>	7,111 <b>(100%)</b>	236,383 <b>(100%)</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: V. N. Vera in a paper presented at the National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS) at Savannah State University, Savannah, Georgia, 6–10 March 1996.

Kandebele, Lebowa, KaNgwane, KwaZulu, Gazankulu, Quaqua, and a group consisting of black reserves or scheduled areas, and black-owned released areas or Trust-owned areas outside the homelands.<sup>15</sup> The basic notion underlying the creation of homelands and national states from the former South African reserves was that black South Africans could be denied equality within South Africa proper if they were citizens of their own ethnically defined states rather than the Republic of South Africa. The government also had two other objectives in promoting the Bantustan Strategy: to divide the population into smaller, more easily controlled units that would prelude the development of black unity; and to gain a modicum of international support by casting the policy as one of internal decolonization.<sup>16</sup> Conditions in the homelands were problematic from the beginning. Scarcity of land exacerbated poverty. Homeland unemployment was estimated at around 50%, with 80% of all households living below the generally accepted poverty line. A 1987 survey of rural Bantustan households, conducted by the private relief organization, Operation Hunger, found that 56.6% of all children were undernourished. Malnutrition in South Africa's rural areas, the study concluded, was worse than in many other countries in the region.<sup>17</sup> These were the conditions that the administration of President Mandela inherited.

## The Proposals for Land Reform

Nearly every political organization of any significance contributed to this important debate, either in general fash-

ion or concrete proposals. The National Party Leadership, the most powerful business organization, argued that any land reform, while involving a deracialization must nevertheless preserve the existing commercial agricultural sector and safeguard the existing (white) property rights.<sup>18</sup> This view, supported by the Inkatha Freedom Party led by Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, was advanced by the white minority regime in its March 1991 "White Paper" on land reform and by the Urban Foundation, a think tank and lobbying institution funded by major corporations and industrialists, in a September 1990 report entitled *Rural Development: Towards a New Framework*.<sup>19</sup> The Urban Foundation report revealed that without some measure of land reform, South Africa's large landholders might eventually confront much more drastic action by the country's millions of landless. The report stated that:

The current racially-divided system of rural development cannot continue into the future... In a context of black "land hunger" it is possible that people could [be] forced to illegally occupy other people's lands, thereby further complicating the already complex array of conflicting land claims.<sup>20</sup>

The report further asserted that the ultimate goal was to attain "a unified, national land market based on secure tenure for all."<sup>21</sup> The government "White Paper" stated along similar lines, "private ownership of land, including agricultural land, is a cornerstone of government policy."<sup>22</sup> With the creation of a land market open to all races, the Foundation ex-

pected to see the emergence of a new class of black farmers—but it hastened to add that “the entry of new farmers of all races into commercial agriculture need not displace existing efficient farmers.”<sup>23</sup> This was echoed by the Nationalist Party-led government, President De Klerk at a conference addressing white farmers: “I have committed myself to the position that landownership in South Africa will be organized on the basis of *kaart en transport* (full title deed) and private possession. It is an important principle that we dare not depart from... Your *kaart en transport* are safe.”<sup>24</sup> In contrast, the ANC Land Commission, established in 1990, identified three key aspects of a possible land reform program:

- (1) return of expropriated land to communities that had suffered from forced removals; (2) protection of occupation rights to prevent further evictions, a measure that would safeguard tenant families and farm workers currently living on white-owned farms, as well as those in the homeland areas threatened by betterment schemes; and (3) establishment of a mechanism, such as a Land Court, to evaluate competing claims to land.<sup>25</sup>

The ANC also called for a “program of affirmative action in regard to the acquisition of land for black people and in regard to supporting aspirant black producers.”<sup>26</sup> Yet, another black political organization, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) called for the nationalization of all land, with compensation paid to former land-owners in the form of interest-bearing government bonds. Similarly, one of the progressive black groups, the Azanian People’s Organization (AZAPO), argued that “land distribution will have to be radical if it is to constructively and adequately address the problems facing the vast majority... It is clear that because land is the primary means of production, it belongs to the people and cannot become the property of individuals. Those using the land would pay rent to the national treasury.”<sup>27</sup> Indeed, individual freehold title, traditional communal tenure, and state ownership were all considered valid options, depending on the particular area’s history of land use and struggles for land rights, as well as the aspirations of those actually working the land.<sup>28</sup> But in the end, following the April 1994 electoral triumph of Mandela-led ANC, the market approach to land reform as advocated by the white minority and supported by the international community including the United States and its allies, was adopted as the most viable alternative. Therefore, due to internal and external constraints and in order to meet its negotiated constitutional obligation of “fair compensation” for white landholders, the ANC, upon assumption of power, turned to the World Bank for assistance. However, the Bank insisted that

most reforms in South Africa will occur as a result of redistribution and not restoration. Pointing to

examples such as Zimbabwe, where investor confidence has been reportedly affected by government interference in fixing land prices and designating zones for resettlement, the Bank argues for a market based land redistribution program in South Africa.<sup>29</sup>

That position of the Bank had contributed to the intransigence of the white minority farmers and made it difficult for the ANC to fulfill its promise of redistributing “30% of the agricultural land in 1999.”<sup>30</sup>

## The Problems of Land Reform

Land reform in South Africa consists of three major programs: land restitution, land redistribution, and the land tenure reform. While the programs are part of a broader land reform program, each of them is aimed at addressing certain specific problem of racial dispossession.

### Land Restitution

The Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 aims to “provide for the restitution of rights in land” of communities whose land was dispossessed “for the purpose of furthering the objects of any racially based discriminatory law.”<sup>31</sup> The restitution is to be achieved through the establishment of a Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court. The Land Claims Court is empowered to determine cases of restitution as well as the payment of compensation. The Court is also empowered to determine the form of land title under which restituted land will be held and to adjust the nature of the right previously held by the claimant. It may also order the state to expropriate land to restore land rights to a claimant. In such cases, the owner of such land will be “entitled” to the payment of just and equitable compensation determined either by agreement or by the Court according to the principles laid down in section 28(3) of the Constitution.<sup>32</sup> The 1994 Restitution of Land Rights Act is also supposed to open up space for some individuals, groups, and communities to reclaim land from which they were forcibly removed. The restitution package offers other outcomes, however, and can lead to the following: (1) restoration of the land from which claimants were dispossessed; (2) provision of alternative land; (3) payment of compensation; (4) alternative relief excluding a package containing a combination of the above, sharing of the land, or special budgetary assistance such as services and infrastructure development where claimants presently live; or (5) priority access to state resources in the allocation and development of housing and land in the appropriate development program.<sup>33</sup> However, a number of questions emerged around the practicalities of land claims, including the potential for their rapid resolution. Claims were to be lodged within three years from 1 May 1995, while a five-year period was provided for the Commission and Court

to finalize all claims, and ten years was provided for the implementation of Court orders. On the ground, people were demanding that they be given back their land now. There were concerns about the ability of the Department of Land Affairs to offer the "alternative relief" it promised in light of the huge numbers of claims pouring in. By early 1996, some 2,853 rural and 2,119 urban land claims had been lodged with the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights.<sup>34</sup> Restitution and land reform, more broadly, have been severely constrained by the provisions for compensation at market value. Serious concerns have been expressed about the entrenchment of property rights in the new constitution. The case of Mpumalanga (where blacks in the community were not able to purchase the land or provide proofs of land ownership) demonstrates that the conceptions which rural people have of land ownership and property rights throw much doubt on the property-rights clause. Most rural black people have rejected payment of compensation. This is clearly illustrated in the resolution on land restoration taken at the National Land Committee's Community Land Conference: "Communities who were forcibly removed should have their land and mineral rights returned immediately, unconditionally and at no cost to the community."<sup>35</sup>

The issue of land is very imperative in South Africa because over 60% of the black population live in the rural areas and many of the people are women. The situation raises the question of gender relations and access to land. As in the case of the majority of Sub-Saharan land tenure systems, women's access to land is tenuous and contingent upon husbands and/or male kin. The Land Claims Court is empowered to influence land rights on restituted land and to take steps to ensure that:

all the disposed members of the community concerned shall have access to the land or compensation in question, on a basis which is fair and non-discriminatory towards any person, including a woman and a tenant, and which ensures the accountability of the person who holds the land or compensation on behalf of the Community to the members of such a community.<sup>36</sup>

The ANC's Reconstruction and Development Program adopted as a post-apartheid development guideline for policy-makers and politicians all across South Africa's vast political horizon not only embodies the nondiscrimination of all South Africans but also recognizes the problems of black women's land rights. It states that: "institutions, practices and laws that discriminate against women's access to land must be reviewed and brought in line with national policy. In particular, tenure and matrimonial laws must be revised appropriately."<sup>37</sup> While the policy is commendable, it must be pointed out that black women cannot be guaranteed their rights through legislation or policy alone; they can only realize their rights to land through organizations aimed at ending their oppression. No such organizations

presently exist.

Land rights are fundamental to an understanding of black women's oppression in the South African countryside. The evolution of customary tenure from colonial times to the present has meant that land is allocated to only heads of household through the practice of owing allegiance to chiefs whose eldest sons are the major beneficiaries. Conditions also exist for the judiciary to intersect with customary legal processes affecting land in order to contest gender discrimination. The most unfortunate thing about gender discrimination is that more than 50% of the population of South Africa are women, and the majority of them are poor black women residing in the suburban and rural areas as squatters.

Participation by institutions or organizations for reforms can be effective if they are developed at the grassroots. This can be achieved through mobilization and organization of social forces. Although the ANC has been sensitive to women's issues and guaranteed 30% representation for women on its parliamentary lists, it has not mobilized grassroots organizations for women.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps, the fact that women have significant representation in the parliament may have drained the women's movement of some of its most dynamic leadership. As ANC's Member of Parliament, Jenny Schreiner, has aptly put it:

Part of our problem is that we have failed to take gender into the mainstream of politics. (That voice) has been replaced by strong women's lobbies and voices heard at the policy-making level, which means we are empowering each other instead of women at the grassroots. It's elitist.<sup>39</sup>

Indeed, one of the challenges of the "new democratic" dispensation in South Africa is how to overcome this elitist tendency and mount an organized onslaught on gendered access to land. It seems that this can only be accomplished through a mobilization of forces at the grassroots level. With 70% of poor people in South Africa residing in rural areas, improving agricultural productivity becomes crucial though not necessarily a sufficient condition for the eradication of rural poverty. Nonetheless, smallholder agriculture is paramount to employment, human welfare, and political stability. Furthermore, as Eicher and Rukuni have suggested, "smallholder agriculture can moderate the rural exodus, create growth linkages and enlarge the market for industrial goods."<sup>40</sup> Therefore, the necessity to make land available for smallholder farmers is a *prima facie* of any rural development. And the need to include not just black men but also black women who have been tilling the land in the transformation is paramount.

## Land Redistribution

The stated purpose of the Land Redistribution Program is to provide the poor with access to land for residential and productive uses in order to improve their income and qual-

ity of life. This program focuses attention on the poor, labor tenants, farm workers, women, and emergent farmers. The program is based on government assistance to the aforementioned categories of people to access land. It is based on a willing buyer and a willing seller. The government provides the eligible categories of people monetary grants to purchase land. These people are expected to pool together their grant money to purchase land jointly. The “pooling together” is a consequence of the grant being small and the land not available in small parcels. The major concern of the program is on productive use of land as reflected in the requirements for business plans. The grant money can also be used to foot the start-up costs for productive projects and infrastructure programs. The amount of grant available to eligible people was fixed at R16000.00 (approximately US \$1,600.00).<sup>41</sup>

The program for Land Redistribution obtains its mandate from section 25(5) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Much of the roughly 73% of the land controlled by the white minority is supposed to be redistributed under the scheme which merely offers a possibility but certainly not a realistic approach. Redistribution of land through the market is problematic in two ways: it ignores the lack of purchasing power of blacks and more importantly, it is a blatant disregard for history because blacks are essentially asked to buy back what had been wrestled from them by force. The land market approach also overlooks another fundamental tenet of “property rights” law in South Africa that had historically been applied with double standards. In fact, the existing white title deeds are:

the result of a system of property law which prohibited blacks from buying land, leasing land, or protecting what land they had. Property law legal-

ized forced removals, farm evictions, and the expropriation of land in the public interest. Political considerations of race have overridden the sanctity of private property for decades.<sup>42</sup>

Another problem of the market approach to land is that it creates an opening for only a small minority of blacks, leaving the majority land-hungry, and if that class of small black farmers becomes established entrepreneurs, they would soon develop a stake in the system and serve as a buffer against popular demands for a more sweeping redistribution.

Although land redistribution is preached by the ANC, the record of land redistribution by the black majority government is abysmal. Table VIII—Transferred Projects, 1994–97—shows that little progress has been made regarding land redistribution since the Land Reform Pilot Program aimed at developing equitable and sustainable mechanisms of land redistribution in rural areas was launched in 1994. The table also shows that out of the nine regions in South Africa, the government made little progress in terms of land redistribution in the KwaZulu-Natal (9.22 hectares per beneficiary household) and Northern Cape (34.76 per beneficiary household). The relatively successful land redistribution effort in KwaZulu-Natal region is not surprising given the fact that the area is predominantly inhabited by Zulus, the foremost ethnic group in South Africa. But looking at the total land transferred since 1994, the figure is a disappointingly low.

Table IX—Rural Immovable Land Transfers Between 1994–97—illustrates this disappointment. The table shows that the total land redistribution transfer to date is roughly 1.3%. Since redistribution is the major aspect of the land reform program, it is reasonable to say that the land reform program is far from achieving its target of redistributing 30% of the total available farmland promised by the black

**TABLE VIII**  
**Transferred Projects, 1994–97**

Province	Hectares	Projects	Households	Hectare	Hectares
Eastern Cape	6,214.95	9	3,198	690.55	1.94
Free State	13,649.17	19	1,217	719.38	11.22
Gauteng	247.00	4	3,383	61.75	0.07
KwaZulu-Natal	47,202.00	28	5,118	1,685.79	9.22
Mpumalanga	17,432.24	12	3,487	1,452.69	5.00
North Cape	71,643.11	7	2,061	10,234.73	34.76
Northern Province	3,477.32	4	500	869.33	6.76
Northwest	973.12	3	918	334.37	1.06
Western Cape	643.41	2	344	321.21	1.87
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>161,317.85</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>16,918</b>	<b>1,833.16</b>	<b>9.54</b>

Source: Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Department of Land Affairs, South Africa, 2000.

**TABLE IX**  
**Rural Immovable Land Transfers Between 1994–97**

	Number of Transfers	Area (ha)	Average Area per Transfer (ha)
Private Transfers	28,748 (99.7)	14,725,733 (98.9)	512.2
Redistribution Transfer	88 (0.3)	162,317 (1.1)	1,833.2
All Transfers	28,836	14,888,090	516.3

Source: Central Statistics Services, Transfers of Rural Immovable Properties, 2000.

majority rule under the ANC leadership. If the present trend continues, it will take over thirty years for the government to achieve its goal. It is unreasonable to expect the dispossessed blacks who had endured many decades of oppression and exploitation in South Africa to wait any longer.

The sentiments expressed by members of the Transvaal Rural Action Group (TRAG) at a meeting held in Soweto are typical of the view held by many of the people who are expected to benefit from the land redistribution exercise.

When talking about land, we must remember that the land was taken from the black people—300 years of dispossession have left us without land... [The government says we should have a free market, that we have to buy land. Why should we buy the land which was stolen from us in the first place?]

Apartheid has made us poor and we cannot afford to buy the land. The government must give us back the land. What we demand is that the government must give land back to the people, all the people, not just a few rich [black] people.<sup>43</sup>

This is the sort of backdrop against which current problem of land redistribution should be viewed. As a consequence of the government's inability to meet the demands of the dispossessed landless through the market system, increasing number of homeless black people who are left with no other choice are invading any unoccupied land. The most notable case was the Bredell Land invasion. In July 2001, the ANC government failed its first major test by using force to disperse the squatters,<sup>44</sup> many of whom voted for the party in the hope of a new lease of life after apartheid. Ironically, the ANC government, now under President Thabo Mbeki leadership, responded the same way that the white minority regime under apartheid system would have responded without providing an alternative to the squatters. In a face saving move, the ANC government, still unable to grasp the frustration and anger of the people, blamed the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) for inciting the homeless to invade land. This is absurd and irresponsible! What are the

other choices if the "willing seller" of land is not willing to sell or if the "willing buyer" of land does not have the purchasing power to do so? As Cyril Ramaphosa, ANC Secretary-General and Chief Political Negotiator, has noted at a conference in Johannesburg on land distribution option:

Most of us in the leadership have an urban bias. We belong to the towns and have a deep sense of involvement with the urgent problems of the cities. The land question appears so difficult, so laden with emotion, so ridden with layers of competing interests, that we wait for a more convenient time to deal with it.<sup>45</sup>

Against this backdrop it is easy to see why the ANC government has not done much to redistribute land to the vastly poverty-stricken, rural residents, many of whom depend on subsistence farming to sustain themselves. The government cannot be sluggish on the issue of land for such inaction will lead to Zimbabwe being revisited. Already, South Africa has now countless squatter camps including Mandela, Winnie Mandela, Slovo Park and Chris Hani Camps.<sup>46</sup> While the homeless seek for refuge in squatter camps as a temporary measure, this cannot be a long term solution. It is the responsibility of the government to provide the basic necessities of life including shelter to the dispossessed people.

## Land Tenure

Land tenure is defined as the terms and conditions on which land is held, used and transacted, or transmitted. Tenure reform is a planned change in the terms and conditions under which people hold, use, and transact land.<sup>47</sup> Tenure reform deals with people who currently occupy and use the land and all other conditions related to that. To this extent it is different from both land redistribution and land restitution. It is dynamic and is impacted upon by a number of factors including population pressures, changes in the economy, and commercialization of agriculture.

The current focus of tenure reform is the extension of security of tenure to people and communities who occupy and use land in the communal areas. Although attempts at tenure reform began before the advent of the new political

dispensation, there was a problem with its fixation on the individualism of tenure in communal areas. The ill-conceived approach would have led to enormous social dislocation on communal land. The current measure is contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in section 26(6) which provides that “a person or community whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled to the extent provided an Act of Parliament, either to tenure which is legally secure or to comparable redress.”<sup>48</sup> Most of the land that the people in communal areas occupy and use is registered in the name of the state. This is a legacy of colonial past wherein most land occupied by black people was designated as Crown land. It has since then, in terms of various proclamations and practices, been recognized and understood to belong to the successors in title of the British Crown that is now the South African State. The bulk of communal land is in areas which were set aside for black people in terms of the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts; it comprises just 13% of the South African land surface.<sup>49</sup> Under the Land Acts, black people were not allowed to own or have the land registered in their own names. They could only hold land in terms of weak forms of tenure that were legally insecure. The land in these areas was registered as being “held in trust” for specific ethnic groups.

The case of “betterment planning” which was hailed as the savior of rural development and meant to introduce development in communal areas left feelings of bitterness and resentment. The “betterment planning” which was a major project under the apartheid regime was the major cause of land dispossession and poverty in the rural South Africa today. In fact, the policy of forced removals and clearing of “black spots” not only generated bitterness and resentment on the part of those forcibly removed, but also brought a sense of insecurity for those on whose land the evictees were settled. Such was the case of black people in Doornkop who were uprooted from their ancestral homes and dumped in often-barren reserves designated as “tribal homelands” by successive white minority settler governments between 1961 and 1980. Under the Land Tenure Reform, the destitute and dispossessed blacks are now asked to show proof of land ownership so that they can legally reclaim their land. Unfortunately, most of them did not have title of deeds and, even if they had the title of ownership, the documentation had been destroyed as a result of forced removals. Besides the “black spots” and “betterment planning,” there were also a number of other forced removals in several different categories including homeland consolidation (removals which took place in the course of extending or altering the boundaries of the homelands). Blacks were evicted from white farms, especially after a change of ownership. Claimants under these categories of land reform are having little success in seeking restoration or compensation for land expropriated decades ago. In view of the lack of funds to pursue claims and the inability of the government to render meaningful assistance to the claimants, the majority of the aggrieved never get to court. In some cases claimants have to

rely on the help of the overstretched non-governmental organizations. Only a handful of black people who were forcibly removed can go into business, have the money, clout or know-how to press their claims. The majority black government, however, has power to restore the lands to their rightful owners. It was the state power that was used to dispossess the land from the blacks; therefore, only the state machinery is necessary for the remedy.

The land reform problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the system of land administration has tended to collapse in most areas. In some cases, records can no longer be traced, and in other cases, the records are no longer maintained and updated. This makes it difficult to have accurate statistical data as to the number of claims settled under the land tenure reform.

## Conclusion

We have attempted to present the problems of reforming education and redistribution of land with the concomitant politics extant in post-apartheid South Africa. We must admit that the task of attempting to analyze the various processes which enter into transforming an educational system vis-à-vis land redistribution characterized by disproportionate dominance by the minority whites has been, and remains, a daunting one. How do you correct the legacy of benign neglect in the past when facing resistance from the economically well-established white elites? More importantly, how can meaningful changes be made through the negotiated settlement that established a Constitution that adheres to a market mechanism for both the transformation of education and the redistribution of land? The Constitution sets the parameters in which all the key actors function.

There is little evidence that the ANC, since its electoral triumphs, has been able to transform its radical view during the process of national liberation into practical realities. Implementations of policies have been met with constitutional, local, and global constraints. The World Bank’s argument for a market based land redistribution program as a condition for lending money to the majority government enhances the bargaining power of the white farmers and thereby making it difficult for any effective land redistribution under the existing policy. More and more people are losing hope that the ANC will ever deliver on its promise to give land to the masses. Consequently, people are taking the initiative to find land themselves. While one does not want to condone this action, it is entirely understandable that people are angry and frustrated. What then can be done?

Two steps are recommended for the ANC government to take in order to redistribute land without further delay.

- The constitutional constraint of market approach to land redistribution can be overcome by imposing reasonable taxation on rural immovable properties.
- Revenues generated from the taxation on rural immovable properties can be used to assist the dispossessed landless people to pursue their land claims.

If that fails, the other viable option left for the government is the expropriation of land. The aim of land reform is to create a stable and fair system of property rights. It cannot achieve this by allowing a minority to continue to control over 70% of the land while the majority is left with less than 30%. The problem of overcrowding, as well as overlapping rights, must be dealt with squarely. As the United Democratic Movement succinctly puts it: "The homeless and destitute of South Africa have for far too long been marginalized."<sup>50</sup> As Petros Nkosi, a rural community leader in the Southeastern Transvaal, conclusively affirms:

The land is our whole lives, we plough it for food, we build our homes from the soil, we live on it and we are buried in it. When the whites took our land away from us we lost the dignity of our lives. We could no longer feed our children. We were forced to be servants, we are treated like animals.... In everything we do we must remember that there is only one aim and one solution and that is the land, the soil, our world.<sup>51</sup>

Nkosi understands that land is the most important factor of production. Everything we do takes place on the land. It is as important as education, if not more.

While recognizing that some changes have been made on the contentious issue of education by the ANC government, we believe that the government has not gone far enough in the transformation process. Under the apartheid white minority government, we must remember that education was free and compulsory for whites and white schools received well-funded state grants and subsidies. Therefore, reductions in budget deficits must not now be accomplished at the expense of the social sector, particularly in the area of education. Efforts must be made to ensure that a large portion of the total government outlays is devoted to the social sector. To bridge the gaps between the education of whites and blacks, we recommend the following:

- Free education should not be limited to the age of sixteen, but should include institutions of higher learning.
- The government should provide scholarships, fellowships and very limited repayable loans to students in higher education on the basis of financial needs.

The apartheid system was the most brutal form of exploitation and oppression found anywhere in the world. Its legacy is still being felt daily by millions of black workers throughout South Africa who are living as squatters in shacks in suburban areas, traveling long distances, paid starvation wages and denied their legal rights to reclaim the land of their ancestors. There are also millions of people who are homeless and jobless. Yet, the enormous wealth produced by black labor is still being used under the black majority rule to prop up privileges of a white minority who live in a lifestyle unequalled anywhere in the world. That cannot be allowed to continue.

Constitutionally, there is generally a paradigm shift in South Africa. The overt discriminatory aspects of the apartheid system have been dismantled, and continue to be eradicated, but the covert aspects of the nefarious system remain very much intact. The ANC government is still engaged in politics of symbol. The reliance on symbolism in galvanizing or mobilizing support against the evils of apartheid system worked well during the national liberation process; however, the ongoing rhetoric about change, even in the face of demonstrated setbacks (as in the cases of educational deficiencies and landlessness of black majority) is a recipe for a chain of reactions the end of which no one can predict. This is why the ANC government must seriously address the concerns of the marginalized South Africans by shifting away, not just superficially, from the old paradigm of disempowering, close, discriminatory and fragmented South Africa to a society that is democratic, open, empowering and integrated.

More than anything else, educational opportunities for all and land redistribution are still the most pressing needs of the black population in South Africa. The problems of joblessness and homelessness are accentuated by the lack of educational skills caused by the infamous apartheid system. Land seizure by squatters and even attacks against white farmers reminiscent of Zimbabwe are already occurring. But the ANC government can avert the situation if the will to act is there. Is there the will to act? It remains to be seen!

## Endnotes

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# Imagining the Zapatistas: Rebellion, Representation and Popular Culture

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*The Mexican...seems to me to be a person who shuts himself away to protect himself: his face is a mask<sup>1</sup>*

— Octavio Paz

*...I will take off my ski mask when Mexican society takes off its own mask, the one it uses to cover up the real Mexico.... And once they [Mexicans] have seen the real Mexico—as we have seen it—they will be more determined to change it.<sup>2</sup>*

— Subcomandante Marcos

Few events over the last decade have captured the international public imagination as the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, on 1 January 1994. In the years leading up to the rebellion the Mexican government had been largely successful in creating an image of the country as socially and economically stable. Mexico, the government argued, was not only ready to commit to NAFTA, but was on its way to achieving First World status. The events in Chiapas went a long way in shattering this glossy image in showing the world, what Subcomandante Marcos has called the “basement” or “underside” of Mexico.<sup>3</sup>

The contrary image that the Zapatistas portrayed was closer to reality. The scantily armed Indian rebels that emerged from the jungle to take several regional towns by force argued that widespread poverty, landlessness, malnutrition, inadequate health care, illiteracy, and governmental corruption were better indicators of the “real” Mexico. They demanded land, justice, democratic reforms, and the end of Mexico’s oppressive one-party state. Mexico and much of the world stood transfixed in the mid-nineties as the events in Chiapas played out.

The first response of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari was to accuse the rebel forces of not being indigenous. In labeling the Zapatistas as foreign agitators and communists from Guatemala, Salinas believed that there would be little political fallout in calling upon the military to crush the rebellion.<sup>4</sup> The Mexican government and the Zapatista insurgents have not been the only parties offering images of the country, of themselves, and of each other. With its infatuation of the rebels (especially with Subcomandante Marcos), the popular press has also offered up representations of whom the Zapatistas are and what their struggle is about. Above all, the Zapatistas and the media have portrayed the

rebellion as an indigenous endeavor with non-ideological political views.

In addition to the ways that the rebellion has been represented by the international media industry, popular images of the rebels have been commodified in merchandise ranging from t-shirts and pens, to dolls and condoms. Indeed, the desperate but powerful Indian rebel hiding behind a ski mask has been made a popular icon with multiple meanings. The commodification of the Zapatistas raises questions about authenticity and the ability of the rebels to have agency outside of the widespread images and representations of the movement available on the commercial market. It will be the aim of this study to explore some of the ways in which the Zapatistas have been represented in popular culture and the mass media. The paper will also examine how such representations square up with the realities of the rebellion by articulating, when necessary, the history of the movement. In other words, the study will attempt to identify where the popular discourse—fueled in large part by the media-savvy Marcos—has embellished or misconstrued certain aspects of, or told different stories altogether about, the Zapatista movement. In the end, the paper will contend that the Zapatista uprising has been as much a war of images, or a propaganda war, as a military endeavor.

## A Rebellion Without Ideology?

In the weeks and months following the rebellion in early 1994, the international press formed its own ideas about the aims and ideological underpinnings of the Zapatista movement. “The way millions of Americans got the story,” argues journalist Andres Oppenheimer, was that “the Zapatistas were a new phenomenon—a pro-democracy Indian uprising with no ideological overtones.”<sup>5</sup> Even *60 Minutes*, aired on CBS, became caught up in the largely uninformed media frenzy. On 21 August 1994, the show opened with the following comment:

What Robin Hood was to the people of Sherwood Forest, Subcomandante Marcos has become to the people of Mexico—a fighter for the rights of peasants who are trapped in poverty by large landowners.<sup>6</sup>

The program proceeded to insinuate that the Zapatistas were struggling for U.S. style political rights. What *60 Min-*

utes and the rest of the popular press virtually ignored was the possibility that the Zapatistas could be just another well-trained Marxist guerrilla force. Was the rebel leader, Subcomandante Marcos, also without ideology, or was he a media-savvy spinster that possessed an uncanny ability not only to charm the press, but also to play down the more radical aims of the movement by moderating public statements? In portraying the Zapatista rebels as an army of Indian peasants demanding land and democracy, and who were not ideologues, the press omitted important clues that might have led to a more critically informed understanding of the nature of the movement.

Despite the popular claims to the contrary, the Zapatista struggle clearly emerged out of the political left. In his book, *The Chiapas Rebellion: The Struggle for Land and Democracy*, Chiapas historian Neil Harvey traces the long and complicated history of indigenous leftist struggles for land and representation in southern Mexico. It was from these movements, especially the leftist urban guerrilla organization—the National Liberation Forces (NLF)—that the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) emerged in 1983.

As an organizing force, the EZLN promoted armed struggle over the legal strategies that had been employed by previous organizations such as the Union de Uniones. The legal approach tended to divide and weaken such organizations as members felt that negotiations compromised too much. It is important to note, as Harvey does, that the new activists in the EZLN “avoided imposing yet another political line or ideology on the indigenous communities.”<sup>7</sup> This is not to say, however, that many of the mestizo and Indian Zapatista leaders were not thoroughly engrained in socialist ideology.

In the end, the ideological underpinnings of the EZLN emerged as a complex hybrid of traditional Marxism with distinctive indigenous political overtones.<sup>8</sup> Harvey argues that the EZLN had successfully found “new words for old struggles.”<sup>9</sup> As Marcos recalls, he and the other mestizo activists in the EZLN had started out as Marxists but went through a transformation of sorts as they interacted with the collective Indian societies.

We had a very fixed notion of reality, but when we ran up against it, our ideas were turned over. It was like that wheel over there, which rolls over the ground and becomes smoother as it goes, as it comes into contact with the people in the villages. It no longer has any connection to its origins. So, when they ask me: ‘What are you people? Marxists, Leninists, Castroites, Maoists, or what?’ I answer that I don’t know. I really do not know. We are the product of a hybrid, of a confrontation, of a collision in which, luckily I believe, we lost.<sup>10</sup>

As late as 1993, however, Marcos and other leftist leaders had reaffirmed and clearly stated their Marxist views in the NLF’s “Declaration of Principles.” Among other things, the document stated the goal of the NLF was to “establish

the dictatorship of the proletariat, understood as a government of the workers that will stave off counter-revolution and begin the construction of socialism in Mexico.”<sup>11</sup> Oppenheimer concludes that the Zapatista army, as the rural wing of the NLF, was designed to begin the revolution in the countryside.

According to the NLF’s documents, Zapatista defectors, and sources close to the movement, the group had adopted a Maoist strategy of “prolonged popular war,” which would continue throughout the country with massive protests by the civilian population to wear down the government and ultimately topple it. Following that plan, a group of young Marxist philosophy and sociology graduates from the Autonomous Metropolitan University of Mexico had moved to Chiapas in the early 1980s to set in motion the NLF’s rural guerrilla front.<sup>12</sup> Such leftist goals and political leanings clearly do not square up with the representations put forward by the popular press’ labeling of the Zapatistas as “non-ideological” rebels.

## An Indian Rebellion?

In addition to portraying the Zapatista revolt as ideologically vague, the popular press has also contended that the rebellion is a fully indigenous endeavor. Again, it appears that the press has ignored investigating the origins of the EZLN. Perhaps the omission of important information regarding the nature of the movement was merely to create a popular and sellable media story about poverty stricken Indians in southern Mexico struggling for land and democracy. In any case, the press largely neglected to inform the public that the origins and leaders of the rebellion came just as much from mestizo leftist organizers in Mexico City as from the exploited Mayan communities in Chiapas. In short, the media did not tell the entire story.

In pitting the outnumbered landless rebels with aged rifles, toy guns, and makeshift bayonets against the well-armed Mexican army, the television images and press releases were effective in drawing international sympathy to the Zapatista movement. Placing the ill-equipped Indian rebels at the center of action on January 1 was a masterful media ploy. An interview with Marcos reveals how the uprising was choreographed to garner the support of the press. Writes Oppenheimer:

As Zapatista military leader Subcommander Marcos himself would concede to me later, his military strategy consisted of surrounding San Cristobal with the elite troops armed with AK-47 rifles, Uzi submachine guns, grenade launchers, and night vision devices, which he placed in the four major access roads to the city, while allowing lesser-armed rebel foot soldiers—some of them only armed with sticks, machetes, and hand-carved wooden toy guns—to march toward the center of town and take the municipal palace.... The television cameras would focus on the...ragtag army of

landless Mayans mostly armed with toy guns...it worked exactly as planned.<sup>13</sup>

To be sure, much of the strength of the Zapatista movement has been their ability to turn the struggle into a propaganda war. As artist/writer Guillermo Gomez Pena notes,

What made the Zapatista insurrection different from any other recent guerilla movement was its self-conscious and sophisticated use of the media. From the onset, the EZLN was fully aware of the symbolic power of the military actions. They chose to strategically begin the war the day that NAFTA went into effect. And since the second day of the conflict, they placed as much importance on staging press conferences and theatrical photos as on their military strategy. The war was carried on as if it were a performance.<sup>14</sup>

“Indian rights had never been a central part of the NLF’s rhetoric,” says Oppenheimer.<sup>15</sup> In the “First Declaration of the Lancondon Jungle,” issued on New Years Day 1994, the rebels declared war on the “Salinas dictatorship” and demanded land, jobs, housing, food, education, health care, freedom, independence, justice, democracy, and peace. While these were all issues confronting the indigenous peoples of Chiapas, the document makes no references of Indian rights. The declaration instead announced the Zapatistas intention to march on the nation’s capital, to defeat the national army, and to topple the government.<sup>16</sup> References referring specifically to the rights of indigenous peoples would only emerge in the subsequent declarations issued by the Zapatistas.<sup>17</sup>

The morning of the rebellion Comandante Felipe, one of the Zapatista head Indian chiefs, held the movement’s first press conference. “We have come to San Cristobal de las Casas to do a revolution against capitalism,” said Felipe.<sup>18</sup> It was this kind of ideological zeal that Marcos and other rebels would moderate, at least publicly, to make the rebellion more palatable to the international press.

It was only after the Zapatistas had made the worldwide headlines after the first week of fighting, argues Oppenheimer, that Marcos would “start playing down their calls for class struggle and begin to emphasize the Indian nature of the rebellion.”<sup>19</sup> In retaliation to Salinas’ comment that the Zapatistas were communists from outside of the country and to gain the sympathy of the international press, Marcos and the Zapatista leaders thought it would be better to drop the socialist rhetoric and to cast the rebellion as a genuine indigenous struggle. This was an extremely successful ploy in that it legitimized the rebellion to the world.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, by playing up the Indian card, the Zapatista leadership moderated the some of the more radical tenants of the movement. It was these strategic ideological maneuvers that garnered the Zapatistas widespread international support and spared them from being crushed

by the military forces of the Mexican government. In this light, the rebellion appears to be just as much a performance act—a war of images—as a military campaign.

## Spokesman or Supreme Commander?

Is Marcos a mere spokesman for the committee of indigenous leaders or is he their supreme commander? Despite his alleged submission to the Zapatista village leaders whom he calls his “superiors” and “commanders,” Marcos’ relationship with the Indians appears more complicated.<sup>21</sup> Historian Dan La Botz has commented that, “because of the EZLN’s clandestine existence and state repression, we do not know how democratic the EZLN really is.”<sup>22</sup> When pressed by one journalist, Marcos failed to give any substantial example of a time when his indigenous leaders over-turned any of his decisions or advice. Because Marcos makes the military decisions for the Zapatistas and is their link to the outside world, the reporter claims that Marcos not only has the upper hand over the rebels, but also leaves little for the indigenous leadership to decide upon.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps such criticisms are overstated. Many others report that the EZLN is a truly democratic organization and that the Indian committee consults and votes on every minor and major issue. It is somewhat revealing, however, that the Mayans guard Marcos with an almost religious fervor. Reporters often speak of driving for days on poor roads, being stopped at multiple checkpoints, having guns pointed in their faces, hiking through the jungle, and having a complete body search only to wait for days to meet or be ignored by the heavily guarded and much revered Marcos. These same journalists report few difficulties in making contacts with the other Zapatista leaders.

Could it be that the indigenous Zapatistas view Marcos as a millennial messiah of sorts? After all, he trained the rebels and articulated their case to the world. Furthermore, Marcos continues to help guide them in their cause for justice, land, and democracy. One wonders if the Mayans see something more than just a sympathetic middle class mestizo in Marcos. Does he fill a special role in the cosmology and religion of the indigenous peoples? Whether the Indians revere him as sort of savior or as a pragmatic tool to further their cause, his special position within the movement makes him indispensable to the Mayan rebels.

## The Zapatistas and Popular Culture

Thus far this paper has tried to wade through some of the popular conceptions and understandings of the rebellion. In evaluating the impact that the Zapatistas have had on popular culture, it appears necessary to also examine how popular culture has affected the movement. In order to save the movement from being annihilated by federal military forces, the Zapatistas had to sell a certain type of self-image

to garner the sympathy of the international press. Indeed, the rebels choreographed a popular culture revolution of sorts to promote their cause. As historian Arthur Schmidt notes,

[t]he present-day Zapatista uprising in Chiapas demonstrates both an unusual level of resistance and an inventiveness indicative of the potential of popular cultural creativity to link together matters of culture, economics, society, state, and globe.<sup>24</sup>

The Zapatistas' creative figuring of Mexican popular culture straddles tradition and modernity. While their preferred communicative tools—the international press and the Internet—place them in the modern (perhaps postmodern) world, they also play up images of the Mexican past and call for age-old demands. Figuratively speaking, the Zapatistas have made Zapata comfortable with the laptop. Among other things, this refashioning of Mexican popular culture has made quite an impact on the Mexican state project. Historian Anne Rubenstein argues that the Zapatista movement has gone a long way, at least for a time, in wrenching Mexico's collective memory and popular culture from the grasp of the PRI.<sup>25</sup>

Since the mid-nineties, however, public interest in the Zapatistas has waned considerably. Although the rebels continue in their cause, Mexicans appear to be more concerned about unemployment, social and economic problems, crime, and corruption than the demands for democracy and land reform. A poll conducted in Mexico just six months after the initial uprising revealed that Mexicans viewed automobile traffic as a greater issue facing the country than the Zapatista revolt. In fact, the Zapatista rebellion did not even make the top ten answers.<sup>26</sup>

Journalist Joel Simon argues that the Zapatistas failed in garnering public attention throughout the late-nineties because they were not quite savvy enough to keep up with the rapid changes that popular culture demands. He writes:

For the first year of the Zapatista revolt Marcos did an amazing job of keeping the rebels in the spotlight. Be he should have taken a lesson from Madonna. In today's MTV world, you need to change your image every fifteen minutes to sustain interest. A year after the Zapatista uprising began, the media and the public seemed to lose interest in the Zapatista story.<sup>27</sup>

Could it be that the popular images that the Zapatistas initially sold to the media now keep the rebels pinned down, in the public's view, under a certain stereotype or representation? Has the commodification of such images held back the movement from having real agency? What is an authentic Zapatista?

It seems that popular culture has had both an accelerating and braking effect upon the rebellion's popularity. In a very real sense, the Zapatista movement has been co-opted by popular culture. What initially was their friend is quite

possibly now their foe. Because the Zapatistas have been culturally appropriated and commodified in a wide array of merchandise—including t-shirts, buttons, refrigerator magnets, posters, ski-mask condoms, key chains, dolls, pens, and billboard advertisements, to name a few—they have become novelties or museum pieces for consumption. In the public imagination, the Zapatista experience has its place in time and space—it is static. Like the tourist destination that markets itself to the expectations and preconceived understandings of the tourist, the popular culture industry has created and designed the essential and authentic Zapatista for consumption in the public mind.

It is ironic that the Zapatistas have feared and fought against being co-opted by the state, never thinking that they might be equally co-opted by popular culture. It is hard to say which is possibly their worse enemy; that is, which is more debilitating to their struggle. It seems fair to say that when the Zapatistas turned to the media to play up popular images of their movement they entered into a devil's bargain. This bargain gave them international recognition and momentarily spared their movement. In the end, however, the image making spiraled out of their control in a frenzy of commodification. Of course, the violent swings in the Mexican economy during the nineties also exaggerated other national political and social issues and helped to push the rebels to the sidelines.

## Zapatista Images and Commodification

The imagery of the Zapatistas, especially that of the masked rebel, have come to have multiple meanings and representations in Mexican popular culture. For journalist Elena Poniatowska, the ski mask "is now an emblem of resistance of the most novel and most bellicose Mexico."<sup>28</sup> Rubenstein argues that the Zapatista mask,

like Superbarrio's outfit, referred to the beloved sport of lucha libre but also made an implicit promise that they would not allow themselves to be co-opted or used by the state.<sup>29</sup>

As Marcos notes in the epigraph, the Zapatista ski mask represents the feigned state of Mexican affairs or Mexico's modern glossy image. When prodded about why the Zapatistas wear ski masks, Marco responded with the following: "The main reason is that we have to be careful that nobody tries to be the main leader. The masks are meant to prevent this from happening."<sup>30</sup> In the mid-nineties, the mask helped Marcos to find his way into Mexico's rich "activist" popular culture. Pena notes that Marcos

was undoubtedly the latest popular hero in a noble tradition of activists which includes Superbarrio, Fray Tormenta (the wrestler priest), and Super-Ecologista, all self-proclaimed 'social wrestlers'

who have utilized performance and media strategies to enter in the political ‘wrestling arena’ of contemporary Mexico.<sup>31</sup>

Marcos carefully constructed his image to draw on the beloved heroes of Mexican history and draw international sympathy. Pena writes:

His serious but nonchalant demeanor, adorned with a pipe and a Zapata-style bandolera with bullets that don’t match the model of his weapon, made him extremely photogenic. His persona was a carefully crafted collage of twentieth-century revolutionary symbols, costumes, and props borrowed from Zapata, Sandino, Che, and Arafat as well as from celluloid heroes such as Zorro and Mexico’s movie wrestler, ‘El Santo.’ Because of all this, the New York Times christened him ‘the first postmodern guerrilla leader,’ and newspapers and magazines throughout the world made it a priority to obtain an interview with him. The cult of Marcos was born.<sup>32</sup>

The Zapatista image has not escaped several of the more base commercial aspects of Mexican popular culture. A *Marcondones*, or Marcondoms, advertisement shows the rebel leader Marcos with a condom on his head and reads, “Say no to terrorism. Use Marcodoms against AIDS.”<sup>33</sup> A competing Zapatista condom brand, *Alzados* (those that rise up), also carries the image of a masked rebel on the wrapper. The commodification of the Zapatista knows few boundaries.

While Zapatista merchandise can be bought all over the state of Chiapas, Mexico City, and other areas in southern Mexico, one can now purchase a number of souvenirs over the Internet at the Zapatista Cyber-Mercado and several other web-based vendors.<sup>34</sup> Oppenheimer notes that the Zapatista merchandise frenzy began because the presence of the host of reporters that descended upon Chiapas following the rebellion. He writes:

What few people outside Chiapas knew is that the Zapatista paraphernalia craze wasn’t the truly spontaneous phenomenon that most foreign correspondents found ourselves reporting with wide-eyed amazement. Rather, it was a textbook case of self-fulfilling media coverage.... [t]he hundreds of war correspondents from throughout the world... were ... looking for new angles to keep the story in the front pages. What viewers didn’t know—and many reporters found inconvenient to acknowledge—was that the merchandising phenomenon had been created by ourselves.<sup>35</sup>

## Summary

Image making has been an essential component of the Zapatista movement. Indeed, the image conscious and media savvy nature of the rebellion sets it apart in both popularity and originality from the other rebel movements in Latin America. Understanding that the Zapatista ideology stems as much from leftist mestizo urban intellectuals as it does from the impoverished rural Indians of Chiapas allows for a more fluid and revealing rendering of the movement. For the Zapatistas, the image of the revolt—that of the poverty-stricken ideologically vague Indian—has been just as important as the goals of the revolt. With the aid of the international press, the aims and images of the Zapatistas have often been blurred in the public mind.

Like a fad that has seen its day and then gone out of fashion, the Zapatistas brought their struggle to the world only to find that in a relatively short amount of time their cause would begin to fade into obscurity. While the rebels remain organized, active, and continue to make grassroots progress for the Mayan peoples of Chiapas, they no longer command the attention of the world press, let alone the Mexican populace. The Zapatistas made a devil’s bargain with popular culture: in selling an image of themselves they were able to bring a short-lived international attention to their cause which also spared them from being annihilated by the Mexican federal forces. The down side of the bargain came when the Zapatistas were not able to compete with other major national issues or keep up with the rapidity and mutating nature of popular culture. In a sense, the Zapatistas have become victims of their own imaginings.

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## **Book Review: Culture, Ideology and Society**

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Tarifa, Fatos. *Culture, Ideology and Society*. The Hague: Smiet, 2001. 81pp. (paper).

Fatos Tarifa's *Culture, Ideology and Society* was my companion on a recent trip to the Balkans. Having read and reviewed one of his other books, *The Quest for Legitimacy and the Withering Away of Utopia*, I thought *Culture, Ideology and Society* would not only offer a glimpse of how a social scientist turned enlightened diplomat examines the lenses through which sociologists, philosophers, and film makers look at the world, but also some insight into the categories and concepts that are useful in better understanding the Balkans. I believe the book was somewhat successful at doing both.

It is a collection of essays written during the period 1996–98 while the author was earning his second doctoral degree at the University of North Carolina. The first essay, "The Language Paradigm in Contemporary Social Theory: Marx, Habermas, and Bourdieu in Comparative Perspective" (1997), examines how the problem of language has been treated by three 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century giants of social theory: Karl Marx, Jürgen Habermas, and Pierre Bourdieu. Tarifa lays out Marx's treatment of human consciousness (and ideology qua form of consciousness) and language as being indispensably and dialectically linked to each other, and nicely captures Marx's concern for the social being of both consciousness and language, as well as the importance of ideology and how ideology as language provides errors and illusions that distort the practical reality in which people live.

Tarifa's overview of Habermas focuses on the latter's move away from the historical evolution of material production to the evolution of "communicative rationality." Rather than viewing ideology as false consciousness, Habermas takes it to be distorted communication. What Tarifa finds so important with Habermas's work on language is that language is what allows people to communicate with one another and that can lead to the building of "social consensus." Unfortunately, ideology as a distorted form of communication makes consensus difficult, and yet Habermas's Hegelian vision of history amounts to a progression "towards a state of human freedom and emancipation" (23). Moreover, Tarifa takes Habermas's theory of language and communication to be one of truth and emancipation. The Enlightenment values of democracy, freedom, rationality, and individuality are of great importance and can be anchored in social institutions that promote forms of communicative action. It is this portion of Habermas's work that

provides hope for those living in the Balkans, since it is "through communicative action and rational discourse, [that] people can act cooperatively in a 'goal-directed manner' for reaching understanding, hence resolving, at least in principle, all significant differences" (23). This belief in the development of communication skills as the means by which people can narrow their political and cultural differences, however, seems to be overly optimistic, and is a point that Tarifa could have further exploited. Tarifa makes it clear that Habermas suggests

conceptions of truth and justice and genuine legitimacy of consensual agreements emerge only from conditions that correspond to an "ideal speech situation." In an "ideal speech situation" all parties have *equal* opportunities to engage in dialogue without undue *domination* by one party, without *restriction*, and without ideological *distortion*. An "ideal speech situation" is thus a prerequisite for an authentic democratic public sphere where citizens can determine social policy under conditions of uninhibited, noncoerced, nonmanipulated discourse.(25)

Given this to be the standard that must be met before a democratic public sphere is to be achieved, there is little reason to think that such a sphere will be formed any time soon in places like Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. To the degree that ethnic nationalism and the various nationalist political parties promote divisiveness between different ethnic groups, there is little reason for the mastering of communicative skills to become a panacea for what ails the Bosnians and the Kosovars alike.

As for Bourdieu, Tarifa notes that the Frenchman moves away from the one-dimensional emphasis on the material conditions of man to one that is multi-dimensional, including the positions that people occupy in different fields of social space, particularly that space of cultural production (thus, the concept of cultural capital). What is important for those who live in capitalist societies, or societies that are moving toward capitalism, is that certain historical changes have taken place during the 20<sup>th</sup> century such that the forms of power and resistance are no longer centered around economic domination and exploitation, but rather around cultural and psychological identities. Marxist discourse on class struggle and critique of political economy no longer represents the heart of power and change in contemporary capitalist society. Ruling classes do not dominate overtly or

through a conspiracy where the privileged willfully manipulate reality to suit their own interest, but they do so by being

the beneficiary of economic, social, and symbolic power which is embodied in economic and cultural capital, and which is imbricated throughout society's institutions and practices and reproduced by these very institutions and practices. (26–27)

Although Bourdieu's thesis is a plausible one, Tarifa's work would have benefitted from an enumeration of the sorts of historical changes leading to the reshuffling of sources of power and resistance, and how the 20th century is different from the 19th century in this regard. Nonetheless, Tarifa's discussion of Bourdieu's work is illuminating as a lens through which transition societies, like those of the Balkans, can be examined; and it offers one more concern about how such societies can foster domination in the 21st century.

The second essay "Marx est mort! Where Have All the 'New Philosophers' Gone?" (1997) is a fascinating look at a group that emerged from the same socio-political context in France and that shared a set of political beliefs and philosophical assumptions, particularly their rejection of Marxism as a "philosophy of domination." These new philosophers included André Glucksmann, Michel Guérin, Jean-Marie Benoist, and Bernard-Henri Lévy. Most well-known is Lévy, author of *Barbarism with a Human Face*, who made the controversial claim that the application of Marxism will always lead to the Gulag. Although the group's critique of Marxism made them famous, Tarifa is correct to say that these new philosophers cannot take credit for first rejecting Marxism, since others including Claude Lefort, Raymond Aron, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty had made such assessments long before. Although the new philosophers helped to alter the public conversation about Marxism, their notoriety and influence was short lived.

The third essay is entitled "On Culture and Ideology: Spelling Them with a Capital 'C' and 'I' or with a Small 'c' and 'i'?" Of all the essays, this essay, along with the next, most closely resembles a seminar paper. Tarifa examines two important but difficult concepts of the social sciences: culture and ideology. Unfortunately, the significance of how these words are spelled is somewhat lost in his cursory discussion of several key figures in philosophy and the social sciences. It would have been helpful had he drawn the distinction between the upper and lowercase spellings and then proceeded in instantiating these in the works of the theorists mentioned. Instead, Tarifa begins with a definition of culture as the creation and use of symbols and artifacts by humans, including paintings and novels, and one which constitutes a way of life of an entire society. This is followed by a discussion of how culture has been construed in a variety of ways: e.g., Marx and Engels thought of it as the ideal expression of the material conditions of a society. Others who followed the founders of Marxism, like the Hungarian philosopher Georg Lukács, the author of *History and Class*

*Consciousness* (1923), iterated the former's notions of class and revolution, whereas others, like Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) and Theodor Adorno (1903–69), focused on notions like culture industry and mass culture, while still others such as Paul Dimaggio, focus on high and popular cultures.

Tarifa's discussion of the concept of ideology is no less ethereal. He launches into a brief discussion of various theorists spelling "ideology" but never explains the distinction and how that arises within the works of these theorists. "Ideology" is as elusive as "culture." Tarifa begins with the standard reference to de Tracy as the originator of "*idéologie*" and moves to Marx and Engels, who spelled "ideology" with an uppercase "I" and who portrayed ideology as false consciousness or a distortion of reality. He then references Bennett Berger, in whose work ideology is found with a lowercase "i." Yet he never makes clear what the distinction between cases is and how it is played out, thus complicating further the issue with Berger's claim that culture can be transformed into ideology.

The fourth essay, "On Political Power and Legitimation: Marx *vis-à-vis* Weber," begins with Marx and ends with Max Weber. Marx understood power as an aspect of the economic relationship which determined, in a fundamental way, the shape of society and was applied by classes and groups, not individuals, with the most extreme forms of power differentiation found in capitalist societies. However, Tarifa finds Marx's base-superstructure model of the relationship between economic class power and state power to be simplistic, primarily because it assumes that changes in the economic base are always paralleled by changes in the political and ideological superstructures of the society. Tarifa rejects this but does not make clear why this is the case.

According to Tarifa, Weber's position on power is in opposition to Marx's view. Weber gave a detailed analysis of power, which for Weber was an aspect of how people relate to one another. As Tarifa makes clear, Weber drew distinctions between types of power based on the extent to which they were thought to be legitimate. Central to his political sociology was the concept of domination, a concept of great importance for anyone interested in assessing power within the former communist countries of Eastern Europe. As Tarifa reads Weber, domination is "obedience that is *willingly* given" (62). Commands must be given and obeyed for there to be domination. Obedience, however, involves some sort of moral support for those who are giving the commands, i.e., legitimate authority or "systematic title to rule" (62). As Tarifa points out, Weber did not complement his classification of forms of domination with a classification of "forms of political regimes on the basis of whether the predominant means of control were coercive, normative, or instrumental" (63). Furthermore, Tarifa notes a second problem with Weber's work:

[Weber] makes no distinction between what might be called normative compliance that springs from

voluntary commitment and that which is grounded in a long-term strategy for survival, both very important especially in understanding the problem of legitimacy in communist-ruled states. (63)

Of some importance to understanding Weber's theory of power are his three kinds of claims to legitimacy and domination: the traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational claims which Tarifa discusses. He believes that Weber was primarily interested in the issue of legitimation, rather than legitimacy: the former deals with the claims that dominant groups make about themselves; the latter "refers to the conditions in which such claims have in fact been accepted and endorsed by subordinate groups" (65). Tarifa believes the issue of legitimacy should have been addressed by Weber by enlarging his typology to include the category of illegitimate domination. Such a discussion is of importance to Tarifa given his interest in "processes of legitimation and legitimation crises of state socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe" (65).

The final essay of the collection, "Making Sociological Sense of *Lamerica*," is about the Italian film *Lamerica* and how Tarifa perceives it as "a distortion of reality and insulting for most Albanians" (69). This is an interesting essay, first because it is part of a collection of essays so influenced by the works of Marx, particularly his discussion of ideology as a distortion of reality. *Lamerica* takes place in 1991 following Albania's emancipation from Communist rule. Unlike the excitement and confusion that Albanians were facing at that time, *Lamerica's* portrayal is one of chaos and anarchy, a view unrepresentative of Albanian society at that time. Tarifa takes children to be an accurate mirror of any society, yet *Lamerica's* portrayal are anything but accurate. Rather than having depicted the children of Albania as normal children living in a stressful situation, *Lamerica* represented them

by a flock of gipsy kids begging and loitering everywhere, clinging to strangers in all their curiosity, laying fire upon an old absent minded man. Elsewhere, whenever children are shown, they are all depicted as malicious, pitiless street kids. (71)

Even the mass departure of Albanian refugees is poorly captured in the film, suggesting that those who fled were simply searching for the "good life" in the West.

Second, it is a film that deals with a rather important issue for the future of post-communist societies in Eastern Europe, including Albania. The 1990s saw large numbers of Albanians continuing to leave their country, leading Tarifa to conclude that mass emigration may have had a detrimental impact on the rebuilding of the country. The first wave of emigrants captured by *Lamerica* were factory workers, farmers, and the unemployed. What the film does not show is the second wave that took place when large numbers of university graduates and professionals left the country, creating a brain drain of massive proportions with adverse results. In Tarifa's own words:

The long term economic and social prosperity of Albania depends on knowledge available to it. For progress is based on knowledge, and knowledge is used by brains and increased by brains. Human brain power is therefore the key to the future. But the future never comes if you do not plan for it. (80)

Tarifa has put together a collection of essays dealing with the principal concerns of sociology: culture, ideology, and society. Those anticipating many direct links to the Balkans will be disappointed; however, the few links Tarifa explores are compelling.

*Culture, Ideology and Society* can be read as a testimony to the development of a scholar-statesman and how he traces the fusion of sociology and politics in a collection of writings. Perhaps Tarifa is showing the reader that an intellectual framework disconnected from immediate realities will be a failure just as a pragmatic politics divorced of theory will also fail. The reader who is somewhat well-versed in the history and jargon of sociology and philosophy, and who wants to construct a vision of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, will find Tarifa's book interesting reading.



## **Book Review: “Believing Women” in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur’an**

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Barlas, Asma. *“Believing Women” in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur’an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002). 254pp. \$21.95 (paper).

Recent historical events have heightened international interest in the politics of Islam and Islamic culture. Among the many areas of interest, the status and treatment of women in majority Muslim nations is prominent. In particular, commentators criticize such practices as female circumcision (frequently called ‘female genital mutilation’), stoning women for adultery, and so-called “honor killings,” in which women are killed by close male relatives. Common rejoinders to such criticisms include the suggestions that many of these practices have a socio-cultural foundation not a religious one, and that women in Islamic nations have had greater rights historically than in majority Christian nations. These assertions and rejoinders regarding the treatment of women is closely linked to ideological (and theological) commitments of the commentators, hence the tone of this debate is heavily loaded, often serving to arouse passions and not to clarify issues.

In the midst of the public debate over these kinds of practices, more fundamental questions about Islam and the role of women in Islam need to be raised in a more productive manner. Such questions include the following: Is Islam inherently patriarchal and misogynistic (as some Muslims and non-Muslims have asserted)? Are there warrants for abusive treatment of women in the *Qur’an*, in the *sunnah* (life and practice) of the Prophet Muhammad as recorded in the *ahadith* (stories about the life and practice of the prophet), or in the *shari’a* (Islamic law)? If so, what are they? If not, what is the basis for the oppression of women in at least some predominantly Muslim nations? And can the discussion be rooted in language in which men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims, participate? Or, are only certain persons privileged to address the questions and the underlying issues?

In a provocative new study, Asma Barlas’ *“Believing Women” in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur’an* raises precisely these questions. As a Muslim and as a scholar, she addresses a broad audience, including both “Muslims and non-Muslims, women and men, believers and nonbelievers, the non-West and the West” (xiii). With such a broad audience, Barlas endeavors to find language for engaging the complex theological and epistemological

problems inherent in these questions. Nevertheless, she does not shy away from raising sharp questions and asserting her answers incisively. As she states in the opening of the Preface, Barlas’ most fundamental question is “whether or not the Qur’an is a patriarchal text,” and her purpose is both “to challenge oppressive readings of the Qur’an [and] to offer a reading that confirms that Muslim women can struggle for equality from within the framework of the Qur’an’s teachings, contrary to what both conservative and progressive Muslims believe” (xi).

Chapter One, the introductory chapter on “The Qur’an and Muslim Women: Reading Patriarchy, Reading Liberation,” elaborates the central questions and theses of this work, i.e., whether the Qur’an is a patriarchal text and whether it permits or encourages liberation for women. In examining these questions, the author notes “two definitions of patriarchy (as a tradition of father-rule, and as a politics of gender inequality based in theories of sexual differentiation)” (2). In raising and answering the questions of patriarchy and liberation, she attempts to recover “the liberating and egalitarian voice of Islam” (4) through a reading of the Qur’an based on two claims. First, she opens the door for a non-traditional reading of the Qur’an by asserting, “insofar as all texts are polysemic, they are open to variant readings.” From the latter, she is able to distinguish between the text itself (which is a record of the very words of Allah) and the (various) readings of the text. Second, and contrary to the claims of many Muslims and non-Muslims alike, she claims that, “the Qur’an is egalitarian and antipatriarchal” (5). In order to make the latter claim, the author insists on “recognizing the Qur’an’s textual and thematic holism, and thus the hermeneutic connections between seeming disparate themes” (8), thereby rejecting the tendency to read “patriarchy and sexual inequality into the Qur’an” (7).

Although she is well versed in and directly engages feminist literature and thought and the questions she raises are central to feminist discourse, especially feminist literary and Biblical criticism, she clearly distances herself from Western feminists in a variety of ways. First and foremost, she speaks as a “believing woman,” that is a Muslim woman who grounds her theoretical perspective on the Qur’an as a revelation of God’s will. Thus, she speaks from what she construes to be a “Quranic perspective.” In assuming this perspective, she rejects the idea of a synthesis of Quranic and Western epistemologies (25). In addition, she rejects a deterministic view of the relationship between sex/gender

and reading, arguing that her positions are not specific to the fact that she is a woman (21). In these and other ways, Barlas intentionally distances herself from Western feminists while engaging the literature and ideas of feminism in a sophisticated and nuanced manner.

Chapter Two on “Texts and Textualities” identifies the principal sacred literature of Islam (the Qur’an), as well as the classical interpretive communities (especially the jurists of the classical period, e.g., al-Shafi) and methods, including *tafsir* (exegesis) and the use of *ahadith* (narratives about the life and practice of the Prophet Muhammad) for understanding the Qur’an. Barlas argues for a clear distinction between the *Qur’an* (as the self-revelation of God to the Prophet Muhammad), on the one hand, and the *tafsir*, *ahadith*, and *shari’a*, on the other. This distinction is the basis for a powerful re-evaluation of the relationship between revelation and tradition. She argues that a relatively small group of interpreters during the classical period accorded the *ahadith* a privileged status comparable to the Qur’an, and that this hermeneutical move on the part of those interpreters introduced the elements of the tradition that are most oppressive of women. In addition to examining the development of tradition in the early centuries, Barlas considers the exegetical methods of both conservative and critical theorists in contemporary Islam.

Chapter Three on “Intertextualities, Extratextual Contexts” goes beyond the textual traditions themselves to the interrelationships among texts (intertextuality) and the extratextual context, that is the contexts of reading, especially the political context of state formation and juridical developments during the classical period of Islamic history. (This is the period of the Abbasid Caliphate and the development of the four great schools of law in the Sunni tradition.) Among the issues explored in this chapter, one might note the definition of the prophet’s *sunnah* through the historically problematic *ahadith*, the collaboration between the *ulama* (religious scholars) and the state, and the closing of the gates of *ijtihad* (critical reasoning) in favor of *ijma’* (communal consensus). These contexts demonstrate that there is a relationship between the social and political contexts and the particular moves of authoritative interpreters, and raise the possibility of other readings that may not be consistent with classical tradition.

At the beginning of Part Two, Chapter Four on “The Patriarchal Imaginary of Father/s: Divine Ontology and the Prophets” moves into a closer reading of the text of the Qur’an itself. Although each of the chapters in this book begins with one or more *ayah* (verses) from the Qur’an, it is in Part Two where we begin to hear more fully the richness of Quranic expression. The author’s commitment to a Quranic epistemology leads her to quote the Qur’an in detail, and the novice can learn to listen to the language of the text (in the widely accepted translation by Yusuf Ali). In the midst of this greater use of scriptural texts, Barlas returns again to her central argument, i.e., not only that the Qur’an is not patriarchal, but also that “the teachings of the Qur’an are radically egalitarian and even antipatriarchal”

(93). She relies particularly on an analysis of *tawhid*, the unity of God. The doctrine of *tawhid* rejects associating anything with God, e.g., a spouse or a son. In fact, the Qur’an rejects anthropomorphizing God. The Arabic word for God, “Allah,” literally means “The God” and has no gender attribution.

In addition to this theological analysis, the author considers the role of prophets in the Qur’an. For example, a close reading of Quranic verses regarding Abraham leads to the conclusion that “Abraham begins by rejecting his father’s *gods*, and then his father’s *authority*, calling on his father to follow him instead, challenging the very core of father-right as it is structured in patriarchies” (111, emphasis original). Likewise, Abraham’s submission to God’s will (not association with God’s authority), his designation as a prophet/*imam* (a gender-neutral term etymologically related to the words for community and mother), and the near sacrifice of his unnamed son (who himself accedes to God’s will), all emphasize the authority of God and the rejection of patriarchy, in the sense of father-rule.

Chapter Five on “The Qur’an, Sex/Gender, and Sexuality: Sameness, difference, equality” raises the question of the construction of sex and gender in the Qur’an. The author finds that “both women and men have the same capacity for moral agency, choice, and individuality,” arguing that the Qur’an “does not sexualize moral agency” and that it “appoints women and men each other’s guides and protectors” (140). In her discussion of modesty, she indicates that, “many Muslim men have made a mockery of its [the Qur’an’s] teachings by acquiring harems and contracting serial one-night marriages. . . . [M]any Muslim men have corrupted in the extreme the Qur’anic ideals of temperance and virtue” (157). Among the many controversial issues touched upon, she also takes up the issue of *harth*, meaning “tilth” or property, a term in Ayah 2:223 that has been used to justify men’s control over women’s sexual praxis (161–65).

In Chapter Six, “The Family and Marriage: Retrieving the Qur’an’s Egalitarianism,” Barlas discusses the relationship between “mothers and fathers and wives and husbands.” It is here that men’s responsibility to protect women, the presumed right to ‘wife-beating,’ divorce, and polygyny are taken up in the context of the scriptural tradition. Her clarification of these issues based on her reading (and quoting) of the text goes a long way to undoing the apparent misunderstandings of the meaning of the text on these matters. The reader will have to judge for herself whether or not Barlas has indeed captured more accurately the meaning of the Quran’s message on these matters. Among her conclusions, Barlas asserts that, “We may also find that [the Qur’an] comes closest to articulating sexual relationships in the kind of ‘non-oppositional and non-hierarchical’ mode that many scholars believe can be liberating for both women and men” (202, emphasis original).

The closing “Postscript” recaps the historical and hermeneutic arguments of a book which the author wrote, “in the hope that it will be among those egalitarian and

antipatriarchal readings of Islam that will, in time, come to replace misogynist and patriarchal understandings of it” (209).

Barlas brings a mastery of both Muslim and Western scholarship to her subject, and the clarity and incisiveness of her arguments are a wonderful lesson in creative and principled debate about fundamental issues in Islam. In addition to a model of scholarship, this book is a rich resource for understanding one of the most important and most difficult scriptural traditions. Both complex in its arguments and challenging in its conclusions, this book is not for the faint of heart. In the author’s attempt to be precise and to cite contemporary scholars in detail, there is considerable repetition in the development of her argument requiring perseverance on the part of the reader. Fortunately, Barlas’ skill as a writer more than compensates for the reiteration of key points. In fact, she is able to bring the riches of literary criticism, feminist thought, scriptural studies, Islamic history, and the Qur’an itself into a coherent, if densely argued, text. For traditional and progressive Muslims alike, Barlas’ ar-

gument undercuts certain assumptions about the meaning of the Qur’an and about the relationship between the Qur’an and the *sunnah*; and it also produces a new reading of the text that contradicts commonly held conclusions regarding its intent. Precisely because they are grounded in a close reading of Quranic texts and scholarship, her arguments will be unsettling to those who hold the assumptions she is challenging. Devout Muslims may have difficulty with the distinction she draws between the Qur’an and the *ahadith*, as well as the implications that distinction has for specific practices related to women. For non-Muslims, this book challenges both political and religious conservatives and progressives. Simply to follow her argument, one must learn the vocabulary of Islamic studies. And to give her a fair hearing, most readers will be required to rethink preconceptions regarding both Islam generally and the role of women in Islam in particular. As a “believing woman” herself, Asma Barlas grounds her reading of the Qur’an in the Qur’an, thus providing a valuable perspective on the continuing debates about Islam in the modern world.



## **Book Review: Globalization and the Nation-State**

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Holton, Robert. *Globalization and the Nation-State*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. 232 pp. \$25.00 (paper).

Most social science scholars agree that globalization has become one of the leading socio-political and economic theories after the fall of the Soviet Union. The worldwide capitalist economy has been a major force of convergence since the late 1980s, to the extent that it has compelled many leaders to propose local economic strategies for restructuring their economies and integrating them into the world economic system. Though the academic circle has been preoccupied with explaining globalization and how every one in the world is adapting to it, the preponderance of the analysis missed a focus on the effects that globalization may have on the well-being of the citizens in any given nation; especially, when the focus is on globalization and its relevance to nation-state, the growing ethnic upheaval, and the ways in which these three items tie together.

Because of its unique approach to globalization, Robert Holton's *Globalization and the Nation-State* is a pioneering work that can be characterized as focusing on the interplay among the three—globalization, the nation-state, and the growing ethnic upheaval. The study, in this regard, is interdisciplinary in nature; and, its intended design covers a broad range of cross-disciplinary audience. The book draws upon a wealth of information that characterizes the massive transformation in contemporary societies in terms of the increasing transnational development and the growing multicultural and multiethnic tendencies that transcend transnational political and economic policies.

Holton's underlying premise in this book is that globalization can not be summarized to economic globalization; it is as a force that dictates changes in the fabric of societies which, in addition to economic globalization, includes a change in affective judgment, moral righteousness, values, and a host of other socially and politically relevant variables. Despite such a strong approach, Holton is neutral while defining globalization as a manifestation of a common ground, similarity of insight, and "one single world of human society in which all elements are tied together in one interdependent whole" (2). In addressing these points, he attempts to define globalization by raising a series of provocative questions that evaluate the positive and negative opinions regarding globalization. The book, therefore, covers globalization in terms of its meaning; its history and dynamics; and, its economic, political and cultural aspects in each of its main six chapters, respectively.

In Chapters Two and Three, Holton discusses the current images of world order under globalization, and focuses on the range of evaluative standpoints—from a commitment to cosmopolitan ideas of social harmony and communities free from conflict, to valuing national autonomy and localism—from which globalization, and specifically economic globalization, is discussed. Here, the author presents a series of criticisms against theories of globalization and their incapability to deliver a viable explanation that accounts for diversity in the rise of counter-movements that emphasize national differences and the continuing cultural appeal of particular countries or localities. In this regard, Holton emphatically rules out the notion of globalization as a unitary process with a single logic (i.e., capitalism), but quickly suggests a more complex multinational descriptive of globalization that becomes the building block of his approach to globalization. Holton's multinational description of globalization, as he claims, aims to sensitize us to similar complexities in normative debates—e.g., attempts to secure global human rights, democratic governments and the exercise of self-determination, or environmental protection movements—that revolve around globalization. Because the social multi-dimensionality of globalization is mirrored by a normative multi-dimensionality, Holton prefers to think of the phenomenon in plural rather than singular terms—globalizations, not globalization.

Whether democratic challenges and national sovereignty lose themselves in economic globalization is the question that Holton addresses in Chapter Four. His general sentiment regarding the rise of nation-states alongside the globalization process is optimistic. Therefore, Holton believes that it is unhealthy to assume that the global challenges to democracy at the national level are tainted with the loss of some absolute sense of national sovereignty. He further argues that the "challenges globalization poses to democracy are more to do with increased global interconnectedness and with inequality of access to power both between nations and between different interests within them" (200). Therefore, he is aware of the difficulties that democratic ideals at national levels can create, and the complexities that global governance can produce by relying on experts and the powerful position of scientists and professionals from the First World. Nonetheless, he agrees that the globalization process permeates those political boundaries within which democratic self-determination is seemingly practiced.

Although the discussion in the first four chapters, for the most part, rested on economic globalization, Holton shifts his attention in Chapter Five toward political globalization

in terms of a global polity. To him, a sense of global order is similar to a complex cobweb that links governmental and non-governmental bodies. With this notion, Holton sees emerging new players on the political scenes which may be either multiple or overlapping powers and may constitute several layers of interconnectedness among peoples and nations. The interesting point regarding this issue is how Holton advocates the notion that a more “complex globally organized polity” is needed for a “territorially bounded world” to operate effectively. This way, it would appear that Holton is suggesting to bridge the gap between the global, national, and local level polities or political organizations through the recognition that can be given to their diverse communities so that global harmony can be maintained.

The underpinning notion in Chapters Four and Five is that there are other developing forces in the making. While Holton is constantly challenging the power of globalization vis-à-vis the growing continuity in the development of nation-state and ethnicity, he maintains that these developmental forces are complementary rather than conflicting. In the meantime, he sees the fusion of ethnicity and nation-state as a reaction against the hegemonizing tendencies of [capitalistic] globalization. Hence Holton rejects the idea of globalization as an evolutionary process. Instead, he argues that globalization is developing alongside of ethnicity and nation-state: a culmination of many mini-globalization. Such thinking has given two distinct characteristics to Holton’s thesis, which separates his approach to globalization from those of others in this area: (1) he looks at the scopes and limits of globalization (global development) not as a uniform or unifying force, while treating globalization as a phenomenon that transcends a simple idea of economic growth driven by the logic of capital accumulation. And, (2) he looks at globalization as an historical, rather than a contemporary, phenomenon that is intensifying the economic, political, social and cultural relations that transcend national boundaries. Thus, Holton contends the world may be seen as politically centered pockets when the relationship between interest groups, such as national governments, and a range of international bodies, such as NGOs, are concerned.

In support of this thesis—i.e., the multifaceted globalization due to the rise of ethnicity and nation-states—Holton pays much attention in Chapter Six to the recent explosion of ethno-nationalism and the revival of ethnicity in settings of migrant settlements. The preponderance of the discussion in Chapter Six revolves around the development of such anti-global trends. In verifying the mechanisms of nation-state building and the rise of ethnicity, Holton carefully argues that the trends—in cultural identity—all suggest in them “different ways that the project of mutual accommodation between contrasting loyalties is an extremely difficult one” (203). While cultural identity in terms of cosmopolitanism is restrictive in the age of globalization, Holton expects territoriality and national sovereignty to continually affect cultural identity. But, the issue remains whether cultural iden-

tity reinforces territoriality; or territoriality and cultural identities lend themselves to mutual accommodation instead of a unidirectional effect or conflict. These are among the questions that Holton addresses in Chapter Seven.

From the overall discussions presented in *Globalization And the Nation-State*, it can be concluded that Holton is alerting us of the links between cultural diversity (i.e., the rise of ethnicity) and national sovereignty (i.e., the rise of nation-state) that are included in recent globalization processes, which raise great challenges to the uniformity or the homogenizing effects of globalization that other works on this subject have envisioned: that globalization is predominantly based on the Western principle of capitalism. The justification for Holton’s diversion from this general universal theory of globalization, as we have implicitly seen so far, is that globalization is not an all encompassing social trend, but one that is mediated by local developments that affect nation building. Hence Holton argues that globalization does not overwhelm nation-state or destroy cultural differences at the local level. For example, a small indication in support of this assertion is Holton’s focus on the unevenness that can be observed in the process of globalization of loyalty; an oddity that makes the debates resting on globalization of culture far from any viable resolution. Thus, Holton’s emphasis on the roles of international bodies—e.g., NGOs—in reviving political and cultural activism within a nation-state is to reinforce this idea.

In addition, Holton does not deny the profound influence that globalization has on patterns of local social change, given that each nation has a varied share of power distribution in global scene. Whether globalization has a polarizing, homogenizing, or hybridizing effects (terms that Holton uses extensively and excessively in the latter part of the book), the underlying analytical challenge in his analysis of globalization is the equity he would need to maintain between local-historical specificity and the significant dynamics of globalization at the macro-level operation. In this course, Holton deliberately spends quite a bit of time critiquing facets of globalization theory and tries to expose them, while treating globalization as a challenge to human society—particularly, in the areas where globalization, buy its nature, can permeate “autonomous” and “self-constituting” societies. Unfortunately, Holton is entrapped in a similar cyclical approach that criticizes other theories of globalization—specifically, when he maintains that globalization represents a powerful force for social change in autonomous regions toward convergence, yet autonomous and self-governing sovereign nations are on the rise. Whatever this dynamic, Holton tries to rescue himself by asserting that the nature of globalization is vague. This may seem true, but isn’t a book on globalization supposed to unveil its vagueness? Nevertheless, Holton agrees with those whom he has criticized that globalization is an unstoppable force; and, it is creating a new form of discourse that permeates the relationship between the nation-states and localities. But he diverts from others by indicating that globalization has not

been able to overrun nation-states nor localities. Whether globalization is good, bad or a mixed reception, the bottom line for Holton is that the judgment depends on what we

believe globalization to be, or which voices or interests are doing the judging. This seems to qualify Holton's theory of globalization as middle range.



## **Book Review: Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies**

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Miyoshi, Masao and Harootunian, H.D., eds.  
*Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies*.  
Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002. 408  
pp. \$22.95 (paper).

This text examines the changes in area studies programs in the post-Cold War era. The editors, Masao Miyoshi and H.D. Harootunian, are, respectively, the Hajime Mori Professor of Japanese, English, and Comparative Literature at the University of California at San Diego and Chair of the East Asian Studies Department at New York University. They, along with Rey Chow, also a contributor to this volume, are editors of the Asia-Pacific Series at Duke University Press. Not surprisingly, then, the text focuses solely on East Asia and within East Asia, there is an emphasis on Japan as five contributions consider that country alone. This is ironic and unfortunate in a text arguing the need to develop new perspectives for thinking about the generation and dissemination of knowledge of the world's regions.

Area studies began in the United States in the mid-1940s. The primary cause was the onset of the Cold War and government's need for information about regions newly important for American security. As Bruce Cummings notes "...the American state and especially the intelligence elements in it shaped the entire field of postwar area studies, with the clearest and most direct impact on those regions of the world where communism was strongest: Russia, Central and Eastern Europe, and East Asia" (261). He argues that there were "astonishing levels of collaboration" between universities, foundations, and American intelligence agencies, especially in the early years of the Cold War (262). To make his case, Cummings examines the Russian Studies programs at Harvard and Columbia and the influence of the FBI and CIA on tenure decisions at the University of Washington. The intelligence emphasis continues into the contemporary era and is much more explicit. It takes the form of the National Security Education Act, which requires that recipients of fellowships under its auspices serve a period of time in national security agencies.

Over time there was a change in the identity and purpose of donors to area studies programs. If it was the U.S. government that was largely responsible for funding area studies programs in their early years, foreign governments—especially Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan—provided funds in later years. These were not America's military enemies but its economic competitors. Moreover, the purpose of such

funding was often different, seeking not only to interest Americans in these societies and cultures but also to establish the primacy of native authority. This funding, too, has slowed down in recent years.

The erosion of traditional funding sources is one reason for the contemporary crisis in area studies. A second significant cause is pedagogical. This is related to funding, of course, because "the obsessive search for cash has resulted in suppressing any genuine concern with thinking through new ways to organize and disseminate knowledge about Asia or the Middle East" (6). In today's world, traditional techniques of studying regions outside Euro-America, e.g., through the lenses of traditional disciplines and the nation-state, are no longer valid. Disciplinary boundaries are breaking down, the cold war and colonial eras are over, and globalization is on the march. In addition, a number of contemporary theories, e.g., rational choice theory—the target of several contributors to the text, are dedicated to the obliteration of differences between regions and cultures.

As a result of these changes, "area studies" has entered its "afterlife," i.e., one in which old truths, perspectives, and institutions can be called into question. Illustrating challenges to existing ways of thinking and new perspectives is the purpose of this text. There are a number of interesting ideas in this regard. Rob Wilson asks what "Asia Pacific" means, examining both literary depictions and those of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. The latter formulation, with its emphasis on open borders and the movement of people and goods, is "culturally and politically naive, ignoring, bypassing, or suppressing the cultural complexity, historical issues, and symbolic profusion of the region in order to form this regional identity" (246). Paul Bove asks if American studies can be area studies and concludes that it cannot, because the prime purpose of area studies has been the production of knowledge for the state whereas the prime purpose of American studies for the state is to promote its hegemony and culture. Moss Roberts makes the valid but often forgotten point that through the study of the other we learn more about ourselves, arguing that the way to understand America's wrongs in Asia is to focus on the victims and the perspectives of Asians.

Yet not every historical approach or intellectual dissident is necessarily relevant for contemporary re-thinking. Several articles examine forgotten or disgraced thinkers from earlier periods in Japanese history, e.g., Tetsuo Najita has contributed an article on Ando Shoeki, a "forgotten thinker"

in Japanese history, and Stefan Tanaka examines Japanese historians of the 1950s. However, these articles establish little connection between their subject and contemporary reassessments. The relevance seems to be merely that their subjects challenged conventional wisdom in an earlier era. Masao Miyoshi's article on the "ivory tower in escrow" has even less relevance for the text's theme, consisting largely of attacks on contemporary universities, ranging from university-corporate linkages, to course enrollments, the widespread use of adjuncts, and the changing priorities of university presses.

The failure to adhere to a single theme is a problem common to many anthologies. Another is a lack of consistency in format. In *Learning Places* there are notes following each article, but Chow's article on issues of pedagogy in area studies includes references as well as notes. A list of Ph.D. dissertations in American Studies written at Yale

University between 1988 and 1995 follows Bove's article; no other contribution includes an appendix. For a text published in 2002, the identification of dissertations completed between 1988 and 1995 might seem a bit dated, but they were current at the time this article was first published in 1997. Other contributions are also dated. Benita Parry's examination of Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* begins with a "prefatory note" written in September 1999, perhaps because the article was first published in 1994.

As these comments suggest, *Learning Places* does a much better job depicting the crisis in contemporary area studies than it does suggesting new approaches and perspectives. It serves as the beginning of this discussion rather than the definitive word. Future assessments, moreover, would be strengthened by the perspectives of observers of Africa, the Middle East, and other regions outside of Europe and America.

## **Book Review: Partner to History: The U.S. Role in South Africa's Transition to Democracy**

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Lyman, Princeton. *Partner to History: The U.S. Role in South Africa's Transition to Democracy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2002. 344 pp. \$19.95 (paper).

Princeton Lyman was the American ambassador to South Africa from 1992–95, a period during which that country completed a remarkable transformation from a racist dictatorship to a multiracial democracy. *Partner to History* provides details about Lyman's experiences during his term as ambassador, a description and assessment of America's contributions to that transformation, and a discussion of the extent to which American contributions to the South African transition may be relevant for other cases. A career Foreign Service Officer who has spent most of his career dealing with Africa, Lyman is well-qualified to undertake such a study.

Policy toward South Africa had been very controversial in the decade prior to Lyman's posting to the country. While Americans had long criticized South Africa's racial policies, there was much debate about how to use America's limited influence to promote change there while not also undermining the country's strong economy and pro-west orientation. Chester Crocker, President Reagan's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, advocated quiet diplomacy with Pretoria, cooperating with it to resolve regional issues, and then concentrating on domestic reform. This policy of "constructive engagement" had become very controversial by the mid-1980s, and many Americans began to call for economic sanctions. That effort succeeded with the passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. Sanctions were only eased in the early 1990s as South Africa began its reform process. Lyman sees merit in both approaches, concluding that both worked in South Africa, constructive engagement because of the support it provided to South African reformers and the entree it gave to South African decision-makers, and sanctions because they added to white South Africans' sense of insecurity and isolation. He advocates such an approach toward other dictatorships, arguing that the "lesson is that following dual... policies in the face of such a situation is not at all a bad thing. It adds up to a valuable array of tools by which to influence such a situation" (274). Unfortunately, it is doubtful that agreement can be reached on such a strategy. The typical tendency in Washington seems to be to engage a government and ignore its excesses or to isolate it because

of its excesses, not to utilize a more subtle and sophisticated strategy of the sort advocated here. American policy toward South Africa in the 1980s provides an illustration. While Lyman's "dual policy" implies a concurrent implementation of carrots and sticks, policy toward South Africa was sequential. Constructive engagement put little pressure on Pretoria, and then sanctions sought to isolate and punish the regime. Yet another problem is implementing such a strategy once it is agreed upon. Lyman describes the difficulty: implementation "takes case-by-case decisions on where to draw the line, where to apply the brakes on cooperation, how to develop incentives, and what to hold back" (274).

By the time Lyman arrived in South Africa, divisions within the United States over South Africa policy and its differences with Pretoria had largely ended. In this sense, his job was easier than that of his immediate predecessors. At the same time, the South African parties had embarked on a difficult transition process and often sought the support of outside parties. Lyman believes the United States played an important role in that transition. Although South Africans are the ones primarily responsible for their country's transition, the "role played by the international community, especially the United States, was an extremely active and, without exaggerating its significance, influential one" (xiii). The United States had first considered playing the role of mediator, but both the government and the African National Congress disapproved, so it decided to play the role of a facilitator, i.e., trying to help the parties reach an agreement, but not taking part in the negotiations themselves.

Still the United States was very active. The bulk of the text describes the multiple and varied American efforts to facilitate the South African transition. It worked with the negotiators, providing support and expert assistance when requested. For instance, the embassy funded a visit by an American law professor to assist a panel seeking to devise rules for mass marches, provided expertise to the South African Defense Force on topics such as civilian control of the military, civil-military relations in a democracy, and affirmative action, and brought ANC officials to the United States so that they could see the workings of the American federal system. A second American policy was to try to persuade parties outside the negotiations—especially Constand Viljoen, a military hero with widespread support among conservative Afrikaners, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party—to participate in

the talks, or, minimally, not to wreck the process. A third American policy was to work with ordinary South Africans to prepare them to assume roles in the new South Africa. The U.S. supported programs in leadership development and conflict resolution and funded scholarship programs for black South Africans to attend university in either South Africa or the United States. The United States also provided more election-related assistance than any other country. This took the form of voter education programs, funds for the parties participating in the election, and coordination of more than one thousand American election observers.

Sometimes the American role was symbolic. Following the assassination of Chris Hani, one the ANC's most popular figures, in the Spring of 1993, for instance, Lyman and his wife decided to go the memorial in Soweto's Jubiliani Stadium. Along with two others from the embassy staff, they were the only diplomats in attendance (many others attended a memorial service in Johannesburg) and the only white faces in the crowd. The funeral of Oliver Tambo less than two weeks later provided another occasion to demonstrate American support. The U.S. sent a major delegation, including Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Maya Angelou, Jesse Jackson, and Randall Robinson. Mandela told Shalala he was "ecstatic" at the American presence (85). To cite one final example, President Clinton gave an interview to South African journalists in the tension-filled week prior to the election. Richard Steyn, editor of the Johannesburg *Star* and a participant in that interview, later cited its importance: "In that frightening period when everybody was stockpiling, the President of the U.S. came in with a very major interview, saying look, we're behind you" (215).

These policies made a difference. The primary players in South Africa, Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk, both praised the American role. Mandela argued in August 1992 that the "United States and the ANC are moving closer together. We are seeing problems from the same perspective." De Klerk made a similar assertion in November 1993, claiming that South Africa's relationship with the United States had "moved from a stern one to a warm one" (77). American programs had a direct impact on many leaders in the new South Africa. Eleven of the 27 members of Mandela's first cabinet had visited the United States as part of the USIA Visitor Program. More than 1,000 members of newly-elected town councils had participated in U.S.-sponsored leadership development programs. More than 1,300 Africans had earned college degrees in the U.S. or South Africa as a result of an American scholarship program. Nearly seventy percent of South African NGOs believed American assistance had made a considerable contribution to human rights and the social and political empowerment of blacks in their country.

Lyman believes there are lessons in the South African experience for American policy toward other conflict situations. To reach this conclusion, he rejects the widespread notion that what happened in South Africa was a "miracle," because "doing so leads to seeing it as an aberration, a special case with limited relevance to other conflicts" (263). One of his recommendations was noted previously, i.e., adopting a dual policy of carrots and sticks toward rogue regimes. Another important idea is to keep the process in the hands of the parties, i.e., to play the role of facilitator and not of mediator. Americans often want to take the lead and get frustrated with lack of success, but allowing the parties to negotiate their own agreement gives them a greater stake in its success. It is necessary to have a large and well-trained diplomatic presence in the country in order to be in contact with and understand the perspectives of leading political forces. In South Africa, for instance, it was possible to understand conservative white opinion because two officers spoke Afrikaans, ANC opinion because an officer was essentially stationed at ANC headquarters, and Inkatha opinion because there was a consulate in Durban. It is also important to coordinate policy with other governments in order to send the same message and to increase resources. Finally, Lyman writes of the need for American ambassadors to speak out on conditions in the country but to do so rarely, in order to husband their influence.

These proposals are sensible, but it is doubtful that they can be implemented in most cases. While South Africa's transition may not have been a miracle, it was unique in many ways. The country is one of the largest and most important in Africa, guaranteeing that it would receive American attention and resources. It also possessed many of the background conditions for conflict resolution: both leading parties realized that they could not win militarily, both had enough understanding of the other that some degree of mutual understanding existed, and both had leaders committed to a peaceful transition and willing to compromise toward that goal. Moreover, the leading parties in South Africa wanted the United States to play an active role. Most other civil conflicts in Africa are different. None of them receive much attention from the U.S., and few have leaders of the quality of Mandela and de Klerk.

Even if the South African experience and the American role there are unlikely to be repeated, *Partner to History* nonetheless provides a very interesting and informative case study. It offers the perspective of a diplomatic insider on the South African transition, describes the day-to-day initiatives that often constitute the essence of diplomacy, and demonstrates the influence the United States can have on those situations where an American role is sought and American influence exercised.

## **Book Review: Iraq's Burden: Oil, Sanctions, and Underdevelopment**

**Tanweer Akram**

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Alnasrawi, Abbas. *Iraq's Burden: Oil, Sanctions, and Underdevelopment*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2002. 180 pp. (cloth).

Alnasrawi's recent book, *Iraq's Burden*, is a timely one. His earlier scholarly research on oil industry, OPEC, and Iraq's development planning and economic problems gives him a useful perspective on Iraq's economic problems and its origins. This book is a valuable addition to the literature. The author is a knowledgeable commentator on Iraq's economy. There are a number of books on the impact of sanctions and war on Iraq. Although these books have discussed the geopolitics and the consequences of the sanctions on Iraqis, none of these have dealt primarily with Iraq's economic problems. Alnasrawi's book fills a lacuna in the literature. He engages in a detailed discussion of the emergence of modern Iraq and the evolution of its economic policies. He traces the rise of Iraq's national oil industry, the role of oil in the country's development, the consequences of Iran-Iraq war, the invasion of Kuwait, and the effects of sanctions. Last but not the least he examines the future prospects of Iraq's economy.

Alnasrawi's book is a thorough study with references to the relevant literature and the available data. There is a paucity of reliable data on Iraq since the Iraqi authorities decided to stop publishing national income and product accounts in the late 1970s. However, the author makes good use of available data and cites facts and figures from various Iraqi planning documents available solely in Arabic. He also describes Iraq's developing planning processes and its limitations.

The author goes over modern Iraq's economic and political history. As Alnasrawi documents, its modern history is marked by instability, coups, countercoups, purges, wars, and sanctions. Iraq was one of the first Middle Eastern countries to break out of the "concession system" imposed on the Middle East during the colonial period by the oil majors. The revolution of 1958 brought about major changes in Iraqi society. The land tenure system was reformed. It also brought to an end the enclave-type nature of foreign domination. Since 1958 Iraq was ruled by middle class-led nationalist and authoritarian regimes (until the fall of Saddam Hussein). The author shows that although Iraq succeeded in increasing its oil income per unit of oil output, its economy continued to become more dependent on oil. Iraq's development program became dangerously tied to the oil sector.

Though Iraq was an agricultural country, the authorities neglected the development of the agriculture sector. Indeed the actual expenditure on agriculture was less than the allocated amount. As a result Iraq became highly dependent on food imports. He points out that the Iraqi authorities also did not devote sufficient resources to develop the industrial sector. Nevertheless due to the revenue generated by oil Iraq was able to make substantial progress in literacy and education, health, social services, and infrastructure. By the late 1970s it was a middle-income country with impressive social development. The authoritarian regime provided out of the oil revenue transfers in order to consolidate its political basis. However, the relative material prosperity of Iraqis was not to last for long.

The oil supply shock that resulted from the Iranian revolution of 1979 made Iraq the second largest exporter within OPEC. Iraq benefited from the rise of oil price. However, the war with Iran led to a substantial reduction of Iraq's oil revenue due to the damage of its production facilities and the difficulty of shipping oil from Iraq. With the loss of exports, Iraq's development plans were severely curtailed. Whereas prior to the war Iraq was making progress, the war started the process of Iraq's decline. Alnasrawi gives details of the destruction caused by the Iran-Iraq war. However, the end of its war with Iran did not end Iraq's problems.

Within two years of the end of Iran-Iraq war, the Iraqi leadership brought the country to a conflict with Kuwait. Iraq had a long-standing border dispute with Kuwait. But it was Kuwait's policy of overproduction causing downslide in oil prices that led to events resulting in the invasion. Iraq regarded Kuwait's action in the oil market as tantamount to war. The Iraqi authorities claimed that a dollar reduction in world oil price meant a US\$1 billion in revenue loss per year for Iraq. It also accused Kuwait of appropriating its oil through diagonal, slant drilling in Rumaila field. It demanded that the loans given by Arab countries, including Kuwait, to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war be converted to grants. When negotiations between Kuwait and Iraq broke down, Iraq's leadership ordered the invasion on 2 August 1990. Comprehensive economic embargo was imposed on Iraq since 6 August 1990. Even after the United States defeated Iraq and forced it to withdraw from Kuwait, sanctions continued. The sanctions that were imposed on Iraq were the toughest sanction the world has ever seen.

The effects of sanctions were immediate because it was quite easy to shutoff Iraq's pipelines and prevent Iraq from exporting its oil. A post-war study revealed the sharp collapse of household's purchasing power in Iraq. Post-war Iraq is characterized by high unemployment, inflation, and substantial debt. The sanctions transformed a relatively successful Arab middle-income country into a poor and devastated nation. At present Iraq's economy is in shambles and its people face tremendous hardships and difficulties. The U.S.-imposed and U.N.-legitimized sanctions on Iraq have been in force for more than a decade. The consequences of the sanctions have been quite deadly. It is reported that more than one million Iraqis have died due to sanctions. Researchers estimate that more than half a million children have died as a result of the increase in child mortality. Child mortality has risen from a level that was comparable to advanced countries to that of least developed countries with chronic shortages of food or under civil war. Iraq is the *only* case of sustained rise in child mortality in the last two hundred years. Iraq's water supply facilities and waste disposal system, its schools and hospitals, its infrastructure and its oil industry are in shambles. Iraq is barred from importing spare parts and critical equipment. The sanctions destroyed Iraqi intellectual life and civil society and strengthened the grip of the Iraqi ruling elite.

The author discusses the sanction regime. Under the sanction regime Iraq's oil imports were heavily restricted. In fact even though Iraq was allowed to export oil, it did not have control over its oil revenue, which went to an UN-administered escrow account in New York. Iraq's oil revenue is used to compensate Kuwait and other claimants against Iraq for war damages, purchase food and administer the oil-for-food program. The oil-for-food program did not permit imports for the oil sector until 1998. The existing regime of sanctions and weapons inspection seems to be work well for the UN bureaucracy. While the author provides a detailed description of how the sanction regime operates, he does not comment on this aspect of the UN sanctions. It can be argued that the UN bureaucracy financially benefits from the oil for food humanitarian program because it is probably one of the few *self-financing* programs of the United Nations that does not rely on transfer of funds from advanced economies. This program is completely funded by Iraq's own oil revenue. Therefore, it cannot be regarded as an aid program.

Alnasrawi examines the evolution of Iraq's economic and covers the devastating effects of the sanctions on the population in details. He regards Iraq's oil wealth as burden instead of a blessing. However one can argue that the social system that has been fostered by Iraq's oil wealth as well as imperialist passion for control of its wealth that are the country's "burdens," not its hydrocarbon resources. The author does not emphasize the key role of the U.S. and the U.K. in perpetuating and prolonging the sanctions. Throughout the 1990s though France, China, and Russia occasionally expressed reservations about the continuation of the sanctions, they had gone along with the Anglo-American elites. The Arab regimes, such as Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, did not really voiced their dissatisfaction with the sanction regime. Moreover, one can argue that other OPEC countries gained from the loss of Iraq's market share in the international oil market. Yet this is not an argument that Alnasrawi considers.

The author does not discuss the role of the Western countries in providing military and financial support to the Iraqi regime during its worst days of human rights abuse, slaughter of the Kurds, and attacks on Iran (Arnove 2002 and Parenti 2003). The U.S. and other Western countries were providing Iraq with military intelligence and subsidies when the regime was killing Iraqi dissidents and Kurds and fighting a war with the Iranians. It was after the invasion of Kuwait that Saddam Hussein was transformed into an official enemy. Until then, he and his regime were worthy partners of the West. The U.S. had no qualms about permitting American Type Culture Collection, a U.S. company, to supply spores that could be used as biological weapons. Much of this is rarely mentioned in current discussions about Iraq. It is barely discussed that U.S. war planners had deliberated damaged Iraq's water system, which is a war crime.

At times the book is a bit repetitive. Each chapter seems to have been written as a separate article for publication in academic journals. The same information is often provided in different chapters. Such repetitions could have been judiciously edited.

Alnasrawi's book remains a valuable contribution to literature on economic development, the political economy of the Middle East, and the literature on the history of geopolitics of oil. It provides a useful background to Iraq prior to the second Persian Gulf War. It deserves to be widely read by scholars and by citizens concerned about war, occupation, and the new imperialism.

## **Book Review: What's So Great About America**

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D'Souza, Dinesh. *What's So Great About America*.  
New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2002. 218 pp.  
\$15.00 (paper).

*What's So Great About America* is a defense and analysis of America's role in the world in the aftermath of 11 September 2001. It is written from the perspective and insights of an immigrant from a Third World country, an immigrant who attributes his success to a country that to him is a model for the world. Obviously the product of much research and personal reflection, this book is thought-provoking and challenging.

In the preamble, D'Souza endeavors to put America into historical perspective by comparing this nation to the ancient Athenians who were a model for "civilized peoples everywhere." The Athenians were not only "a freedom-loving society" but functioned "within the bounds of the law." Athens was a commercial civilization whose people had access across state boundaries and who traded freely with their neighbors. Athenians, however, were not immune from the attacks of enemies; Pericles characterized these adversaries as "leaner, hungrier, and harder." The Athenians, therefore, were not only enjoined to consider Athens' greatness, but also to be willing to make sacrifices "to preserve Athenian liberty and the Athenian way of life." America today is in a similar position, facing enemies, but it must determine the "source of the conflict" and "the nature of the enemy."

Chapter 1 focuses on America's enemies and why they hate this nation. The author asserts that arguments for and against America "play out" in his life; moreover, he claims that over the years he has seen "the greatness of America reflected in" his experience here. He says that he does not take lightly what critics have to say about this country, but he categorically states that critics are wrong since "they are missing something of great significance about Western civilization and about the American way of life." His attacks are directed at "terrorists," "the European school" represented by the French, "the Asian school," "the Islamic school," "the political Left" in the USA, and the "political movement called multiculturalism." Multiculturalists, he claims, are powerful and are an influence in high school and colleges. They are opposed to immigrants assimilating to the American mainstream, since by doing so immigrants would lose their identity and give in to racism.

Chapter 2 is devoted to colonialism and how the West prevailed. The author denounces current views, particularly multiculturalism, that he claims teach students to "despise"

Western civilization and put it at the same level as other civilizations. Ethnocentrism, colonialism, and slavery are concomitant with the history of the West, but the author downplays the negative characterization applied to them by America's critics and suggests that these are not distinctively Western in origin. At the end of this chapter he makes the assertion that the success of the West is due to the interaction between science, democracy, and capitalism. It is capitalism, the author notes, that has "produced the great wealth and strength and success of Western civilization." Therefore, it is wrong to claim that the West grew rich from robbing Asia, Africa, and Latin America "because the West created its own wealth, and still does."

Chapter 3 is about "becoming American and why the American idea is unique," and interwoven into this chapter is a reflection of the author's reasons for wanting to come to the United States. Being from a middle-class background, the author was more privileged than those from poor backgrounds, but his destiny would have been determined more or less by the traditions of his culture had he not emigrated. He maintains that America provides great scope and opportunities for immigrants, but some immigrants cannot handle these freedoms without some ambivalence. And becoming an American is risky because one is likely to become alienated from one's culture. The process of assimilation is what concerns the author even though he considers it a good thing. He notes that, "when second-generation Asian-Americans become fully assimilated, they don't study as hard and their test scores fall." He mentions, with some ambivalence, that he is "quite willing to let his daughter date and choose the person she wants to marry, as long as the process begins at the age of thirty." Notwithstanding, he believes in the "melting pot" concept and decries the idea of it being considered racist.

Chapter 4 addresses what D'Souza terms the thorny subject of "reparations" which is directed specifically at African-Americans. Apparently the author has debated Jesse Jackson and others on this issue. Blacks, in particular, claim that America is oppressive and denies freedom and opportunity to minorities because it is racist and has always been. The author does not dispute the fact that racism does exist; one can find many instances of it. In debating this issue, reference is made to the fact that a distinction exists between the views of "indigenous" people of color (African-Americans and Native-Americans) and those of immigrants considered people of color. The author believes that the notion that old immigrants could easily pass for white is wrong because prejudice and hostility against earlier gen-

erations of Europeans immigrants were far greater than what Asian, African, and Latin American immigrants experience. Reference is made to the fact that Black leaders and scholars think that “societal racism is responsible for the current problems of blacks.” This viewpoint the author attempts to diffuse by pointing out that Black immigrants are not prevented by racism from being successful in the United States. They are in reality following the strategy of Booker T. Washington. Washington argued that African-Americans faced racism and cultural disadvantage; he also said that “black crime rates were too high, black savings too low, [and] blacks did not have enough respect for educational achievement.” The cultural problems facing Blacks nevertheless needed attention; if they were not addressed, “they would help racism by giving it an empirical foundation,” Washington warned. Evidence supporting immigrant success points to “assimilating to the cultural strategies of success.” D’Souza notes that:

The immigrants know that racism today is not systematic, it is episodic, and they are able to find ways to navigate around its obstacles. Even immigrants who start out at the very bottom are making rapid gains, surging ahead of African-Americans and claiming the American dream for themselves. West Indians, for instance, have established a strong business and professional community, and have nearly achieved income parity with whites.

And he argues that this is possible because:

The immigrants don’t spend a lot of time contemplating the hardships of the past; their gaze is firmly fixed on the future. They recognize that education and entrepreneurship are the fastest ladders to success in America. They push their children to study, so that they will be admitted to Berkeley and MIT, and that they can pool their resources and set up small businesses, so that they can make some money and move to the suburbs. There are plenty of hurdles along the way, but the immigrant is sustained by the hope that he, or his children, will be able to break the chain of necessity and pursue the American dream.

This reality does not detract from the fact that Black Americans have contributed much to the United States by forcing the country to live up to its highest principles. Consequently, immigrants:

owe a tremendous debt to the black civil rights movement for opening up doors that would otherwise have remained closed. All Americans have a lot to learn from African-Americans about suffering, about dignity, about creativity, and about charm. But it is also a fact that the black leadership can learn a lot from the immigrants, especially

black immigrants. African-Americans can move up faster if they focus less on manufacturing representation and more on building intellectual and economic skills. In this way blacks can achieve a level of competitive success that is ultimately the best, and final, refutation of “rumors of inferiority.”

Martin Luther King is cited for stating that we are responsible for what we do with our rights, what we do with our lives.

Chapter 5, titled “When Freedom Loses All Her Loveliness,” is concerned with freedom and its abuses. The author makes reference to the fact that the most serious accusation against America is that it is immoral. According to Muslim fundamentalists, the United States and the West, although materially advanced, are morally depraved. The view that the West is immoral is supported by the perceptions of critics within the United States and Europe. The blame for this is generally placed on technology and capitalism, but according to D’Souza, this is not the complete story. In the 1960s and 1970s, the United States experienced a moral revolution, a rebellion against society the author attributes to the philosopher Rousseau. Prior to Rousseau, no one believed that each person should follow his or her own unique “moral course, nor did anyone think of giving the inner self—the voice of nature within us—final authority in determining that course.” Both Augustine and Rousseau held that the “counsel of inwardness” was the means to arriving at the truth, but for Rousseau, self determines goodness. For Augustine, however, “the inward journey is merely a pathway to the Creator. The inner light is controlled by an outer source, and that source is God.” In other words, there is a moral order in the universe and that moral order is distinct from us. This moral framework, says D’Souza, was taken for granted by the majority of Americans in the 1950s, but it changed in the 1960s:

For the first time many people, especially young people, began to find the external rules arbitrary, senseless, and oppressive. The counterculture did not reject morality; it was passionately concerned with morality. But it substituted Rousseau’s conception of the inner compass for the rules of obligation. Getting in touch with one’s feelings and being true to oneself were now more important than conforming to the preexisting moral consensus of society. By embracing the new morality, the children of the 1960s became incomprehensible to their parents. And as this new generation inherited the reins of power, its ethos entered the mainstream. As a consequence of this change, America became a different country.

The author holds that our freedom and autonomy are valuable “commodities,” but the inner self needs a “compass” to direct it, and therefore the role of “conservatives” is to “steer the American ethic of authenticity to its highest mani-

festation and to ennoble freedom by showing it the path to virtue.” Why only conservatives are invoked is somewhat puzzling.

Chapter 6, “America the Beautiful,” explores American “exceptionalism and American universalism,” characteristics that have come under the onslaught of America’s enemies. At stake is the United States’ foreign policy, which the author defends, while, in part, recognizing the fact that mistakes have been made. Next, in the discussion, is the United States’ “evident moral superiority” which the author mentions is refuted by “leftist intellectuals,” here and abroad; by “American multiculturalists,” and “Islamic fundamentalists.” In denouncing cultural relativism, a concept attributed to multiculturalists, the writer attempts to explain what he means by American superiority by linking it to the right to free speech and people achieving shared objectives. The notion of the success of American ideas and culture, as far as the international marketplace is concerned and the fact that most immigrants from around the world prefer to come to the United States, is inconsequential to some cultures. In one country, a person’s life can be controlled by others, while in another, a person’s life can to a great extent be self-directed. In a free society, however, freedom includes the option to do what is good or what is evil. This freedom to choose is what the United States receives blame for. D’Souza says Muslim fundamentalists “don’t just object to the excesses of American liberty; they object to liberty itself.” But, in effect, virtue can be chosen freely whereas compulsion cannot produce virtue.

The author concludes this chapter by declaring that the American founders were aware that:

America is a new kind of society that produces a new kind of human being. That human being—confident, self-reliant, tolerant, generous, future

oriented—is a vast improvement over the wretched, servile, fatalistic, and intolerant human being that traditional societies have always produced, and that Islamic societies produce now. In America, the life we are given is not as important as the life we make.

In addition, he makes the claim that:

America is the greatest, freest, and most decent society in existence. It is an oasis of goodness in a desert of cynicism and barbarism. This country, once an experiment unique in the world, is now the last best hope for the world.

This claim is one that is bound to cause controversy, particularly in light of the writer’s expressed feelings about nations, personalities, and institutions he considers critics and enemies of the United States.

This text is fast-paced, written in readable, lucid, and straightforward language. It draws on research as well as on the author’s experiences and reflections. (Notes at the end of the text list research sources used). D’Souza attempts to define both the character and historical import of the United States in an engaging and challenging way. This book is apt to appeal to a broad political readership. Some or much of the discussion might be controversial to some readers, but it is worthwhile reading and can contribute to the reinforcement of one’s negative, positive, or ambivalent attitudes toward the United States of America. Two possible questions emerge from my analysis of the text. Does the author present strong and convincing arguments? Is the United States what the author perceives it to be? Answers to these questions will of course reflect each reader’s point of view.



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