Introduction

Welcome to Volume 9 Number 2 of the *Journal of International and Global Studies*. We continue to increase our subscriptions to this free open access online interdisciplinary journal. If you would like to subscribe to the journal, just click on the Subscribe tab below the journal title. We will be sure to send you the web link to the journal so that you can read and download the essays and book reviews in accordance with your interests. You will also provide us with a database so that we can draw on your expertise for peer reviewing essays for the journal.

This Spring/Summer 2018 issue features eight essays from a variety of different disciplines, one Review Essay, and 25 book reviews on globalization topics (defined broadly), a predominant theme of the journal.

The first essay is by Shawn Smallman from Portland State University on ‘Conspiracy Theories and the Zika Epidemic.’ Smallman discusses the conspiracy narratives that blamed the mosquito borne Zika virus that broke out in Brazil in 2015 on science, various chemical companies such as Monsanto and Oxitec, the Rockefeller Foundation (that supposedly created ‘The New World Order,’), the Illuminati, the Eugenics Movement, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Gates Foundation, or other foreign agents. Some of these theories recycled older conspiracy theories circulated in Latin America during the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic. These conspiracy theories reflect both fear created by some trends in birth defects, especially microcephaly in infants, and a significant mistrust of accurate information put out by public health authorities and transnational corporations. Smallman draws on Portuguese, Spanish, and English materials from blogs, websites, newspapers, YouTube, videos, and other social media like Whatsapp or Reddit postings to present how these conspiracy narratives regarding the Zika virus spread like wildfire throughout Latin America, Brazil, and elsewhere in the world. Pesticides and GMO crops produced by Monsanto, Oxitec’s production of GMO mosquitoes, and vaccines distributed by the Gates Foundation were blamed for the virus. Smallman describes the global context for the development of these conspiracy theories including the lack of solid data on the virus, the fears of microcephaly, interventions by the US into Latin America, and mistrust of health authorities.

The second essay is by Daniel Varisco who is currently a scholar at the Institute for Social Anthropology in the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. Varisco is a well-known anthropologist who writes about the Middle East, Islam, Orientalism, and related topics. In this essay he discusses Darwin’s theory of evolution and its relationship to Islamic thought and debates in the Middle East. Comparing the Qur’anic and Judeo-Christian Genesis versions of the creation of the world Varisco indicates that there are both similarities but differences in the narratives. Varisco describes how Darwin’s theory was initially distributed in the Middle East by Arab Christians familiar with Western science and how it created controversies among conservative Islamic religious scholars and elicited a variety of interpretations by Western-trained Muslim scientists, as well as provoking an anti-Darwin movement by an Islamic creationist known by the pseudonym Harun Yahya. These Arab Christians who translated Darwin argued that the theory was materialistic and atheistic, which became a widespread theme reiterated by many Muslim religious scholars. Yet, Varisco also discusses how some Muslim scholars who became acquainted with Darwin’s theory viewed him as a scientist whose teachings needed respect in relationship to the Qur’anic injunction for all humans to seek
knowledge in one’s life. Many of these Muslims adopted a theistic view of evolution, similar to those views by some Protestant and Catholic theologians. However, a digital anti-Darwin website by a controversial but charismatic Turkish cyber entrepreneur, Adnan Oktar, under a pseudonym Harun Yahya has been spreading creationist views throughout the Middle East. Varisco concludes that Darwin’s evolutionary views should not be imposed by outsiders, but rather evaluated and considered by Muslim scientists and scholars themselves.

The third essay is by Andria D. Timmer and Danielle Docka-Filipe at Christopher Newport University. Timmer has been engaged in current ethnographic research in Hungary. These scholars focus on the role of NGOs as an aspect of civil society in Hungary, especially in respect to the refugee crisis of the summer of 2015. In the essay Timmer and Docka-Filipe examine how civil society has developed in Hungary following the end of the Soviet era. They begin the essay by describing how the NGO known as Open Hearts has concluded that the right wing populist and xenophobic Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his political party Fidesz have been suppressing freedom of the press and civil society, and classifying their NGO as well as others as ‘Enemies of the Nation’. Open Hearts has been involved in assisting Hungarian individuals and families with free clinics, soup kitchens, educational and youth groups, in particular the Roma ethnic minority, and the homeless since 1989 during the transition from Soviet rule to democracy. They were also very active in assisting asylum seekers and refugees who entered Hungary in unprecedented numbers in the summer of 2015. Thus, Orbán and his government categorized this NGO as ‘enemies’, along with the Hungarian-American billionaire George Soros and his Open Society organization who are accused of assisting non-Hungarian refugees, including Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis, and Kurds and promoting open borders. Timmer and Docka-Filipe indicate that the attack on civil society and liberal society in Hungary is not new, however, in the past it was not as transparent as it is currently. The authors conclude that NGOs may serve as “canaries in the coal mine,” as the movements toward an increasing illiberalism and abandonment of democratic principles and civil society are creating havoc in Europe and elsewhere.

The fourth essay is by Daisuke Akimoto and independent scholar who is based in Shinjuku, Tokyo, Japan. His essay examines the recent “Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty” (NWPT) that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on July 7, 2017. 122 non-nuclear countries voted in favor of the treaty. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and other international organizations were active in their attempt towards disarmament. However, the Japanese government voted against the NWPT while commenting that the government wanted to assist in the elimination of nuclear elimination. As Japan has been the only country to have ever been struck by a nuclear weapon in war, Akimoto tries to answer the question as why the government voted against the NWPT. The essay combines what he terms “analytical eclecticism” and international relations (IR) theories to deal with Japan’s ambiguous policy toward nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Much of the Japanese media criticized the government for its vote against the resolution. Akimoto utilizes IR theories including classical liberalism, neoliberalism, classical realism, neo-realism, and constructivism to assess the multiple factors as to why the Japanese government opposed the NWPT. All of these IR theories have relevance in understanding these issues. He argues that Japan as the sole country affected by nuclear weapons, the Japanese government should resolve to lead a global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament educational program and international movement.

The fifth essay entitled “Creating a Global Sustainable Lifelong Learning Society: An Andragogical Approach” is authored by Suwithida Charungkaittikul from Chulalongkorn
University in Bangkok and John Henschke at Lindenwood University. They are both specialists in the field of andragogy, the art and science of helping adults learn in contrast to teaching children. These scholars of andragogical methods have been implementing adult education in Thailand, Brazil, South Africa, Mali, and Austria as discussed in this essay. They discuss the characteristics of adult learners that are utilized by these applied education scholars doing andragogical and lifelong learning programs. They emphasize that the andragogical approach focuses on the individual and personal development of these adults in various countries. In addition, these applied education scholars encourage strategies for building sustainable lifelong learning programs that will provide improvements in people’s lives, democratic participation, national growth, and economic and social development.

The sixth essay by Fernando Magalhães an anthropologist who is based at an Interdisciplinary Centre of Social Sciences in Portugal. He illuminates the literary works of Fernando Pessoa, Mário de Sá-Carneiro, and the painter and poet Almada Negreiros who founded Portuguese modernism, and the concept of sensacionismo (sensationism) with a sociocultural analysis in the context of early twentieth century Portugal. Magalhães concentrates primarily on Pessoa’s work as the paradigmatic case of modernism. He demonstrates how Pessoa’s poetic and literary works emerged within the historical context of the economic and political crisis, which involved new competition from the British empire and the fall of the monarchy and the rise of the Portuguese republic in 1910. The modernist movement criticized the romantic bourgeois assumptions that had developed earlier in Portuguese literature influenced by Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx. Modernism integrated Kantian philosophy with the work of Arthur Rimbaud, Ezra Pound, Baudelaire, and the art of Salvador Dali into the modernist movement. Pessoa and other modernists criticized bourgeois hypocrisy and romanticism as expressed in the work of Victor Hugo and George Sand. Another aspect of modernism was its integration of futurism related to globalizing factors such as the speed of technological inventions like the automobile, airplanes, and the industrializing cities. Pessoa and other modernists were fully engaged in representing these new global forces into their literary works.

The seventh essay is by G.S. Mmaduabuchi Okeke and Tola Odubajo. Okeke is in the Department of Political Science at the University of Lagos in Nigeria while Odubajo was conducting research through the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa. They write about the economic integration and security challenges in West Africa and southern Africa in relationship to global terrorism and other human security issues. The authors apply a functionalist approach in international relations theory to understand the various regional groupings such as the 1975 formation of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) led by the Nigerian military government and the more recent Southern African Development Community (SADC) that were developed to further economic growth and welfare security. The functionalist approach emphasizes the institutional needs for cooperation and peace in contrast to the realist power politics perspective that focuses on conflict, disunity, and discord. The authors describe the security challenges and needs for reform in West African states ranging from the civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Cote d’Ivoire, the revolt in Mali and Niger Republic, the Niger Delta Crisis in Nigeria and the Boko Haram terrorism along the Chad Basin, as well as organized crime, arms trafficking, illegal mining, sea piracy, etc. They discuss how the ECOWAS has had some limited success in some of these security problems such as in Mali. The SADC in southern Africa faced different challenges related to the issues of South Africa state, apartheid, and post-apartheid developments and
political instabilities. The authors compare ECOWAS and SADC and conclude that these organizations must develop multistate coordination efforts rather than just relying on Nigeria and South Africa and also include sub-regional involvement as well as international NGO investigations for more objective reporting to provide information to help solve some of these problems.

The eighth essay is co-authored by Afroz Ahmad in the Centre for Security Studies in the School of International Studies at the Central University of Gujarat and Ms. Najish in the Centre for Indo Pacific Studies at the School of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University. These two International Studies scholars write about the counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and India following terrorist attacks in the US on 9/11/01 and in Mumbai 26/11/08. They note that though both New Delhi and Washington recognize the importance of coordinating their joint efforts in counterterrorism, at times they have been reluctant to cooperate because of mistrust and misperceptions. Summarizing some of the trends of terrorism in India ranging from the Sikh uprising in the 1980s, Muslim separatist movements in Jammu and Kashmir, other ethnic separatist developments in northeastern states, and the leftist-extremist Naxalite and Maoist movements in rural areas, the authors identify the challenges that New Delhi faces. Prior to 9/11/01, the US had cooperated with India on some limited counterterrorism operations. But after 9/11 and the US war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq, New Delhi and Washington issued a joint statement emphasizing how the Taliban and Al-Qaida threatened both of their countries. The authors describe how cooperation on counterterrorism deepened between the two countries following the Mumbai terror attack on 26/11/08. More recently in 2017 the Trump administration has met with Prime Minister Modi to establish partnerships for regional security and international peace. The authors conclude that despite some persistent misperceptions that are obstacles to joint efforts in counterterrorism, India and the US need to work towards more effective coordination in intelligence gathering.


Volume 9 Number 2 also includes 25 book reviews dealing with global trends throughout the world; we intend to maintain this standard of generalized interdisciplinary readability for all of our essays and book reviews in future issues of our journal. We hope that you will subscribe to our journal to read future essays, review essays, and book reviews. We also invite you to submit essays, review essays, book reviews, and suggest possible book reviews for the journal.

Sincerely,

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