Introduction

Welcome to our third issue of the *Journal of International and Global Studies*. As stated in our inaugural issue, this online journal has been launched as a forum for an interdisciplinary approach to comprehending the consequences of globalization and all of its manifestations throughout the world. This third issue leads off with an essay by Ernesto Braam, an Islamic Studies scholar based at the Hague, who was a EU observer of the Iraqi elections of 2010. The essay focuses on the influence of the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali al-Sistani on the election process. Braam had an intimate account of the election activities, which included an invited meeting with Grand Ayatollah Bashir al-Najafi and his staff. This essay produces a highly nuanced understanding of Sistani’s intervention in Iraqi politics and the election process and the implications for the future of Shia political and religious activities in Iraq.

The second essay by Padmini Banerjee and Myna German deals with the ramifications of new communication technologies and migration around the world. Cell phones, the Internet, email, fax, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, and other online social networks and communication technologies have changed the circumstances for diasporic and other migrant communities in different regions of the world. Banerjee and German focus on how these communication technologies has produced what they refer to as neo-culturation and transnationalism as they draw on the classical work of Otiz, Appadurai, Portes, and other scholars in this area. They suggest that the new lexicon introducing terms such as *hyper-reality*, *cyberspace*, *virtual community*, *digital nomads*, or *cyborg identity* have to be used cautiously in this area of research. This research is bound to become a more important topic as this information age unfolds. (One side note, German and Banerjee are editing a collection of papers on this topic through our Center for International and Global Studies, Lindenwood University Press for the Spring of 2011).

The third essay by education specialists at Kennesaw State University is based on research on two groups of student teachers based in Belize in Central America. As the authors indicate, more than one hundred universities and colleges in the U.S. offer student teaching abroad opportunities through participation in a larger consortium or through developing their own programs. These programs are aimed at developing global and international competence in order to help teachers prepare for more student diversity in the U.S. multicultural classrooms. The study illuminates how the student teachers were able to transfer their knowledge in an international context to the U.S. domestic multicultural circumstances.

The fourth essay by anthropologist Peter Castro focuses on the role of applied anthropologists during the Cold War as they participated in the Smithsonian Institution’s Institute of Social Anthropology (ISA) that was established to assist various countries in Latin America. Castro’s historical research supplemented by interviews with some of the anthropologists who participated in this program demonstrates that the ISA was not a U.S. front to promote covert counter-insurgency operations against leftist or communist trends in Latin America, but rather offered opportunities that benefitted both U.S. and Latin American applied programs in medical anthropology. This essay critiques some of the earlier misinformed perspectives of the ISA in Latin America and the role of U.S. and Latin American anthropologists.

The fifth essay by Imdat Ozen utilizes a statistical Z-test to measure the inter-group dynamics that influence European skepticism towards Turkey’s acceptance into the European Union. The author uses content analysis of statements made by some elite members of a
peripheral Turkish religious party, the Felicity Party to measure these group dynamics based on trust, nationalism, and religion. Readers who may abstain from analyzing statistical materials can readily understand the analysis without any knowledge of this statistical technique. The results of this study are generalized to other group settings associated with the well known social identity theory pioneered by Tajfel and his students in social psychology. The sixth essay by Janelle Johnson, an education specialist, focuses on a cross-cultural education project. She uses a comparative case study of two models of cross-cultural professional development organization. One program is based in Lake Atitlan in Guatemala and the other is a USAID government funded program for Mexicans and Guatemalans who participated in a year-long program in the U.S. Johnson observed the program at Lake Atitlan in Guatemala and did research among the Mexicans and Guatemalans who were in the year-long program in the U.S. She wanted to investigate questions such as whether the cross-cultural, global experiences had transformative influences on the teachers participating in these programs and what could be learned about educational institutions in these different societies, including the U.S. Johnson’s research based on in-depth interviews and testimonies help illuminate the process of professional development and teacher education in a world with global inequities.

As always, all of the essays in the Journal of International and Global Studies are aimed at a general audience without any specific disciplinary training. We intend to maintain this standard of generalized interdisciplinary readability for all of our essays in future issues of our journal.

Finally, this issue of Journal of International and Global Studies has substantial reviews of seven books by reputable scholars around the world that have a bearing on globalization issues. We hope that you enjoy and profit from the essays and reviews in this online journal and continue to return to this site www.lindenwood.edu/jigs to pursue useful contributions on understanding globalization issues.

Sincerely,

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