Introduction

Welcome to our second issue of the Journal of International and Global Studies. Our first issue was very successful and we have had many scholars, from many different disciplines, subscribe, for free, to our online journal. If you would like to subscribe to the journal, just click on the tab at the top of the page 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 in accordance with your interests.

We are pleased to have another group of excellent essays for our second issue. Our lead essay reflects the interdisciplinary focus of the journal because it is a multi-authored piece on a significant ailment known as Chagas disease that has had an impact on various tropical areas throughout the world. As the essay notes, this endemic disease has affected some 8 to 11 million people in Latin America. The authors have been conducting epidemiological studies in the Arequipa region of southern Peru focusing on risk factors such as migration, settlement patterns, population growth, and urban poverty as sources of how the disease is transmitted rapidly. All of these authors have been engaged in both the epidemiological studies as well as suggesting preventative methods for containing the transmission of this disease. The medical anthropologist, Joseph Bastion (University of Utah), who was a pioneer in the study of Chagas disease, stated, as a peer reviewer, that the essay was a state-of-the-art comprehensive account of the problem in southern Peru and Latin America.

The second essay in this issue is a remarkably sophisticated theoretical account of how what has been described as late capitalism and hypermodernity has influenced actual local developments throughout various regions of the world. Ismael Vaccaro describes how the hypermobility and flexible manufacturing platforms associated with these new global trends such as reducing the costs of labor, or avoiding environmental regulations have had radically transformed the social and ecological rural landscapes in peripheral locales across the world. Drawing on the work of anthropologists such as anthropologist James Ferguson’s research on the copper industry in Zambia, Vaccaro explores how the mining industries, textile firms, auto companies, timber mills, fish processing, and rubber plantations have outsourced and relocated their manufacturing and corporate agribusinesses to leave behind devastated local moral communities across the world. Although these trends developed with early industrial processes in England that disrupted local rural areas during the nineteenth century, in the postindustrial age, these developments that have created economic recessions, depopulation, and other losses have become much more frequent and global. The essay concludes with contemporary sources such as the Wall Street Journal to reflect on recent economic and global trends that are ongoing. We believe that this essay, with its theoretical framework of hypermodernity that draws on a vast range of materials will facilitate more productive research on these processes in the future.

Our third essay is an empirical study of the familial and other institutional factors that influence academic achievement among African American and other African and Caribbean students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at one university. Noting that in general African American student achievement is below that of other groups especially with respect to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, the author utilizes the heuristic Cultural-Ecological Theory of Minority School Performance developed by anthropologist John Ogbu, while indicating the limitations of that model, to measure the factors that result in academic achievement of some African Americans compared to other African and Caribbean students. The study indicates that the African and Caribbean students are much more academically integrated to campus academic life than the African American students. The
author reviews the studies of African American student achievement in math and science and retention and graduation rates in comparison with other ethnic groups that conclude that differences in financial support, academic skills, social peer cooperation and integration, supportive faculty, advisors, and administrators, as well as family involvement are important significant factors that account for differential academic achievement. Williamson’s study has made a definite contribution to this important area of research and demonstrates how effective strategies and policies such as facilitating a conducive campus culture can benefit African American males within the science and mathematics disciplines.

The interesting essay by Linda O’Brien Rothe on a song tradition based on the famous K’iché Popul Vuh text among the Tz’utujil Maya in the Guatemala highlands in the town of Santiago on the southern shores of Lake Atitlán demonstrates both the retention and loss of tradition subjected to the globalizations processes introduced by the Spanish continuing through the devastating 36 years of violence in those communities in the recent era. Despite all of these changes since the 16th century, the Tz’utujil song texts that have been documented and recorded and analyzed by the author illustrate how some aspects of cultural tradition has been preserved since the pre-Hispanic period. The author provides a substantive account of the symbolic sacred geographical and ecological concepts maintained by the Tz’utujil Maya through their oral literature and reinforced within their song texts. Although the author concludes that comparing the Tz’utujil Maya song texts with the K’iché Popul Vuh text is like comparing apples and oranges, her analysis tends to demonstrate that the original Popul Vuh text may have been constructed and maintained with an important mnemonic musical component.

David Aworawo examines the historical context and recent political interrelationships between the country of Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. He documents the numerous domestic political and economic changes that have resulted in conflict and discord between these two countries. Aworawo provides the historical and global circumstances of colonial and post-colonial and the post-Cold War and post-apartheid intra-African politics that influenced the negative political developments between these countries. Following the overthrow of theNguema regime, and the end of the Nigerian military government of General Olusegun Obasanjo that handed over power to the civilian government of Shehu Shagari in 1979, relations began to improve. However, the continued ill-treatment and mass-murder of Nigerian workers reported in Equatorial Guinea soured relations between the two states. As Equatorial Guinea transformed its economy from a cocoa producing one to an oil-based exporting one, less Nigerian immigrants were attracted to the area. This resulted in less ethnic conflict between the two countries. The end of the Cold War and end of Apartheid which had increased discord between Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea began to diminish. This essay provides insight into one of the neglected political arenas of African politics.

In the “The Art of Governing the Self and Others in the Christian Philippines” Pak Nung Wong draws on Foucault’s conceptions of governmentality and other post-structuralists to produce an intriguing ethnographic account of the creolization of values in an interethnic frontier region of the Cagayan valley area where the traditional power/knowledge structure based on the precolonial and post-colonial padrino system and Catholic ritualized kinship compadrazgo are being developed to construct creative innovations in local communities, resolve interethnic conflict, and place constraints on individual self-aggrandizement. Through illuminating and rich ethnographic detail of particular cases, the author demonstrates how the padrino patronage system is creatively used in novel circumstances in this region to coordinate interests and reciprocal systems of exchange and power such as gifts, favors, and other kinship and non-
kinship based political resources into a fabric of symbiotic codes and social practices that govern interpersonal relations and govern self-interest. This frontier community in the Philippines has creatively produced its sophisticated creolization of traditional precolonial cultural values and postcolonial political tendencies to manage conflict violence and inter-ethnic relationships.

The final essay in our second issue compares and contrasts the Indo-Trinidadian diasporic communities in North America (Toronto, Los Angeles, Washington, and Miami) and London, England and how they struggled to define their distinctive identities in relationship to the Afro-Caribbean and Asian Indian immigrant communities. Noting that race-relations in Trinidad and Tobago their perceived second-class status, along with increasing crime rates were important ingredients and push-factors for migration for these Indo-Trinidadians, these diasporic communities found themselves categorized by North Americans and the British as “Carnival Citizens.” Despite these negative stereotypes, the Indo-Trinidadians adapted to their new circumstances and along with the increasing multicultural policies in North America and England, they have assimilated successfully into their new surroundings.

Along with the essays, just as in our first issue, in the second issue we have ten book reviews of significant works that have been produced in various fields. The book reviews as well as the essays are intended to attract those scholars who have an interest in interdisciplinary research and in globalization and its consequences throughout the world. Again, as we stated in our first issue of the journal, 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. We also invite you to submit essays and suggest possible book reviews for the journal.

Sincerely,

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