Introduction

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This Fall 2014 issue features seven essays from a variety of different disciplines, one review essay, and 18 book reviews on globalization topics (defined broadly), a predominant theme of the journal. The lead essay by Timothy S. Rich discusses a topic seldom addressed in international relations; how to incorporate microstates into cross-national studies. Microstates make up one-fifth of all sovereign states. Rich’s contribution to this discussion highlights the importance of considering this topic for international relations theory and empirically-based comparative studies. The second essay by Helena Wallenberg-Lerner and Wayne B. Janes is a cross-georegional study that focuses on the perceived affective components that are necessary for the development of a global society. Although they indicate there have been surveys of international education that investigate global competence, the subject of affective components for global competence is neglected or marginalized. These authors use a sophisticated questionnaire distributed to eight different georegions including Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, North America, South/Latin America, Oceania, and Sub-Saharan Africa to help illuminate what affective components are perceived to be most important for cross-cultural, international, and global competence. This discussion contributes to how an understanding of affective components of global, cross-cultural, and international competence is necessary for the field of international education and development.

The third essay by Robert Oprisko and Kristopher Kaliher is a sophisticated philosophical discussion of how a state ought to be understood as a ‘person’ within international relations theory. They begin with Wendt’s 2004 classic essay “The State as Person in International Theory” with its attempts to fully engage the concept of personhood with the biological characteristics of an organism. Wendt drew on John Searle’s notions of intentionality in order to argue that there really is such a thing as collective intentional behavior, which is not the same as the summation of individual intentional behavior. Other IR theorists rejected these realist notions of states as persons. Oprisko and Kaliher discuss the nuanced discourse of these philosophical debates. They conclude, drawing on Bourdieu’s conceptions of social reality, and Oprisko’s arguments regarding ‘honor’ in his Routledge 2012 book, that Wendt’s arguments for a Darwinian-based ‘state as organism’ cannot be sustained ontologically and IR theorists need to be skeptical of these claims in dealing with international affairs.

The fourth essay by anthropologist Leila Rodriguez explores the issues of Nigerian immigrants in the U.S. She utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data in order to investigate the motivations for political activities of the Nigerian immigrants in both Nigeria and the U.S. Rodriguez explores the transnational political developments that influence the Yoruban and Igbo Nigerian immigrant population in New York City. Although Nigerians immigrants can have dual citizenship defined by the Nigerian constitution and can vote both in the U.S. and in Nigeria, only the wealthy can actually travel to vote in their home country elections. In addition,
those with greater income and education participate in various associations in order to mobilize political activities. Nigerian men tend to become more involved in political activities than women. Thus, Rodriguez found that class, gender, and the degree of acculturation are significant factors in both U.S. domestic and transnational politics.

The fifth essay by anthropologist Brandon Lundy provides a rich ethnographic case study of a development project in Guinea-Bissau. The case study focuses on the process of developing a guesthouse building project among the Nalú of southern Guinea-Bissau to illustrate how a local attempt to connect with globalization is intersected by community relations, NGOs, and development discourse. Lundy draws on participant observation, interviews, and focus groups to investigate how NGOs and community leaders participate in decision-making as they negotiate their interests and evaluate how to proceed in these development activities. Although the guesthouse building project does not develop in the manner that community leaders desired, Lundy emphasizes how these community leaders exhibit individual agency in the context of ethnic and power inequities of various stakeholders throughout the negotiations process.

The sixth essay by R. Swaminathan is a nuanced assessment of the politics of technoscapes with a focus on the intersection of social media and the internet. However, he demonstrates that social media is not only different from that of the Internet with a high degree of relative autonomy in its relationship with the Internet. Discussing the evolution of the technoscape, Swaminathan argues that this autonomy of social media is mutating into a set of digitally mediated spaces with their own scripted and connected logic of inclusion and exclusion. Within these technoscape developments, democratic processes are becoming more unequal and fragmenting. As the Internet becomes more virtual and embedded within our daily lives it expands our notions of sociality, while simultaneously promoting exclusive and inclusive zones of geographic, social, economic, and technological inequalities. In addition, Swaminathan indicates that a form of singularity has been created that integrates humans, algorithms, codes, and machines. Drawing on Giddens, he contends that the politics of the technoscape as evident by the example of the Arab Spring are mutating so quickly that not only does the distantiation between time and space seem artificial, but it actually seems to be moldable enough for it either to exist individually, collectively, or as a singularly merged entity. Although critiquing forms of technological determinism, Swaminathan suggests that as this globalization of the technoscape evolves, the processes of international politics have been transformed dramatically.

The seventh essay by Colonel Abiodun Joseph Oluwadare from the Open University of Nigeria discusses the recent conflict in Mali. He discusses the African Union and The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) who played prominent and successful roles in wars and conflicts in places like Burundi, Darfur, Chad, Somalia, and Liberia. Oluwadare suggests that the US, European Union and its member nations, along with the United Nations provided their support to these regional and sub-regional organizations. However, the U.S., European Union, and the UN did not provide the same support for these organizations regarding the conflicts in Mali. Oluwadare contends that the late intervention by France into the Mali conflict undermined the logistic and military support needed to resolve this conflict. Following a discussion of the history and evolution of the African Union, including its financial weaknesses, he provides a detailed narrative regarding the roots of the conflict in Mali, and the subsequent developments. He concludes that peace in Africa must involve leadership of the African
regional and sub-regional organizations and the coordination of their efforts in conflict areas with the major international powers.

We have one excellent review essay on three Routledge titles dealing with international relations theory by scholar Charmaine G. Misalucha from De La Salle University in Manila. As in the past, we have a number of book reviews for 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, 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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