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# THE LOCAL AND THE GLOBAL: The Anthropology of Globalization and Transnationalism

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## ABSTRACT

This review examines current anthropological literature concerned with migration and other forms of population movement, and with the movement of information, symbols, capital, and commodities in global and transnational spaces. Special attention is given to the significance of contemporary increases in the volume and velocity of such flows for the dynamics of communities and for the identity of their members. Also examined are innovations in anthropological theory and forms of representation that are responses to such nonlocal contexts and influences.

## *Introduction*

The American Anthropological Association's (AAA's) *1994 Survey of Departments* reports the following predictions by department chairs concerning directions of anthropology in the next 25 years: 1. There will be "greater emphasis on the contemporary world and processes of global change"; 2. anthropology will become "more interdisciplinary"; and 3. "sociocultural anthropology will find it increasingly advantageous to involve its faculty [in programs]...such as sustainable development, world ecology, environmental studies, comparative global perspectives, global interdependence and internationalization" (40:1). This trend is already well advanced as evidenced by

recent publications, conferences, papers, and sessions at the 1994 Annual Meeting of the AAA, and introductory cultural anthropology texts. This review examines recent work concerning community, migration, identity, and anthropological theory in global and transnational contexts.

The land surfaces of the earth are mostly divided into national territories. Globalization as used herein refers to social, economic, cultural, and demographic processes that take place within nations but also transcend them, such that attention limited to local processes, identities, and units of analysis yields incomplete understanding of the local (7:11–12). In other words, we are dealing with “the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (38:64). Furthermore, implicit in this idea is the assumption that globalization is deepening. Given cultural anthropology’s commitment to study of local communities, globalization has implications for its theory and methods. Also, given the national character of anthropology, centered as it is in the so-called Western nations, globalization entails certain displacements of the production of anthropological knowledge from its historic national institutional and cultural contexts to other sites. One is tempted to say such displacement is from center to periphery, but as discussed below, globalization implies a decay of that distinction.

Transnationalism overlaps globalization but typically has a more limited purview. Whereas global processes are largely decentered from specific national territories and take place in a global space, transnational processes are anchored in and transcend one or more nation-states (7:5–10; 64). Thus transnational is the term of choice when referring, for example, to migration of nationals across the borders of one or of more nations (42–44, 70). Similarly, transnational corporations operate worldwide but are centered in one home nation.

The “nation” in transnational usually refers to the territorial, social, and cultural aspects of the nations concerned. Implicit in anthropological studies of transnational processes is the work of the “state,” as for example the guardian of national borders, the arbiter of citizenship, and the entity responsible for foreign policy. Transnational and global phenomena conflict with the jurisdiction and power of states and are what might be called “trans-statal.” This term has not gained common usage, but the conditions suggesting it are reflected in the works of those who write about globalization and transnationalism.

Transnational calls attention to the cultural and political projects of nation-states as they vie for hegemony in relations with other nation-states, with their citizens and “aliens.” This cultural-political dimension of transnationalism is signaled by its resonance with nationalism as a cultural and political project, whereas globalization implies more abstract, less institutionalized, and less intentional processes occurring without reference to nations, e.g. technological

developments in mass international communication and the impersonal dynamics of global popular and mass culture, global finance, and the world environment. This distinction between the universal and impersonal character of the former versus the political and ideological dimensions of the latter is indicated in the form of the terms as used herein, that is, use of the suffixes *-ization* versus *-ism*, respectively.

Anthropological knowledge and practice have long been responsive to these processes, but only recently has a global sociology of knowledge emerged. For example, Brenneis (13) reports on rhetorical practices within the National Science Foundation (NSF) as it seeks to conceptualize global research problems that demand a rethinking of intellectual and political borders. Similarly, Bourdieu (10, 11) speaks to a changing global sociology of knowledge in which he extends his notion of the scientific field to a world context with a hierarchy of national social sciences in which dominant ones impose categories of perception and evaluation that distort the production of knowledge in and about the dominated nations. Below I examine the impact of globalization not only on the findings and theories of anthropology, but also on several of its epistemological categories.

### *Global Theory*

A proposition explored in this review is that movement is taking place in sociocultural anthropology from what might be called a modern constellation of general theory and problems to anthropological theory and problems appropriately called global. If such a shift is occurring, then the new perspective should be expressed as a reconfiguration of the images and assumptions of several basic world-view universals (69), namely space, time, and classification.

Globalization mediated by migration, commerce, communication technology, finance, tourism, etc entails a reorganization of the bipolar imagery of space and time of modern world view, which is also expressed in modern anthropological theory. It is a progressive bipolar time stretching between the beginning and the end of history. The spatial correlate of this time has metropolitan centers and peripheral sites stitched together by dendritic lines of communication that are replicated in hierarchical branching systems of classification and administration.

Globalization entails a shift from two-dimensional Euclidian space with its centers and peripheries and sharp boundaries, to a multidimensional global space with unbounded, often discontinuous and interpenetrating sub-spaces. Movement in this direction has gone hand in glove with theory and research that refocused attention from communities bounded within nations and from nations themselves to spaces of which nations are components. A major milestone in this shift is Wallerstein's (135) first volume of *The Modern World*

*System*, which offers a view of global relationships in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, within what Wallerstein calls a European world-economy. It is not a political entity, but rather an unprecedented economic integration unlike empires, city-states, and emerging nation-states, which are forms it encompasses (135:15). Although the world-system is primarily an economic system, Wallerstein's charting of it lays the base for subsequent attention to global aspects of culture and identity (see below). What were its bounds? Anticipating a theme examined below, Wallerstein presciently noted, "it is hard to speak of boundaries" (135:15; see also 1a, 77).

World-system theory drew heavily on dependency theory (e.g. 19, 27), but whereas dependency theory envisioned history as the unfolding of relationships between nations and their colonies, and between developed and "de-developed" nations, world-system theory displaced the zone of analysis to a global space within which nation-states were relativized with other units. Furthermore, whereas dependency theory envisioned centers and peripheries, world-system theory supported a more complex, less polar imagery of space-time, with a "semi-periphery" interposed between the centers and the peripheries. This spatiality of history offered a more decentered view of differentiation than the imagery of distinct centers and peripheries and moved thinking toward an imagery of the local in the global. But as Grewal & Kaplan (55:11) note, "[w]hat is lost in an uncritical acceptance of this binary division is precisely the fact that the parameters of the local and global are often indefinable or indistinct—they are permeable constructs. How one separates the local from the global is difficult to decide when each thoroughly infiltrates the other."

As for time, so hegemonic is the idea of development in the master narrative of progress embedded in anthropological thought that there is no good term for its antithesis, i.e. a nonteleological sense of time, although such an attitude is being expressed increasingly (e.g. 29, 30, 32). Dependency theory proposed de-development, a marked term that affirms a primary, unmarked natural status to development. The image of unilineal time informing theories of development, i.e. time running from lesser to greater development, is logico-structurally consistent (69) with the binary space of centers and peripheries. A theme examined below is the implosion of peripheries into centers, effected by transnational migration, global marketing, electronic media, and tourism. This implosion also has implications for the eschatological vision of developmental thinking and creates the social conditions in which other courses for global history can be imagined. Nonteleological thinking has long prevailed in biology, a science that recognizes the randomness of evolutionary processes and the commonness of species extinction. A comparable awareness of possible global human destinies is entering the social sciences via demogra-

phy, in which one finds less than sanguine views regarding the developmental potential of many global regions (see e.g. 23).

Movement toward global theory also corresponds to some postcolonial displacement of the loci, authors, and subjects of historiography from central elites to the periphery, even as the spatial and categorical distinctions between center and periphery lessen. In the modern era this displacement begins with dependency theory, most of the authors of which are Latin Americans writing from the periphery. Nevertheless, the history of the modern world as portrayed by dependency and world-system theories is somewhat of a subjectless history. Wolf (139) advanced this displacement by writing about “the people without history” within a global perspective. This trend continues to deepen. Thus, whereas the precursors of global theory focused on the economic aspects of production, trade, colonialism, and imperialism, contemporary anthropological global theory is innovating theories of culture, social organization, and identity for global and transnational persons and communities.

The most cogent and comprehensive analysis of changing images of time and space associated with globalization is Harvey’s (66). Although not dealing with globalization per se, Harvey’s thesis is that a marked acceleration in a secular trend of time-space compression in capitalist political economy is central to current culture change. Time compression results from the imperative in capitalism to constantly shorten the average turnover time between investment and the taking of profit. During periods of capitalist restructuring, changes are made that markedly reduce turnover time by shrinking barriers to production, marketing, and profit taking, while also relocating production so as to disrupt worker solidarity. According to Harvey, “it is exactly at such moments that major shifts in systems of representation, cultural forms, and philosophical sentiment occur” (p. 239). The most recent shift began with the recession of 1973, occasioned in part by OPEC’s raising oil prices and the Arab embargo of oil exports to the West. Western industries adapted to this situation by shifting from Fordist to flexible forms of production and accumulation (p. 145). Liberated from the fixity of smokestack industries, strategies of flexible accumulation took advantage of global opportunities in labor markets, research and development, materials, assembly, and marketing, thus spatially disaggregating business operations, while also decreasing turnover time by shifting from heavy to light industries and services. Reduction of turnover time was also facilitated by means for rapid transmission of information, goods, services, and capital. Overall this shift amounted to “another fierce round in that process of annihilation of space through time that has always lain at the center of capitalism’s dynamic...” (p. 293). For Harvey, such postmodernism is not a definitive historic break, but instead is a technological, social, and cultural reflex of contemporary capitalism as a global process.

### *Urban Anthropology and the New Migration*

In the 1980s the city also emerges as a site for the reworking of imagery of center and periphery by urban sociologists who reject a view of urban space as bounded centers that contrast with rural hinterlands in favor of polycentric approaches. Working within Lefebvre's (82) "production of space perspective," Gottdiener (52) says that contemporary US urban space of late capitalism is "decentered," "deconcentrated," and "polynucleated," and as such is a qualitatively new form of multidimensional space, unlike the two-dimensional, planar space of map makers. The functional integration of this space "depends less upon horizontal relations of spatial integration emphasized by concentric zone pictures and more upon hierarchically structured linkages to global system processes, such as capital accumulation and the new international division of labor..." (p. 76). Gottdiener's thesis about social space in the United States is consistent with spatial imagery in the works of other urban sociologists and anthropologists who are rethinking relationships between centers and peripheries, between rural and urban spaces, and indeed the collapse of distinction between them (e.g. 24, 58, 59, 76, 122, 123).

Sassen (114), like Harvey (66), looks at the shift from Fordist production with its vertical integration to increased informalization of the economy and decentralization, but Sassen also focuses on the survival strategies of Third World immigrants in cities such as New York and Los Angeles, which are adaptations to these macro trends (see also 33, 107, 115). The distinctive sociology and cultural dynamics of immigration to the United States in this new structural conjunction is also the subject of *Newcomers in the Workplace: Immigrants and the Restructuring of the U.S. Economy* (81), which should be read with *Structuring Diversity: Ethnographic Perspectives on the New Immigration* (80). These two volumes present an array of ethnographically grounded case studies that document human dimensions of the economic and technological reorganizations addressed by Harvey and Sassen. The papers in these books reveal how non-assimilative cultural and economic differentiation is perpetuated and often deepened as a result of transnational migration within the context of post-Fordist global restructuring. Work in urban anthropology on post-melting pot patterns of immigration (e.g. 57, 79, 130) in the 1980s has deepened and become more concerned with historical-structural and global processes. Such an approach also informs Palerm's work on binational agricultural systems and migrant settlement patterns (e.g. 103–105).

### *Deterritorialization*

Running through the literature on globalization is a concern with how production, consumption, communities, politics, and identities become detached from local places. The term deterritorialization has several usages that speak to such

processes. As noted above, Harvey discusses how capitalist enterprises control time and space by relocating operations. As he puts it, “any struggle to reconstitute power relations is a struggle to reorganize their spatial bases,” which is why capitalism constantly deterritorializes and reterritorializes (66:238).

Transnational migrants move into and indeed create transnational spaces that may have the potential to liberate nationals within them who are able to escape in part the totalizing hegemony that a strong state may have within its national borders (e.g. 22, 71, 112, 113). But as Basch et al (7) argue, a deterritorialized nation-state may extend its hegemony over its citizens who, as migrants or refugees, reside outside of its national boundaries. For example, President Aristide of Haiti has referred to Haitians in the United States as constituting a “tenth province” in addition to the nine within the national territory of Haiti (7:146ff; 108:190). Such “[d]eterritorialized nation-state building is something new and significant, a form of post-colonial nationalism that reflects and reinforces the division of the entire globe into nation-states” (7:269). Deterritorialization in this sense contrasts with the concept of diaspora whereby people imagine themselves as a nation outside of a homeland. But in the case of the deterritorialized nation-state, a people may be “anywhere in the world and still not live outside the state” (p. 269).

Another sense of deterritorialization has to do with the construction of “hyperspaces,” i.e. environments such as airports, franchise restaurants, and production sites that, detached from any local reference, have monotonous universal qualities. Similar to these deterritorialized spaces are hyperreal places such as amusement parks and wax museums in which simulacra are seen as more real than the real thing (28). Quite insightful, but somewhat theoretically detached from political economy, is Appadurai’s notion of the global spaces in which current cultural flows occur, i.e. ethnoscaples, technoscapes, finascapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes (3:11; see also 4). Theory and research are growing on virtual communities, identities, and information access made possible by the World Wide Web and the Internet (see e.g. 98). Finally, in Deleuze & Guattari’s (26) provocative use, de- and reterritorialization is a grand metaphor for oppositions between kinds of spaces, flows, and classification of identities peculiar to states versus nomadic forms (see below).

### *Global Implosion*

Early expansion of the capitalist world-system fed off of preexisting spatial differences between capitalist and noncapitalist formations in which primitive accumulation was a pump primer for the deeper extraction of value from the former as peripheral communities were inexorably subsumed to core areas and transformed into de-developed communities in the process. For the earlier phases of this hegemony of the center, the image of a spreading inkblot is appropriate. But such a process is limited by the sphericity of the earth. For in

its embrace of the noncapitalist regions of the world, the arms of the core have now come back onto itself, and in doing so, obviate the distinction between developed core and de-developed periphery.

The explosive outward movement of capitalism's power to differentiate has thus gone full circle and is now falling back onto itself, imploding into its cores and reducing their difference from their peripheries. The Vietnam War was one such implosion of the periphery into the center (see below and 87:xvi). Although most of the combat was in Southeast Asia, the war also imploded into living rooms across the United States as the first major televised war, thus marking a new relationship between global media communication and consciousness. The war also imploded into the United States with the return of veterans and the arrival of refugees (e.g. 119). Ironically, it was the latter who experienced the lesser difficulty adapting to postwar US society, although they did so as part of a post-melting pot migration.

Such "peripheralization at the Core" (116, cf 110) became apparent in studies of the "new immigration" after 1950 (14), which included high percentages of undocumented persons, refugees, and women coming from non-Western nations. This new migration, which has reconfigured urban anthropology, makes it reasonable to speak, for example, of "the Caribbeanization of New York City," (130) or to refer, as pundits do, to Los Angeles as "the capital of Latin America," although Miami is a strong contender for that distinction (see also 65). Former concern with assimilation in migration studies has given way in contemporary work to examination of the persistence and creation of difference among, for example, Senegalese in Italy (20), Algerians in France (99), Moroccans and other nationalities in Spain (39), Turks in Germany (90), Asians and Mexicans in California (1, 83, 119), Indians in the United States (84), and West Indians and Sikhs in England (53).

The analysis of global economic relations by dependency and world-system theories laid the base for the global study of cultural and symbolic capitals, which like ores, plantation crops, and other raw materials are extracted from peripheral areas and refined for consumption in the metropolises. For example, Savigliano (117) examines the transnational transformations of the tango as a working-class dance from Argentina that was exported to Europe where it was refined—one might say re-class-ified—and then imported in this genteel form to Japan, while also being recycled back to Argentina as a national symbol appropriated by proletarians and elites alike in a neocolonial context.

Such global flows of ethnic art, dance, and cuisine are comparable to the deterritorialization of migrants whose identities are transformed in the transnational spaces that they enter. But whereas ethnic insignia and commodities may be consumed as symbolic capital, the bodies of most transmigrants from the same communities render cheaply paid labor power, which fuels post-Fordist economies (e.g. 80, 81, 85, 101, 111, 116, 140).

### *Media and Time-Space Compression*

Three successive paradigms have dominated the study of international communications. An initial communications and development approach in the 1960s, which assumed an overall cultural homogenizing impact of transnational media, was challenged subsequently by a cultural imperialism model inspired by dependency theory. This latter orientation was modified later by a revisionist cultural pluralism model, which is still exploring the dynamics of media in a world in which the distinction between centers and peripheries has largely dissolved with respect to media production and consumption (124:119–121; see also 91). Southern nations are now producing and exporting massive quantities of movies and television programming to northern countries. Among many examples of such “reverse cultural imperialism” are massive flows of Brazilian and Latin American media to Portugal and the United States, respectively (124:121; see also 61).

Another form of compression is effected by what can be called global media. Examples of global media include the CNN and MTV television networks (61), the programming of which is directed at and consumed by what might be called horizontal audiences, rather than vertical ones. Thus CNN is consumed by middle-aged and older viewers, business people, government officials, policy makers, and local news services around the world. Similarly, MTV disseminates a similar non-local identity, but one directed at global youth and mediated largely by music videos. Chambers notes that in such contemporary popular musical styles and forms, with their collage kind of eclecticism, “a strong sense of ‘the Other’ is replaced...by a weak sense of ‘the others’” (cited in 66:301).

### *Tourism and Globalization*

The pressure to decrease turnover time between investment and profit making, the compression of space, the shift from production to services, the scrambling of and the invention of traditions, and a heightened production and consumption of simulacra all come together in the world’s largest industry, tourism. Like television channel surfing, commercialized tourism promotes the consumption of fleeting images, experiences, and sensations patched together in the collage-like, pastiche effects noted by commentators on postmodern culture.

Urry (132) proposes a sociology of tourism centered on examination of the changing forms of the “tourist gaze” per Foucault’s analysis of historically specific ways of seeing. In contrast, MacCannell (87) builds his theory of tourism on Marx’s ideas about production, extended to include the production of commodifiable experiences. Thus he comes closest, perhaps, to a compre-

hensive anthropological theorization of tourism, which embeds it in the economic and cultural conditions of contemporary global capitalism.

Much of the ethnographic material and analysis needed to round out a project such as MacCannell's is available (e.g. 121). But most anthropology of tourism is the study of tourism as it relates to other issues, such as folk art and crafts (e.g. 20, 95, 96, 126, 127) and development (see e.g. 121). A major theme in much of this literature is how the production of local traditional identities, as expressed in crafts, festivals, architecture, and cuisine, is driven by commercial and state policies played out in global economic and political fields unanticipated by theories of development and modernization (see e.g. recent issues of the *Annals of Tourism Research*).

### *Globalization, Identity, and the Culture Concept*

A landmark in the study of cultural processes played out on a global scale is the founding in 1988 of the journal *Public Culture*, which is devoted to exploration of global cultural flows. Central to this project is a displacement of inquiry from an intellectual space shaped by "the distinction between 'first,' 'second,' 'third' and 'fourth' worlds" and the conceptions of modernity and history they imply regarding the homogenizing effects of cosmopolitanism (12:1). Furthermore, exploration of public culture involves a rethinking of culture theory in the contemporary world "where popular culture is often the product of urban, commercial and state interests, where folk culture is often a response to the competitive cultural policies of today's nation-states, and where traditional culture is often the result of conscious deliberations or elaboration..." (5:8).

Similarly, Borofsky notes that it is now difficult to bound a community as a "cultural group." Referring to Pukapuka, he says, "More than half of those one might deem as Pukapukans...live off the island, especially in New Zealand. Pukapukan cultural dynamics extend beyond its reefs—to Rarotonga, to Auckland, and to Sydney" (9:1–2; see also 100). Likewise, A Gupta & J Ferguson (unpublished manuscript) say that a view of "the world as a mosaic of separate cultures is what made it possible to bound the ethnographic object, as well as to see generalization from a multiplicity of separate 'cases'". They cite work that regards such boundedness and coherence "more as a narrative device than as an objectively-present empirical truth" (A Gupta & J Ferguson, unpublished manuscript; see also 68). It is somewhat ironic that while the conditions of transnationalism are causing anthropologists to reconsider the validity of the culture concept, the growth of transnational communities is causing the legal system to pay more attention to it as, for example, cultural considerations intrude into legal proceedings (e.g. 25, 86).

Awareness of growing dispersion, decentering, interpenetration, and general complexity of globalized and transnational communities is reflected in

anthropology as a rising concern with identity. Thus it is understandable that a new journal devoted to “global studies in culture and power” should be called *Identities* (41). Indeed, it is arguable that the culture concept as the cornerstone of US anthropology is giving way to concern with identity (e.g. 58, 77). Such movement is most apparent in work on gendered identities in relation to globalization (see especially 55, 67; also 36, 127, 129).

The culture concept grew out of mostly German romantic ideas regarding distinctive characteristics of peoples “rooted” in national territories (see e.g. 88). But according to a recent International Labor Organization report (113a), in 1992 there were an “unprecedented” 100 million people living outside of their natal countries, people who for the most part are scattered as a result of wars, unemployment, and poverty. As King (77:6) notes, “[i]t’s not just that, increasingly, many people have no roots; it’s also that they have no soil. Culture is becoming increasingly deterritorialized.” Not only does deterritorialization obviate any notion of bounded cultures, but so does the constantly increasing volume and velocity of global transmission of information, images, simulacra, and stuff that is a diffusion of cultural traits gone wild, far beyond that imagined by the Boasians and creating a nightmare for contemporary cross-cultural correlational studies. Such flows require a reconsideration of presumably bounded culture areas. Thus, for example, Alvarez (1a) shows how the binary absoluteness of cultural areas and identities is giving way to models of border areas as places of interpenetrating spaces and more complex, nonunitary identities.

Growing appreciation of the complexity of identity, and its implications for the culture concept, was also noted by speakers in a session at the 1994 Annual Meeting of the AAA, “Rethinking the Cultural: Beyond Intellectual Imperialisms and Parochialisms of the Past,” organized by Borofsky. In this session, Geertz underscored how contemporary people who live in close proximity often do not share a common culture, but instead interact with people who are dispersed, resulting in an increasingly interconnected world: “We are trying to find our field in a seriously scrambled world that does not divide itself cleanly at the joints into societies or traditions.... That makes the analysis of culture a far more awkward enterprise” (quoted in 138:A18). In the same session, Rosaldo asked, “What happens to notions of cultural uniqueness when individuals acquire cultural repertoires that are binational?” (quoted in 138:A18).

The anthropological analysis of personal and collective identity depends on some theory of classification. If indeed the world has turned a corner into a period of globalization that is distinctly different from the modern, then what are the implications for classification, considered not as an invariant subject of investigation in anthropology, but taken instead as a historically contingent world-view category able to assume different forms in different periods in the history of anthropology? Elsewhere I argue (73) that modern anthropological

classification of social types is a variant of “official” principles of classification that are predicated on presuppositions of unitary identities, i.e. of individuals as members of bounded groups, of which the most rationalized are modern nation-states. Such official individual identities are either-or categories, of which “citizen,” and other officially licensed, credentialed, censused, and documented forms are variants. Such classification of individuals obeys a binary logic in which one either is or is not a distinct member of a category such as a nation, a military unit, or a firm. Modern anthropology has been enamored of this kind of classification as in, for example, ethnoscience, which assumes a binary either-or logic, the logic of the branching tree in which diacritica of identity become more and more discreet and distinctive until the unique form is identified. In contrast we can consider what form classification would take in an anthropology sensitive to globalized and transnationalized identities that resist official classification by being constituted in non-official social spaces such as transnational communities, informal economies, and border areas populated by “undocumented” persons (71). For example, Vélez-Ibañez (134) examines the life and work of Anzaldúa (2), who uses her lesbianism to transcend the multiple dualities of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and nationality that shape identity in the Mexican–US border area (see also 54). Similarly, Ong examines overseas Chinese who, “As postcolonial transnational subjects [call] into question not only stability in cultural identity, but also ties to a single nation-state, or even to a single imagined community” (102:747).

Such identities escape in part from either-or classification and become defined more by a logic of “both-and-and<sup>n</sup>” in which the subject shares partial, overlapping identities with other similarly constituted decentered subjects that inhabit reticular social forms. The reticulum (fr. Latin, network) is a biological metaphor appropriate for the age of globalization. A reticulum cell is “[o]ne of the branched anastomosing reticuloendothelial cells that form an intricate interstitial network ramifying through other tissues and organs” (*Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1984). Such is the form of globalizing reticula, which ramify into nations, communities, and many other social bodies and spaces. Deleuze & Guattari (26) propose a similar imagery with their “rhizome,” which unlike a tree or its roots, “connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature...” The rhizome is “[u]nlike a structure, which is defined by a set of points and positions, with binary relations between the points and biunivocal relationships between the positions...” (26:21; cf 6). Such connections made by reticula and rhizomes are like those of a hypertext in which words are not classified in a hierarchical index, but instead have direct intratextual links. Other comparable decentered systems of networks are the Internet and the human brain. Thus, rhizomes and reticula suggest the form and physiology of

nomadic transnational and global communities that flourish outside the striated space of the state.

### *Global, Transnational, and Diasporan Communities*

Transnational communities commonly refer to migrant communities spanning two nations (e.g. 21, 35, 47, 74, 113, 128; see also 45, 46, 57). One of the most detailed examinations of a transnational community is Smith's (120) account of one stretched between Southern Mexico and New York City. Growing academic concern with more widely dispersed diasporan communities is manifested, for example, with the founding in 1991 of the journal *Diaspora*. Gonzalez (49:31) distinguishes diasporas from other patterns of migration in that diasporas include a full cross-section of community members who are dispersed to many diverse regions of the world, and who yet retain a myth of their uniqueness and an interest in their homeland. Defined as such, diasporan communities contrast with global communities [see e.g. Ong (102) and Ong & Nonini (102a) on global Chinese, Ghosh (37) on Indians, Gonzales Gutierrez (51) on Mexicans, and Leonard (83) on how emigrants from Hyderabad construct Hyderabad culture in diaspora]. Refugees and displaced persons are often the first generations of diasporan communities (109; see 88a). Indeed, refugees, displaced persons, and stateless persons (106) are becoming an increasing percentage of the world population, with identities that make concepts such as citizenship and resettlement problematic.

At the heart of current anthropological concerns with transnationalism, identity politics, migration, and human rights is the persistence, resurgence, or de novo emergence of ethnicity at a time when, according to modernization theory, it was to have been attenuated by robust nation-states (31, 48, 50, 62, 63, 93, 118, 125, 131). Some research links migration with ethnic conflict (50, 89, 90) and with nationalism (137).

Transnational spaces, identities, and communities pose difficult problems for ethnographic representation (90a). In certain ways, film has advantages over texts. One especially successful effort is *Transnational Fiesta: 1992* (34a), which portrays a Quechuan community in Peru and Washington, DC. A transnational space and the life in that space is also the subject of *Oaxacalifornia* (141). This idea of Oaxacalifornia (Oaxaca plus California) is also explored by Grieshop & Varese's film (56), which portrays Mixtec transnationals whose lives span the Mexico-US border.

### *Global and Transnational Politics*

The metaphor "grassroots" is somewhat inappropriate for the organizational challenges facing deterritorialized popular groups attempting to defend themselves in a globalized world. As Basch et al note, "A global perspective on history, as well as the contingencies of the current historical conjuncture,

challenge us to move beyond bounded visions of culture and society" (7:33). The responses to this challenge by popular organizations in recent years have been novel and often empowering. One notable case is the global politics of indigenous peoples. Until recently most anthropologists regarded local indigenous groups as doomed to disappear, but much current work is reconceptualizing their resurgence within global and transnational contexts that often sustain and strengthen their organizations (e.g. 8, 16, 17, 18, 34), sometimes by providing contexts in which indigenous ethnicity can emerge (56, 72, 75, 93, 133). Nash (97) examines how incorporation of subsistence-based resistance movements into the capitalist world economy affects their political strategies.

Numerous indigenous groups have been able to reframe their disadvantageous relationships with the nation-states that encompass them by redefining their projects in the global space of environmentalism and human rights. The first strategy makes transnational alliances based on the recognition of the world as a global ecosystem of which indigenous peoples are an important part. And by defining their problems in terms of violations of their human rights, many indigenous groups have been able to gain support from the international human rights movement, which is able to put pressure on renegade states that abuse indigenous peoples (15, 92, 94). Global environmentalism and the international human rights movement are two examples of how the internationalization of new social movements increasingly is taking the form of nonaligned non-government organizations (17, 58).

Perhaps the most creative analysis of local politics and identities in transnational contexts is being done by non-Western feminists attempting to theorize and forge transnational feminist alliances. For such projects one finds little to build on in world-system and other global theories, which are notably silent on gender issues. Conversely, "feminist poststructuralist or psychoanalytic theorists do not utilize a transnational frame or consider colonial discourse or discourses of race" (55:3). Accordingly, Grewal & Kaplan (55) critique such varieties of global feminism as Western-centric models that fail to appreciate the specificities of local feminists identities as they are affected by global forces and that require global forms of organized resistance without submerging local conditions and identities in alien projects.

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