

## BOOK REVIEW

### Globalisation

#### Challenges to Research and Governance

by *Kultalahti, Jukka, Ilari Kauppi,  
Olli Kultalahti, Enrico Todisco*

Helsinki: East-west Books, 2009  
ISBN: 978-952-99592-6-6, 357 pp.

REVIEWED BY  
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Globalisation can be understood as a variety of flows, controlling these flows is a means of controlling globalisation. This is the central claim of this book: essentially Saskia Sassen's old "global cities" theory with added considerations about control and administration of globalisation.

The background of the book is explained on page 9: "[t]he book is a joint effort of an [...] international network of academics and professional experts from diverse disciplinary and institutional background". Named the Tampere group, the number of participants varies. When the book was compiled, the group had 43 members from eleven countries. The aim of the Tampere group was to develop convergent approaches and methods for globalisation research. Between 2001 and 2008 the group members met a total of five times in Italy and Finland. This book is a final report of the group's work between 2001 and 2008.

The line of research the book is dealing with is the impact of globalisation on societies. It does not try to explain globalisation as it considers globalisation an inevitability that can, however, be studied. Thus, whereas Karl Popper spoke of "social engineering", this book might be considered to represent "global engineering", i.e. practically oriented management of the consequences of globalisation. In earlier literature there has been much philosophical and political debate about whether globalisation should be seen as an unavoidable fact. This debate is not in the scope of this book.

Globalisation literature is very rich. Since it has been subject of so many books and studies for decades, one could be tempted to ask whether this book is a little late? What insights into globalisation have previously been missed that would create a need for yet another book on the subject? What has escaped the focus of Saskia Sassen, Anthony Giddens or Jürgen Habermas? In the book, it is acknowledged that there has been very much previous research into the subject, although this is not mentioned specifically.

The book's focus is on the consequences of globalisation. There is an attempt to theorise how to administer globalisation. The hypothesis of the book is not totally new: globalisation is seen as an economy-driven process (Sassen) which however can be controlled by means of politics and legislation (Habermas). The impact of globalisation differs in different countries (Hardt & Negri), which calls for different ways to administer it (Habermas). Globalisation has its greatest impact on cities and the urban labour market (Sassen).

The hypothesis suggests that globalisation can be viewed as a "system of flows". International migration, the flow of people, is one of these; it is connected to other flows such as the flow of (economic) capital. Thus the hypothesis is closely related to Sassen's theory of global cities. The flows would proceed via social networks as suggested in social capital theories. The book posits that there are various flows which when combined produce a system of flows.

Because Sassen and social capital theorists have previously come to more or less the same kinds of conclusions, there is relatively little that is new in the theory of flows. The

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novelty of this book is that it suggests managing globalisation would amount to affecting these flows by the means of policy and legislation. The actual outcome could be innovative but it may also be used as grounds for measures such as reactive migration control.

The research design of the Tampere group's research was mostly based on qualitative data, namely the use of informants. The methodology is explained in more detail in the Introduction. The members of the Tampere group also cooperated extensively with each other between 2001 and 2008 and many ideas stemmed from discussions between the group's members. From the very start of the project, the group took a multi-disciplinary stance towards globalisation.

Implications and interpretation of the results of the group's work are reported in this book. The book consists of eighteen articles, written by Ilari Karppi, Elina Rantalahti, Mara Di Berado, Antonio Pacinelli, Simone Di Zio, Olli Kultalahti, Arno Tanner, Berhane Tewolde, Enrico Todisco, Bruno Lefort, Cristian Norocel, Ari-Veikko Anttiroiko, Jukka Kultalahti, Jukka Viljanen, Timo Aarrevaara, Veli-Pekka Nurmi and Ari Stenvall.

The articles are grouped into four sections: 1) analysing and developing methods; 2) human mobility and development in globalisation; 3) cultural aspects of globalisation; 4) governance of globalisation.

The need for future research is discussed: "[m]ethodological aspects [...] need further development and harmonisation" (p. 27). This refers to that the multi-disciplinary approach that is one of the strengths of the study, but also created some challenges. For example, different authors refer to the same concepts differently. This is an endemic problem in the social sciences and is not alleviated even when this study's concepts are compared to established concepts used in migration studies, economics and human and social capital theories.

As a research report the book is satisfactory. It includes all the basic elements that a good social scientific study should. Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings. For example, the reasons why foreign immigrants are often on the margins of the labour market. Some previous research by Alejandro Portes (ethnic economies) is ignored as well as the longitudinal studies carried out by George Borjas. These earlier studies show that, contrary to what is suggested in this book, foreign immigrants do not end up on the margins of the labour market by choice. That in fact, their labour market position increases as the period of residence in the receiving country increases. However, despite some shortcomings the book reflects a good piece of research.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Challenging Identities:

Muslim women in Australia  
by *Shahram Akbarzadeh* (ed.)

Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010  
ISBN 978-0-522-85715-3, 208 pp.

REVIEWED BY  
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In this book, Akbarzadeh aims to dispel misconceptions of Muslim women by exploring the myriad of experiences both within the Australian Muslim community and Australian society as a whole. The book covers an array of topics capturing Muslim women's experiences, such as: attending the mosque, as converts, exposure to racism and their resistance to it, the dilemmas they face in divorce, the implications of multicultural policies on Muslim women and sports and recreation.

The book is a collection of articles written by Muslim women, whom readers will find accessible as the writing is clear, succinct and coherent. The clarity of the writing befits the objective of the book: to inform people both from an academic and non-academic background, and improve their understanding of Muslim women by complicating Muslim women's experiences and representation.

'Challenging Identities' aims at being a counter-narrative to the existing political discourse on Muslim women and utilises the current interest in them. The political climate of the 'War on Terror' has rejuvenated interest in the Muslim world. Nowhere is this interest more palpable than in the fetishistic focus on the Muslim woman. With its socio-historical preconceptions of Islam and the Muslim woman, the Western gaze, once again, has made her the centre stage in its narrative: the 'othering' of Islam and Muslims in the Muslim world, and particularly in the West. Never before have we seen such vigorous reporting on Muslim women, often in relation to the hijab –the visible presence of Islam's Otherness and its very antithesis to Western values. Coupled with media attention, the Muslim woman is once again prioritised by Western academic scholarship and cultural discourses, in tandem with Western powers use of such discourses as a political pretext. Driven by orientalist imagery, misconceptions and hysteria, the rise of neo-fascism in Europe and the numerous bans on Islamic dress in countries such as France and Belgium and the debate on the ban in Australia, indicate an alarming hostility for Islam and Muslims. Thus, the fact that the Muslim woman has become a demanding theme has also meant the subject demands genuine inquiry and understanding that is devoid of reactionary and reductive politics.

'Challenging Identities' is an attempt to meet this demand. Broad themes, carefully chosen to highlight dominant factors contributing to understanding Muslim women, and pertinent in providing a clearer insight into their socio-political experiences in Australia, can be drawn from the book. For instance, the significance of the hijab is raised throughout the book as it serves as an anchor for the myriad of related issues which affects Muslim women as their visibility as Muslims in an often hostile environment; specifically, the hijab can tap into issues wearers may have in areas such as the workforce, where women face obstacles getting jobs or are subjected to racism and discrimination in their jobs. Further, in the field of sports and recreation, Muslim women face the expectations of their community -as well as those outside of their community- on what the correct form of dress is whilst participating in such activity. On a different note, Akbarzadeh highlights that due to the obsession with the hijab, Muslim women who do not wear it are faced with their own dilemma of lacking 'authenticity' or are expected to act as a fifth column to undermine Islam and the Muslim community.

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The visibility of Islamic dress has meant that Muslim women are more prone to racism and criticism from broader Australia which subsequently puts them in a position of both defending and defining Muslim identity. As Shakira Hussein points out, this has meant that women face a double responsibility which obliges them simultaneously to be called on to speak for their community -which can be empowering- but also are silenced under internal pressure to not speak negatively of their experiences in the community. However, armed with education and politicised, the book elucidates how Muslim women have developed strategies insofar as dealing with racism as well as internal community disputes. In doing so, they have demonstrated agency which acts as a counter-narrative to the construction of her as 'victim' and 'passive'.

Such themes develop out of different methodologies used by the authors: interviews (individual and group), surveys and literature review. In utilising these research methods, the book's observations and conclusions are bolstered as they are supported by qualitative research that relies upon lived experiences of the women involved. The research mainly focuses on young women below 30. It is understandable why this age group was chosen, as it is young women in particular who are more actively negotiating their identity as Muslims and Australian. However, some research into older Muslim women would have made for an interesting comparison and a wider scope to reflect the category of Muslim women, as suggested by the title of the book. Moreover, the use of literature, especially post-structural works, could have been elaborated on though this approach may have been done with the non-academic readership in mind.

In the spirit of the book's intentions, that is, to serve as a counter-narrative which undermines imagery of Islam, specifically Muslim women, an in-depth understanding of power must be put forth. The focus on misconceptions by the book does not sufficiently delve into how such a discourse developed and the role of power in producing such 'negative' constructions of Muslim Women. A more nuanced engagement with the reason why such misconceptions arise in the first place requires dealing with the question of power: how groups in mainstream society have the ability to create misconceptions and legitimise the very use of those stereotypes as part of public debate. Such a focus would have allowed proper analyses of Muslim women not to get bogged down in simply dispelling misconceptions and negating what Muslims are not. Though at times the book attempts to explain the negative stereotyping of Muslims by alluding to the historical constructions of the Muslim and Islam as the antithesis of the West, it does not sufficiently engage with the contemporary use of power that allow it to deploy such historical constructions in Australian society. For instance, how 'Australian' identity continues to be defined by a white dominant culture, and thus situated within a Western Christian tradition. In doing so, Australian identity is contrasted with the Muslim Other, who belongs to an alien tradition, and how such constructions continue to be used to situate Australian Muslims as 'outsiders'. By not confronting this binding of historical racism with modern day concerns about immigrations, women rights and multicultural politics, it falls short in its purpose to confront power at its axis. Therefore, much goes under the radar in confronting why such out dated modes of conceptualising the Muslim is used as the basis for dealing with such contemporary concerns. In short, it takes the misconceptions in epistemological terms and misses how political discourses intentionally utilise misunderstandings for political ends.

Overall, readers who are interested in the current debate in relation to them (the hijab and multiculturalism), this book provides the opportunity to learn more about Muslim women, their experiences which otherwise may be narrated to us through reductive and sensational media reporting, and their nuanced responses to such reporting, and current political and religious discourses that dominate our perceptions of them.

## BOOK REVIEW

### Migrants and Urban Change: Newcomers to Antwerp, 1760-1860, Perspectives in Economic and Social History by *Anne Winter*

London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009  
ISBN 978-18-5196-646-2, 318 pp.

REVIEWED BY  
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Anne Winter's book is based on her PhD thesis, completed in 2007, and sets out to explore the relationship between urban change and migration. This rather old question is approached from a new perspective: Winter's focus is on the movement of migration, instead of the relations between migrants and non-migrants. Migration patterns are seen as social systems, rather than accidental historical events. This approach has the advantage of illuminating the vulnerability of migration patterns to structural social change. The book focuses on the components and speed of migratory change, and how this is influenced by changing economic, social and political conditions at origin and destination, especially on the latter.

The target area is the city of Antwerp, Belgium's biggest and fastest growing town during most of latter part of the nineteenth century. Winter however is interested in the century prior to Antwerp's demographic explosion. By doing so, she transcends the traditional temporal boundaries, often marked by the French Revolution. During the research period, Antwerp evolved from a pre-modern regional textile centre into a modernizing port city, and was prone to four different national governments (the Austrians, the French, the Dutch and finally the newly founded Belgian Kingdom). These profound economic and political changes as well as the richness of its source material make Antwerp a suitable city to observe.

The book opens with two extensive theoretical chapters, in which Winter explains the mechanisms of migration on a causally hierarchical micro, mezzo and macro level. This integrative approach, as is argued by the author, allows us to "disentangle the role of structural historical change from the existing variation in migration patterns" (pg. 33). The two succeeding chapters illustrate her theories with regard to immigration and the specific Antwerp case. In a detailed description of the Antwerp migrant, special attention is given to labour market characteristics, the life course of the migrants, gender-specific migratory patterns, and the impact of the large proportion of migrants on the city's urbanization process. The last chapter is almost a separate book, in which Winter tries to distinguish between migrant patterns via the concept of migrant 'circuits'. A 'circuit' refers to a group of patterns with correspondence between migrant origins and profiles. Four major migration circuits are discerned: intra-provincial rural, internal inter-urban, long-distance foreign and other rural migrants. Winter clearly explains how each of these circuits has a different way of shaping the adaptability of a migration pattern to social change, each with different speeds of change.

Winter proves her theories with an astonishing amount of data, both on an individual and on an aggregate level, from a very diverse range of historical source material. Moreover, many additional graphs and analyses are added in the appendices. This makes the book a great aid for every historian concerned with urban social history. Also in a conceptual way this work is very valuable. By looking at migration as an adaptive strategy, Winter succeeds to look beyond the direct opposition of continuity and change. Her book delivers an inspiring and refreshing approach to the old question on the relationship between migration and urban change.

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