H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

James C. Cobb, William Stueck, eds. *Globalization and the American South.* Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2005. xvi + 229 pp. $19.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8203-2648-1.

James L. Peacock, Harry L. Watson, Carrie R. Matthews, eds. *The American South in a Global World.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. vii + 299 pp. $70.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8078-2924-0; $27.50 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8078-5589-8.

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Published on H-South (June, 2006)

One New World Order and Many New Souths

Globalization has created some of the furthest reaching and most complex transformations facing southerners and other Americans today. They are also among the most difficult ones to understand. The full meaning of globalization remains elusive because of the scale of the opportunities and challenges it brings to political economy, culture, and individual experience, and the often overly facile critique of its results. Consequently, it is essential and urgent that historians (and the social sciences more broadly) provide analytical lenses to understand globalization's origins, to describe the actual changes being wrought, and to anticipate their long-term significance.

These two collections of essays provide varied and rich explorations of the meaning and impact of globalization on the South. These books jumpstart this exciting endeavor and jointly etch the broad parameters of future work in what is certain to become an essential field in southern history. Since globalization is producing a decidedly new era in the history of the region, documenting and understanding these changes must be at the heart of the study of what Raymond Mohl pointedly calls (in *Globalization and the American South*, by James C. Cobb and William Stueck) "the Nuevo New South" (p. 66).

The South is arguably experiencing the greatest transformations across all sectors of any part of the United States as a result of globalization. While the transformation of work, corporate growth, and foreign investment can be seen all over the country, some of the most striking changes are occurring in and to the South. Immigration to the South has become unprecedented in scale and deeply transformative of the region's traditional biracial system. This moment of remarkable change in a region long (and recently) notable for its continuities provides an excellent opportunity to reinterpret the southern past and to assess the likely trajectory of future developments in the region. It is especially enlightening to evaluate the cascading transformations of southern political economy and culture today given their unexpectedness. Globalization has changed the terms of the development debate. Donald M. Nonini notes in *The American South in a Global World*, by James L. Peacock, Harry L. Watson, and Carrie R. Matthews, "that the South plays a leading role in the globalization processes within the United States may be difficult for those who still dwell on southern victimization to accept–as indeed it may be for those nonsoutherners who still hold prejudices about southern backwardness" (p. 256).

The new scholarship on the globalized South in these two worthwhile volumes will help transform interpretations of southern history in a variety of ways, particularly in terms of reassessing southern distinctiveness, understanding the causation and patterns of southern economic development over time, and capturing the evolving tenor of southern life. Furthermore, studying the impact of globalization on the South could well reveal the significance of discrete regional changes amidst the tumult occurring around the world. As Peacock, Watson and Mathews write in their introduction, "the U.S. South may also be taking its place in a world of regions, not simply of nation-states" (pp. 2-3).

These books have appeared at the same time and cover many related topics in complementary ways. Although outwardly similar in coverage and intent, each book's essays are quite different in approach, presentation, analysis, and utility.

Globalization and the American South is the more consistent of the two books. This book will be immediately

interesting to historians of the South, particularly those studying political economy. Each essay offers a focused, clearly argued historical interpretation of globalization in the South supported by large amounts of evidence, useful charts, and extensive footnotes. This concise and readable volume outlines the field well and provides thorough coverage of some of the most important aspects of the topic. It will also be very useful in university classes on southern history and globalization.

The essays in Cobb and Steuck grew out of a conference at the University of Georgia on globalization and the South, and are broadly based on the notion that "there is more value in studying the South as part of the world than as a world apart" (p. xi). All of the authors are historians, and each explores the South grappling with the profound impact of globalization, which the editors define as "the transnational flow of people, capital, technology, and expertise that is initiated and sustained by the desire to capitalize on natural and human resources or attractive investment opportunities available somewhere else" (p. xii). The essays in this book honestly evaluate the complex and often troubling transformations of globalization without rejecting or sidelining the overall advancements it has brought to the region. This book is, helpfully, not an anti-globalization screed, but rather a critical historical approach to some of the most important regional aspects of globalization.

The essays proceed in rough chronological order, starting with Cobb's interpretative essay, proceeding through two historical overviews of southern globalization, and followed by a series of well-argued and increasingly specialized essays. These historians are concerned with both tracing the impact of globalization as a process on life, work, society, and governance in the South over time, and anticipating the role the South will take in the rapidly transforming world. As a whole, this book is meant to capture the experience and meaning of globalized change in the South in ways "that should be useful to those who would chart the course of any region, nation, or community in the much wider and increasingly fluid global context where the future is always now" (p. xv).

The American South in a Global World, which grew out of a series of Rockefeller Foundation-funded institutes at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has a decidedly (although not exclusively) contemporary focus in its essays and a more overtly politicized tone. The essays describe many critical aspects of the dynamic, globalized South, with an emphasis on multiculturalism and the impact of neoliberalism. The authors are primarily anthropologists, although other disciplines like history and economics do make appearances. The authors emphasize exploring "the transnational South as it emerges" (p. 3), and often use an ethnographic approach which can effectively complement the historical emphasis in Cobb and Steuck.

The American South in a Global World is organized thematically and offers a wide-ranging, although inconsistent, array of case studies. This volume can be read more selectively than Cobb and Steuck. The book's sections cover immigration to the South, connections between global forces and local interests, the meaning and experience of work in the globalized South, and the fascinating question of transnational citizenship in the South. Of least utility is the fifth section devoted to "Activist Approaches to the Transnational South." While well written, these advocacy essays do not serve the same analytical or interpretive function as the main body of the book and subsequently interrupt its focus and effectiveness.

A crucial component of *The American South in a Global World* is the final section of essays which solidly critique, supplement, and contextualize the proceeding material and imagine the trajectory of future work. Nonini rightly notes the lack of sufficient discussion of globalization and rural southern life in the essays and offers a detailed explanation of the "transnational South" as a central focus of analysis. James L. Peacock refers to a "grounded globalism," in which "the South would emerge as a unit different from others, and hence distinctively useful or viable, yet integrated into global currents" (p. 273). Harry L. Watson relatedly suggests in his final historical overview that globalization could have so profound an impact that "the particulars of place will not always override the fundamentals of capital flows, trade shifts, immigration concerns and the re-creation of infrastructure" (p. 283). Nevertheless, he is sure "the global South will be distinctively southern without remaining unchanged" (p. 286), even as it accommodates large economic and cultural shifts.

Certain individual essays in these two volumes are notable. In Cobb and Steuck, Cobb's deft essay "Beyond the 'Y'all Wall': The American South Goes Global" synthesizes economic and cultural history to challenge the easily peddled certainties about the processes and ends of globalization in the South even as it recognizes their broader resonance (a la C. Vann Woodward) in other regions. Cobb offers a subtle interpretation of the unexpected ways globalization has enhanced and sustained the long-term shortcomings of southern low-wage, non-union "economic development at the expense of human development" (p. 2), while simultaneously encouraging

both the commodification of southern regional identity and the blossoming of "a divisive and ultimately dangerous kind of identity politics" (p. 15). Cobb emphasizes that "the process of global adaptation is both mutual and incremental" (p. 10), and explains how the outcomes of this interplay cannot be fully anticipated. The heavily globalized South, and the "at best uneven results of the South's self-exploitative approach to industrial recruitment" (p. 15) may well have created a developmental trap that other nations would be advised to ponder.

The Cobb and Steuck volume features two strong essays detailing the history of globalization in the South before and after 1950, by Peter A. Coclanis and Alfred E. Eckes respectively. In reperiodizing and reconceptualizing globalization in the region, these essays are essential background reading for an understanding of the global context of southern history. Coclanis persuasively argues that globalization, in the form of "transnational, indeed, intercontinental flows of labor, capital, and entrepreneurship into the region and … impressive produce flows out" (p. 23), has been central to southern history, economic development, and cultural formation from the start. His essay details each of these four components of a South "born of global forces" in a well developed world economy (p. 30) that has existed and persisted in significant ways from the colonial era to 1950.

Eckes continues and deepens this understanding of the global context for southern development by describing the massive changes brought by the accelerative impact of "a new wave of globalization driven by pathbreaking technological innovations, expanding markets, and probusiness public policies" (p. 36). In Eckes's view, globalization has so transformed the economic life of the South since 1950 that the region's distinctiveness has been threatened if not lost, especially in terms of its longstanding competitive advantage in global labor markets. He demonstrates, using census data, exactly how and in what ways globalization has massively changed the South, including the move to a service economy, changing patterns of corporate and foreign investment, and global market integration. Eckes concludes with a striking and persuasive picture of the unsustainability of globalization's benefits for the South. He pictures a South trapped in a disastrous dual "race to the bottom" in the global markets for skilled labor and white-collar jobs. He rightly concludes that "the American South has become more diverse, more prosperous, and more like the American nation–vulnerable to the changing winds and fashions of the global marketplace" (p. 62).

One of the most instructive essays in either book is Meenu Tewari's history of the transformation of North Carolina's furniture industry in *The American South in a Global World*. Tewari proves that, contrary to traditional belief, the industry did not develop solely as a result of low wages and local, cheap resources. Rather, non-local elements combined with robust and activist institutions to create "the bases for more enduring competitive advantage." Cost-cutting was not the only means to economic success; it had to be supplemented with "collaborative and innovative institutions that local actors jointly created" (p. 134). This emphasis on concerted, institutional action could indicate a means for southern communities to effectively respond to the challenges of globalization.

Raymond A. Mohl's excellent "Globalization, Latinization, and the Nuevo New South" in Cobb and Steuck covers the "dramatic demographic, economic, and cultural transformation" of the South (p. 67), the incredible increase in the region's Hispanic (principally Mexican) population. This growth, Mohl argues, was brought on by changes in immigration law and the development of "an immense service economy and a consequent demand for low-wage labor" (p. 68), and as a result of the "the globalization of markets and capital" (p. 69). Using sometimes astonishing census data, Mohl illuminates the patterns of Hispanic migration and settlement throughout the South, in areas like North Carolina, which saw a Hispanic population growth of 383.8 percent during the 1990s, or Arkansas, which grew by 337 percent in the same period. These immigrants, providing what Mohl emphasizes repeatedly as "a cheap, reliable, nonunionized labor-force" (p. 76), in turn have helped change the nature of work in industries like chicken processing, manufacturing, construction, agriculture, and myriad other fields. Hispanic life in the Nuevo New South has changed the region enormously, and will continue to drive the globalized transformation of culture and economic life in the South. Importantly, Mohl details how the "multicultural and multiethnic rather than biracial now describe society in many southern places" (p. 70).

This increasing and significant Latinization of the South is also the focus of several of the best essays in *The American South in a Global World*, which should be read in conjunction with Mohl's overview. One of the most engaging to read is Steve Striffler's "We're All Mexicans Here," a firsthand account of working in an Arkansas chicken processing plant with a largely Mexican workforce. Striffler concludes "that transnational migration and the resulting experiences may make people question the very categories that borders support" (p. 164). Paul A.

Levengood has written an interesting comparative study of Latin immigration to Miami and Houston, focusing on the diffusion of immigration and the structural differences in access to city political power that have produced decidedly different outcomes in the two cities. Whereas Cubans have been remarkably powerful and prosperous in Miami, Mexican immigrants have not attained similar power in Houston despite their numbers. Levengood forecasts that the new large but diffuse Hispanic immigration to the southeast will follow a Houston pattern.

Other essays in the books treat the influence and experience of different ethnic groups and national economic interests in the South. Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu's excellent essay in Cobb and Steuck on Japanese business investment in the South thoroughly explains the complexities existing between trade liberalization, foreign investment, and the evolving nature of southern political economy. She traces the slow development of Japanese investment in the region, as the stable investment opportunities, low labor costs, anti-unionism, cheap land, and proffered tax breaks by a host of eager southern governors provided opportunities for the Japanese to establish a "subtly colonial subnational coupling" (p. 139). Guthrie-Shimizu concludes with a fascinating and concise description of the changes in the South that globalization rewarded over time: "when Japanese industrial capital readied itself to cross the Pacific, the Sun Belt South, also angling to go global, was just conservative, oligarchical, and hierarchical enough to attract it" (p. 155). In *The American South in a Global World*, Sawa Kurotani's essay offers a supplementary view by describing the Japanese experience of living and working in North Carolina, while Ajantha Subramanian provides a fascinating account of Indians maintaining ethnic identity in North Carolina.

The essays in these two volumes are rich, complex, and fascinating, and they provide more insights and information than can be adequately detailed in a short review. All southern scholars, as well as those studying globalization in other fields, can read both volumes fruitfully.

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Citation: Dan Margolies. Review of Cobb, James C.; Stueck, William, eds., *Globalization and the American South* and Peacock, James L.; Watson, Harry L.; Matthews, Carrie R., eds., *The American South in a Global World*. H-South, H-Net Reviews. June, 2006.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=11929

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