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Roxann Prazniak, Arif Dirlik, eds.. *Places and Politics in an Age of Globalization.* Oxford and New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001. xiv + 329 pp. $108.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-7425-0038-9.

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Who Could be Opposed to Globalization?

In *Places and Politics in an Age of Globalization*, Roxann Prazniak and Arif Dirlik have put together a volume that articulates what the authors refer to as a "place-based" opposition to globalization, whether understood as global capitalism specifically, or global cultural identity, more broadly construed. The book combines theoretical work defining modes of identity formation as well as exploring dichotomies such as local v. global and place v. space. It also includes a diverse array of essays grouped into two sections, one focusing on identity formation and the other on political ecology. Despite their tremendous diversity, these essays share a focus on developing practical political resistance to globalization in its economic, political, and cultural forms and, more insidiously, as the dominant discourse in identity formation. The essays Prazniak and Dirlik have compiled all adhere to Dirlik's admonition to "create those discursive spaces that enable the thinking of alternatives to 'the power of the negative'" (p. 42).

Demonstrations against events or institutions associated with globalization, such as meetings of the World Bank or IMF, are always fascinating because they illustrate what most of us know albeit tend to ignore: political ideologies do not fall in a straight line running from left to right, but rather in a circle, and there can be a remarkable convergence between the views of the extreme right and the extreme left. Jonathan Friedman acknowledges this convergence in opposition to globalization in his contribution, "Indigenous Struggles and the Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie." Friedman writes, "In certain conditions [indigeneity] produces alternative identities against the state, in other conditions it can produce extreme nationalism within the state. This accounts for the strange fact that the ideology of the New European Right is so similar to that of some indigenous movements" (p. 61). Despite the fact that ***Places and Politics*** is a critique of globalization from the "left," it is also of interest to those on the "right" as well as the many in the middle, who may find themselves discomfited by globalization without understanding why.

In a dense theoretical contribution entitled "Place-Based Imagination: Globalism and the Poli-

tics of Place," Arif Dirlik insists on a grounded conception of place. He argues that an understanding of place is necessary to critique developmentalism. He provides a well-developed literature review, ranging from traditional Marxism through feminism to ecologism. He ultimately rejects hybrid conceptions of global and local, arguing that while almost all phenomena are both, not all are global and local in the same way. Dirlik utilizes his theoretical insights in his other contribution, "Asians on the Rim: Transnational Capital and Local Community in the Making of Contemporary Asian America," fulfilling his insistence that "The questions raised by the juxtaposition of space and place, under the circumstances, are not merely questions of theory, but of practical politics, of daily survival" (p. 19).

This emphasis on practical politics is carried through to the rest of the volume, although the emphasis on place is not always as clearly articulated. Peter Kwong and Margaret Zamudio both address relationships between ethnicity, citizenship, and labor. In his essay, "Chinese Illegals Are American Labor," Kwong analyzes class divisions within an ethnically defined community, by studying the role of illegal Chinese immigrant labor within the larger Chinese community in America. Kwong argues against the idea of "ethnic exceptionalism--the idea that inside of immigrant communities there is neither class division nor exploitation" (p. 107). Instead, Kwong contends that the illegal smuggling of immigrants into the United States has "left a degraded caste of illegals" who are open to exploitation and isolation by members of their own ethnic group (p. 109). Like Kwong, Zamudio is also concerned with relationships between ethnicity, citizenship, and labor, but instead of studying class relations within one ethnic group, she examines ethnic conflict within a single labor pool. In her contribution, "Organizing Labor among Difference: The Impact of Race/Ethnicity, Citizenship and Gender on Working Class Solidarity," Zamudio presents an analysis of labor organization in a multi-ethnic, stratified work place, specifically, the New Otani hotel in Los Angeles. Zamudio rejects more traditional theoretical approaches which suggest that ethnic divisions within a class either should not exist or are insurmountable barriers to effective labor organization. Instead, Zamudio argues that "ethnicity is fluid and is often used as a way of experiencing exploitation" (p. 128). The case illustrates that while organizing labor in a segmented market has its own difficulties, it is possible. Moreover, Zamudio is optimistic that immigrants do and will continue to organize.

Geoffrey M. White's contribution is particularly important, not only for academics, but for journalists and analysts. In "Natives and Nations: Identity Formation in Postcolonial Melanesia," White explores the "constructed nature of local identities" (p. 141). Using media coverage of conflict in the Solomon Islands as an example, White challenges current media tendencies to portray conflicts as ethnicity-based, without adequately exploring other possibilities. It is one of White's contentions that, since identities are socially constructed, the "ethnic" aspect of conflict can be constructed by outside characterizations of that conflict (p. 144). This observation in itself, as illustrated through the Solomon Islands case, provides a strong argument to those who report on the news as well as those who develop information for international organizations: a false characterization of a conflict is not simply misinformation, it has the potential to transform reality. In other words, what begins as an economic or political conflict can become an ethnic conflict through over-simplification and misrepresentation in the media, as local concepts of identity interact with global identifications. However, the same malleability of identity can have positive attributes as well. White asks why there have not been more "ethnic" conflicts in Melanesia. His conclusion, again drawing on the constructed nature of ethnic identities, is that people and organizations in Melanesia have constructed a supranational identity, which includes a unity in diversity concepts, as

exemplified in the development of Pidgin language (p. 151). In this sense White echoes Zamudio's optimism in a very different context.

Part 3 of the volume contains four essays that, while diverse, are all concerned with challenges to globalization from political ecology. The first two, by Arturo Escobar and James H. Mittelman, share a more theoretical concern. In "Place, Economy and Culture in a Postdevelopment Era," Escobar provides a follow-on to Dirlik's contribution, stating that "a reassertion of place, noncapitalism and local culture against the dominance of space, capital, and modernity that are central to globalizaiton discourse should result in a theory of postdevelopment that makes visible possibilities for reconceiving and reconstructing the world from the perspective of place-based cultural and economic practices" (p. 194). Escobar provides a detailed literature review that complements the already extensive one provided by Dirlik. Mittelman takes a different approach. In "Globalization and Environmental Resistance Politics," Mittelman develops a typology of civil society and core environmental resistance strategies based on extensive interviews in southern Africa and parts of Asia. One of the more interesting results of this typology is the paradox between one of these core strategies, "scaling up," in which "the more local groups extend to the global arena, the greater the temptation to conform to global norms" (p. 235). Conforming to global norms is precisely what the authors in this volume are arguing against.

Moving to the political ecology of indigenism in its concrete form, two contributions, interestingly, deal with Native Americans. Roxanne Prazniak's contribution, "Political Organizing in the Land of the Great Spirit, Tunkashila: A Conversation with Joann Tall," is just that, a transcript of Prazniak's conversation with Joann Tall, a Lakota activist. In this wide-ranging interview, Prazniak and Tall explore seemingly diverse issues such as the role of spirituality as motivation, environmental work, and cooperation with global groups such as Greenpeace. Prazniak also uses the initerview to explore Tall's sense of identity and her link to the Black Hills. John Brown Childs, in "Beyond Unity: Transcommunal Roots of Coordination in the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Model of Cooperation and Diversity," uses the Iroquois League to illustrate what he refers to as transcommunality. Childs demonstrates the volume's emphasis on both place and practical politics, while also managing to be theoretically interesting, which is no mean feat. One of the most interesting aspects of transcommunality is Childs's emphasis on the necessity for interpersonal relations or friendship. According to Childs, "Although most academic leftists and progressives [and conservatives as well] generally pay little heed to the significance of friendship and trust as key elements in activism and coalition building, these and other interpersonal aspects are absolutely essential to Transcommunality" (pp. 282-283). Theoretically, the group identity is not constructed solely of discourse (although it is important), but also by contact.

Wendy Harcourt closes the volume with a contribution entitled "Rethinking Difference and Equality: Women and the Politics of Place." Harcourt ties politics of place together with feminism and practical feminist politics. She utilizes "place" at three levels: body, home/community, and public place (p. 300). Harcourt concludes that women's place-based politics offer a meaningful challenge to the negative effects of globalization.

One drawback to this volume is the tendency of some contributors to rely on jargon in relating rather complicated concepts. For example, Elizabeth Rata opens her contribution, "The Indigenization of Ethnicity," with the following sentence: "The intrusion of global capitalism into local economies and the interaction between the intruding forces and responding local movements have resulted in the establishment of localized postfordist modes of regulation that structure the capital-labor relationship within the reified com-

munal relations of revivalist social movements" (p. 167). Rata's analysis of neotribal capitalism in New Zealand is interesting and informative, both in relation to her theoretical argument and New Zealand in particular. Unfortunately, Rata forces the reader to wade through such jargon-laden phrases as "commodity fetishization and surplus-value appropriation" to reach the heart of her essay (p. 168). While jargon can be convenient shorthand in communication between members of the same field, it can be a barrier to reaching a broader audience, such as this book deserves.

The various case studies presented in this volume are both interesting and wide-ranging, but they all share one characteristic. From various indigenous movements to environmental organizations to Native American activists, they are all associated with the "left." Do the politics of place apply to challenges to globalization coming from the "right"? What can the theories laid out in this volume tell us about neo-Nazi organizations or the KKK? While many of the contributors to this volume are concerned with the practical politics requisite to move toward social justice, and thus would not want to recommend successful mobilizing strategies for such groups, I think that in order to be more robust, these theories need to be applied to the "right" as well. Many of the arguments put forth here would shed considerable light on Nazi successes in the 1930s.

On a more profound level, the reliance of many of these authors on constructivist arguments--that identity is created through discourse and ideas shape reality--is unsettling. As Escobar expresses it, "to what extent can we reinvent both thought and the world according to the logic of place-based cultures?" (p. 195). This is, of course, an attractive proposal to academics and others who make a living in the realm of ideas and the communication of ideas. It suggests that our work matters. But how true is it?

Places and Politics is a valuable book. It is of theoretical interest to scholars in all areas of political science from American Politics to International Relations. It holds practical advice for activists, whether community based or members of international organizations. Moreover, *Places and Politics* holds valuable lessons for analysts and members of the media.

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