Mirror for Humanity
A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

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Globalization

The term globalization encompasses a series of processes, including diffusion, migration, and acculturation, working to promote change in a world in which nations and people are increasingly interlinked and mutually dependent. Promoting such linkages are economic and political forces, as well as modern systems of transportation and communication. The forces of globalization include international commerce and finance, travel and tourism, transnational migration, the media, and various high-tech information flows (see Appadurai, ed. 2001; Friedman and Friedman 2008; Scholte 2000). During the Cold War, which ended with the fall of the Soviet Union, the basis of international alliance was political, ideological, and military. More recent international pacts have shifted toward trade and economic issues. New economic unions (which have met considerable resistance in their member nations) have been created through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the European Union (EU).

Communication systems and the media play a significant role in today’s process of globalization. Long-distance communication is easier, faster, and cheaper than ever, and extends to remote areas. I can now e-mail or call families in Aracataca, Brazil, which lacked phones or even postal service when I first began to study the community. The mass media help propel a globally spreading culture of consumption. Within nations and across their borders, the media spread information about products, services, rights, institutions, lifestyles, and the perceived costs and benefits of globalization. Emigrants transmit information and resources transnationally, as they maintain their ties with home (phoning, faxing, e-mailing, making visits, sending money). In some such people live multilocally—in different places and cultures at once. They learn to play various social roles and to change behavior and identity depending on the situation (see Cresswell 2006).

The effects of globalization are broad and not always welcome. Local people must cope increasingly with forces generated by progressively larger systems—region, nation, and world. An army of outsiders now intrudes on people everywhere. Tourism has become the world’s number one industry (see Holden 2005). Economic development agents and the media promote the idea that work should be for cash rather than mainly for subsistence. Indigenous peoples and traditional societies have devised various strategies to deal with threats to their autonomy, identity, and livelihood (Maybury-Lewis 2002). New forms of political mobilization and cultural expression, including the rights movements discussed previously, are emerging from the interplay of local, regional, national, and international cultural forces (see Ong and Collier, eds. 2005).
The World System and Colonialism

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Although fieldwork in small communities has been anthropology’s hallmark, isolated groups are impossible to find today. Truly isolated societies probably never have existed. For thousands of years, human groups have been in contact with one another. Local societies always have participated in a larger system, which today has global dimensions—we call it the modern world system, by which we mean a world in which nations are economically and politically interdependent.

The World System

The world system and the relations among the countries within it are shaped by the capitalist world economy. A huge increase in international trade during and after the 15th century led to the capitalist world economy (Wallerstein 1982, 2004b), a single world system committed to production for sale or exchange, with the object of maximizing profits, rather than supplying domestic needs. Capital refers to wealth or resources invested in business, with the intent of using the means of production to make a profit.

World-system theory can be traced to the French social historian Fernand Braudel. In his three-volume work Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century (1981, 1982, 1992), Braudel argued that society consists of interrelated parts assembled...
into a system. Societies are subsystems of larger systems, with the world system the largest. The key claim of world-system theory is that an identifiable social system, based on wealth and power differentials, extends beyond individual countries. That system is formed by a set of economic and political relations that has characterized much of the globe since the 16th century, when the Old World established regular contact with the New World (see Bodley 2008).

According to Wallerstein (1982, 2004b), countries within the world system occupy three different positions of economic and political power: core, periphery, and semiperiphery. The geographic center, or core, the dominant position in the world system, includes the strongest and most powerful nations. In core nations, "the complexity of economic activities and the level of capital accumulation is the greatest" (Thompson 1983, p. 12). With its sophisticated technologies and mechanized production, the core churns out products that flow mainly to other core countries. Some also go to the periphery and semiperiphery. According to Arrighi (1994), the core monopolizes the most profitable activities, especially the control of world finance.

Semiperiphery and periphery countries have less power, wealth, and influence than the core does. The semiperiphery is intermediate between the core and the periphery. Contemporary nations of the semiperiphery are industrialized. Like core nations, they export both industrial goods and commodities, but they lack the power and economic dominance of core nations. Thus Brazil, a semiperiphery nation, exports automobiles to Nigeria (a periphery nation) and auto engines, orange juice extract, coffee, and shrimp to the United States (a core nation). The periphery includes the world's least privileged and powerful countries. Economic activities there are less mechanized than those in the semiperiphery, although some degree of industrialization has reached even peripheral nations. The periphery produces raw materials, agricultural commodities, and, increasingly, human labor for export to the core and the semiperiphery (Shannon 1996).

In the United States and Western Europe today, immigration—legal and illegal—from the periphery and semiperiphery supplies cheap labor for agriculture in core countries. U.S. states as distant as California, Michigan, and South Carolina make significant use of farm labor from Mexico. The availability of relatively cheap workers from non-core nations such as Mexico (in the United States) and Turkey (in Germany) benefits farmers and business owners in core countries, while also supplying remittances to families in the semiperiphery and periphery. As a result of 21st-century telecommunications technology, cheap labor doesn’t even need to migrate to the United States. Thousands of families in India are being supported as American companies “outsource” jobs—from telephone assistance to software engineering—to nations outside the core.

The Emergence of the World System

As Europeans took to ships, developing a transoceanic trade-oriented economy, people throughout the world entered Europe’s sphere of influence. In the 15th century, Europe established regular contact with Asia, Africa, and eventually the New World (the Caribbean and the Americas). Christopher Columbus’s first voyage from Spain to the Bahamas and the Caribbean in 1492 was soon followed by additional voyages. These journeys opened the way for a major exchange of people, resources, products, ideas, and diseases, as the Old and New Worlds were forever linked (Crosby 2003; Diamond 1997; Fagan 1998; Viola and Margolis 1991). Led by Spain and Portugal, Europeans extracted silver and gold, conquered the natives (taking some as slaves), and colonized their lands.

Previously in Europe as throughout the world, rural people had produced mainly for their own needs, growing their own food and making clothing, furniture, and tools from local products. Production beyond immediate needs was undertaken to pay taxes and to purchase trade items such as salt and iron. As late as 1650 the English diet was based on locally grown starches (Mintz 1985). In the 200 years that followed, however, the English became extraordinary consumers of imported goods. One of the earliest and most popular of those goods was sugar (Mintz 1985).

Sugar cane originally was domesticated in Papua New Guinea, and sugar was first processed in India. Reaching Europe via the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean, it was carried to the New World by Columbus (Mintz 1985). The climate of Brazil and the Caribbean proved ideal for growing sugarcane, and Europeans built plantations there to supply the growing demand for sugar. This led to the development in the 17th century of a plantation economy based on a single cash crop—a system known as monocrop production.
The demand for sugar in a growing international market spurred the development of the transatlantic slave trade and New World plantation economies based on slave labor. By the 18th century, an increased English demand for raw cotton led to rapid settlement of what is now the southeastern United States and the emergence there of another slave-based monocrop production system. Like sugar, cotton was a key trade item that fueled the growth of the world system.

Industrialization

By the 18th century the stage had been set for the Industrial Revolution—the historical transformation (in Europe, after 1750) of "traditional" into "modern" societies through industrialization of the economy. Industrialization required capital for investment. The established system of transoceanic trade and commerce supplied this capital from the enormous profits it generated. Wealthy people sought investment opportunities and eventually found them in machines and engines to drive machines. Capital and scientific innovation fueled invention. Industrialization increased production in both farming and manufacturing.

European industrialization developed from (and eventually replaced) the domestic system of manufacture (or home-handicraft system). In this system, an organizer-entrepreneur supplied the raw materials to workers in their homes and collected the finished products from them. The entrepreneur, whose sphere of operations might span several villages, owned the materials, paid for the work, and arranged the marketing.

Causes of the Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution began with cotton products, iron, and pottery. These were widely used goods whose manufacture could be broken down into simple routine motions that machines could perform. When manufacturing moved from homes to factories, where machinery replaced handwork, agrarian societies evolved into industrial ones. As factories produced cheap staple goods, the Industrial Revolution led to a dramatic increase in production. Industrialization fueled urban growth and created a new kind of city, with factories crowded together in places where coal and labor were cheap.

The Industrial Revolution began in England rather than in France. Why? Unlike the English, the French didn’t have to transform their domestic manufacturing system by industrializing. Faced with an increased need for products, with a late 18th-century population at least twice that of Great Britain, France could simply augment its domestic system of production by drawing in new homes. Thus, the French were able to increase production without innovating—they could enlarge the existing system rather than adopt a new one. To meet mounting demand for staples—at home and in the colonies—England had to industrialize.

As its industrialization proceeded, Britain’s population began to increase dramatically. It doubled during the 18th century (especially after 1750) and did so again between 1800 and 1850. This demographic explosion fueled consumption, but British entrepreneurs couldn’t meet the increased demand with the traditional production methods. This spurred further experimentation, innovation, and rapid technological change.

English industrialization drew on national advantages in natural resources. Britain was rich in coal and iron ore, and had navigable waterways and easily negotiated coasts. It was a seafaring island-nation located at the crossroads of international trade. These features gave Britain a favored position for importing raw materials and exporting manufactured goods. Another factor in England’s industrial growth was the fact that much of its 18th-century colonial empire was occupied by English settler families who looked to the mother country as they tried to replicate European civilization in the New World. These colonies bought large quantities of English staples.

It also has been argued that particular cultural values and religion contributed to industrialization. Many members of the emerging English middle class were Protestant nonconformists. Their beliefs and values encouraged industry, thrift, the dissemination of new knowledge, inventiveness, and willingness to accept change (Weber 1904/1958).
Socioeconomic Effects of Industrialization

The socioeconomic effects of industrialization were mixed. English national income tripled between 1700 and 1815 and increased 30 times more by 1939. Standards of comfort rose, but prosperity was uneven. At first, factory workers got wages higher than those available in the domestic system. Later, owners started recruiting labor in places where living standards were low and labor (including that of women and children) was cheap.

Social ills worsened with the growth of factory towns and industrial cities, amid conditions like those Charles Dickens described in *Hard Times*. Filth and smoke polluted the 19th-century cities. Housing was crowded and unsanitary, with insufficient water and sewage disposal facilities. People experienced rampant disease and rising death rates. This was the world of Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim—and Karl Marx.

Industrial Stratification

The social theorists Karl Marx and Max Weber focused on the stratification systems associated with industrialization. From his observations in England and his analysis of 19th-century industrial capitalism, Marx (Marx and Engels 1848/1976) saw socioeconomic stratification as a sharp and simple division between two opposed classes: the bourgeoisie (capitalists) and the proletariat (propertyless workers). The bourgeoisie traced its origins to overseas ventures and the world capitalist economy, which had created a wealthy commercial class.

Industrialization shifted production from farms and cottages to mills and factories, where mechanical power was available and where workers could be assembled to operate heavy machinery. The bourgeoisie were the owners of the factories, mines, large farms, and other means of production. The working class, or proletariat, was made up of people who had to sell their labor to survive. With the decline of subsistence production and with the rise of urban migration and the possibility of unemployment, the bourgeoisie came to stand between workers and the means of production.

Industrialization hastened the process of *proletarianization*—the separation of workers from the means of production. The bourgeoisie also came to dominate the means of communication, the schools, and other key institutions. *Class consciousness* (recognition of collective interests and personal identification with one's economic group) was a vital part of Marx's view of class. He saw bourgeoisie and proletariat as socioeconomic divisions with radically opposed interests. Marx viewed classes as powerful collective forces that could mobilize human energies to influence the course of history. On the basis of their common experience, workers would develop class consciousness, which could lead to revolutionary change. Although no proletarian revolution was to occur in England, workers did develop organizations to protect their interests and increase their share of industrial profits. During the 19th century, trade unions and socialist parties emerged to express a rising anticapitalist spirit. The concerns of the English labor movement were to remove young children from factories and limit the hours during which women and children could work. The profile of stratification in industrial core nations gradually took shape. Capitalists controlled production, but labor was organizing for better wages and working conditions. By 1900 many governments had factory legislation and social-welfare programs. Mass living standards in core nations rose as population grew.

In today's capitalist world system the class division between owners and workers is now worldwide. However, publicly traded companies complicate the division between capitalists and workers in industrial nations. Through pension plans and personal investments, some American workers now have a proprietary interest in the means of production. They are part-owners rather than propertyless workers. The key difference is that the wealthy have control over these means. The key capitalist now is not the factory owner, who may have been replaced by thousands of stockholders, but the CEO or the chair of the board of directors, neither of whom may actually own the corporation.

Modern stratification systems aren't simple and dichotomous. They include (particularly in core and semiperiphery nations) a middle class of skilled and professional workers. Gerhard Lenski (1966) argues that social equality tends to increase in advanced industrial societies. The masses improve their access to economic benefits and political power. In Lenski's scheme, the shift of political power to the masses reflects the growth of the middle class, which reduces the polarization between owning and working classes. The proliferation of middle-class occupations creates opportunities for social mobility. The stratification system grows more complex (Giddens 1973).

In the United States this complex stratification system has gone largely unnoticed by many Americans. Most contemporary Americans, for example, think they belong to, and claim identity with, the middle class, which they tend to perceive as a vast undifferentiated group. However, there are substantial differences in income and wealth between the richest and the poorest Americans, and the gap is widening. According to U.S. Census data from 1967 to 2000, the top (richest) fifth, or quintile, of American households increased their share of national income by 13.5 percent, while all other quintiles fell. The percentage share of the lowest fifth fell most dramatically—17.6 percent. The divergence continues: In 2006 the highest quintile of households got 50.5 percent (versus 49.7 percent in 2000) of all national income, while the lowest fifth got only 3.4 percent (versus 3.6 in 2000). Comparable figures in 1967 were 43.8 percent and 4.0 percent. The 2006 ratio was 15:1, versus 14:1 in 2000 and 11:1 in 1967. In other words, the richest fifth of American households, with a mean annual income of $168,170, is now 15 times wealthier than the poorest fifth, with a mean annual income of $11,352 (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, and Lee: U.S. Census Bureau—2006http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/h03ar.html). When we consider wealth (investments, property, possessions, etc.) rather than income, the contrast is even more striking: 1 percent of American families hold just over one-third of the nation's wealth (Council on International and Public Affairs 2006).

Weber faulted Marx for an overly simple and exclusively economic view of stratification. As we saw in the chapter "Political Systems," Weber (1922/1968) defined
three dimensions of social stratification: wealth, power, and prestige. Although, as Weber showed, wealth, power, and prestige are separate components of social ranking, they tend to be correlated. Weber also believed that social identities based on ethnicity, religion, race, nationality, and other attributes could take priority over class (social identity based on economic status). In addition to class contrasts, the modern world system is cross-cut by collective identities based on ethnicity, religion, and nationality (Shannon 1996). Class conflicts tend to occur within nations, and nationalism has prevented global class solidarity, particularly of proletarians.

Although the capitalist class dominates politically in most countries, growing wealth has made it easier for core nations to grant higher wages (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982). However, the improvement in core workers’ living standards wouldn’t have occurred without the world system. Without the periphery, core capitalists would have trouble maintaining their profits and also satisfying the demands of core workers. In the periphery, wages and living standards are much lower. The current world stratification system features a substantial contrast between both capitalists and workers in the core nations and workers on the periphery (see Kerbo 2006).

Colonialism

World-system theory stresses the existence of a global culture and economy. It emphasizes historical contacts, linkages, and power differentials between local people and international forces. The major forces influencing cultural interaction during the past 500 years have been commercial expansion, industrial capitalism, and the dominance of colonial and core nations (Wallerstein 1982, 2004b; Wolf 1982). As state formation had done previously, industrialization accelerated local participation in larger networks. According to Bodley (2007), perpetual expansion is a distinguishing feature of industrial economic systems. Bands and tribes were small, self-sufficient, subsistence-based systems. Industrial economies, by contrast, are large, highly specialized systems in which market exchanges occur with profit as the primary motive (Bodley 2007).

During the 19th century European business interests initiated a concerted search for markets. This process led to European imperialism in Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Imperialism refers to a policy of extending the rule of a country or empire over foreign nations and of taking and holding foreign colonies. Imperialism goes back to early states, including Egypt in the Old World and the Incas in the New. A Greek empire was forged by Alexander the Great, and Julius Caesar and his successors spread the Roman empire. More recent examples include the British, French, and Soviet empires (Scheinman 1980).

After 1850, European imperial expansion was aided by improved transportation, which facilitated the colonization of vast areas of sparsely settled lands in the interior of North and South America and Australia. The new colonies purchased masses of goods from the industrial centers and shipped back wheat, cotton, wool, mutton, beef, and leather. The first phase of European colonialism had been the exploration and exploitation of the Americas and the Caribbean after Columbus. A new second phase began as European nations competed for colonies between 1875 and 1914, setting the stage for World War I.

Colonialism is the political, social, economic, and cultural domination of a territory and its people by a foreign power for an extended time (see Bremen and Shimizu, eds. 1999; Cooper and Stoler, eds. 1997). If imperialism is almost as old as the state, colonialism can be traced back to the Phoenicians, who established colonies along the eastern Mediterranean 3,000 years ago. The ancient Greeks and Romans were avid colonizers, as well as empire builders.

The first phase of modern colonialism began with the European “Age of Discovery”—of the Americas and of a sea route to the Far East. After 1492, the Spanish, the original conquerors of the Aztecs and the Incas, explored and colonized widely in the New World—the Caribbean, Mexico, the southern portions of what was to become the United States, and Central and South America. In South America, Portugal ruled over Brazil. Rebellions and wars aimed at independence ended the first phase of European colonialism by the early 19th century. Brazil declared independence from Portugal in 1822. By 1825 most of Spain’s colonies were politically independent. Spain held onto Cuba and the Philippines until 1898, but otherwise withdrew from the colonial field. During the first phase of colonialism, Spain and Portugal, along with Britain and France, were major colonizing nations. The latter two (Britain and France) dominated the second phase.

British Colonialism

At its peak about 1914, the British empire covered a fifth of the world’s land surface and ruled a fourth of its population (see Figure 10.1). Like several other European nations, Britain had two stages of colonialism. The first began with the Elizabethan voyages of the 16th century. During the 17th century, Britain acquired most of the eastern coast of North America, Canada’s St. Lawrence basin, islands in the Caribbean, slave stations in Africa, and interests in India.

![Map of British Empire in 1765 and 1914](image-url)
The British shared the exploration of the New World with the Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Dutch. The British by and large left Mexico, along with Central and South America, to the Spanish and the Portuguese. The end of the Seven Years’ War in 1763 forced a French retreat from most of Canada and India, where France previously had competed with Britain (Cody 1998; Farr 1980).

The American revolution ended the first stage of British colonialism. A second colonial empire, on which the “sun never set,” rose from the ashes of the first. Beginning in 1788, but intensifying after 1815, the British settled Australia. Britain had acquired Dutch South Africa by 1815. The establishment of Singapore in 1819 provided a base for a British trade network that extended to much of South Asia and along the coast of China. By this time, the empires of Britain’s traditional rivals, particularly Spain, had been severely diminished in scope. Britain’s position as imperial power and the world’s leading industrial nation was unchallenged (Cody 1998; Farr 1980).

During the Victorian Era (1837–1901), as Britain’s acquisition of territory and of further trading concessions continued, Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli implemented a foreign policy justified by a view of imperialism as shouldering “the white man’s burden”—a phrase coined by the poet Rudyard Kipling. People in the empire were seen as unable to govern themselves, so that British guidance was needed to civilize and Christianize them. This paternalistic and racist doctrine served to legitimize Britain’s acquisition and control of parts of central Africa and Asia (Cody 1998).

After World War II, the British empire began to fall apart, with nationalist movements for independence. India became independent in 1947, as did Ireland in 1949. Decolonization in Africa and Asia accelerated during the late 1950s. Today, the ties that remain between Britain and its former colonies are mainly linguistic or cultural rather than political (Cody 1998).

**French Colonialism**

French colonialism also had two phases. The first began with the explorations of the early 1600s. Prior to the French revolution in 1789, missionaries, explorers, and traders carved out niches for France in Canada, the Louisiana territory, several Caribbean islands, and parts of India, which were lost along with Canada to Great Britain in 1763 (Harvey 1980).

The foundations of the second French empire were established between 1830 and 1870. In Great Britain the sheer drive for profit led expansion, but French colonialism was spurred more by the state, church, and armed forces than by pure business interests. France acquired Algeria and part of what eventually became Indochina (Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam). By 1914 the French empire covered 4 million square miles and included some 60 million people (see Figure 10.2). By 1893 French rule had been fully established in Indochina. Tunisia and Morocco became French protectorates in 1883 and 1912, respectively (Harvey 1980).

To be sure, the French, like the British, had substantial business interests in their colonies, but they also sought, again like the British, international glory and prestige. The French promulgated a *mission civilisatrice*, their equivalent of Britain’s “white man’s burden.” The goal was to implant French culture, language, and religion, Roman Catholicism, throughout the colonies (Harvey 1980).

**FIGURE 10.2 Map of the French Empire at Its Height around 1914**

On January 1, 1900, a British officer in India receives a pedicure from a servant. What does this photo say to you about colonialism? Who gives pedicures in your society?
The French used two forms of colonial rule: *indirect rule*, governing through native leaders and established political structures, in areas with long histories of state organization, such as Morocco and Tunisia; and *direct rule* by French officials in many areas of Africa, where the French imposed new government structures to control diverse societies, many of them previously stateless. Like the British empire, the French empire began to disintegrate after World War II. France fought long—and ultimately futile—wars to keep its empire intact in Indochina and Algeria (Harvey 1980).

**Colonialism and Identity**

Many geopolitical labels in the news today had no equivalent meaning before colonialism. Whole countries, along with social groups and divisions within them, were colonial inventions. In West Africa, for example, by geographic logic, several adjacent countries could be one (Togo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia). Instead, they are separated by linguistic, political, and economic contrasts promoted under colonialism. Hundreds of ethnic groups and “tribes” are colonial constructions (see Ranger 1996). The Sukuma of Tanzania, for instance, were first registered as a single tribe by the colonial administration. Then missionaries standardized a series of dialects into a single Sukuma language into which they translated the Bible and other religious texts. Thereafter, those texts were taught in missionary schools and to European foreigners and other non-Sukuma speakers. Over time this standardized the Sukuma language and ethnicity (Finnstrom 1997).

As in most of East Africa, in Rwanda and Burundi farmers and herders live in the same areas and speak the same language. Historically they have shared the same social world, although their social organization is “extremely hierarchical,” almost “castelike” (Malkki 1995, p. 24). There has been a tendency to see the pastoral Tutsis as superior to the agricultural Hutus. Tutsis have been presented as nobles, Hutus as commoners. Yet when distributing identity cards in Rwanda, the Belgian colonizers simply identified all people with more than 10 head of cattle as Tutsi. Owners of fewer cattle were registered as Hutus (Bjuremalin 1997). Years later, these arbitrary colonial registers were used systematically for “ethnic” identification during the mass killings (genocide) that took place in Rwanda in 1994 (as portrayed vividly in the film Hotel Rwanda).

**Postcolonial Studies**

In anthropology, history, and literature, the field of postcolonial studies has gained prominence since the 1970s (see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1989; Cooper and Stoler, eds. 1997). Postcolonial refers to the study of the interactions between European nations and the societies they colonized (mainly after 1800). In 1914, European empires, which broke up after World War II, ruled more than 85 percent of the world (Petraglia-Bahri 1996). The term “postcolonial” also has been used to describe the second half of the 20th century in general, the period succeeding colonialism. Even more generically, “postcolonial” may be used to signify a position against imperialism and Eurocentrism (Petraglia-Bahri 1996).

The former colonies (*postcolonies*) can be divided into settler, nonsettler, and mixed (Petraglia-Bahri 1996). The settler countries, with large numbers of European colonists and sparser native populations, include Australia and Canada. Examples of nonsettler countries include India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Senegal, Madagascar, and Jamaica. All these have substantial native populations and relatively few European settlers. Mixed countries include South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Algeria. Such countries had significant European settlement despite having sizable native populations.

Given the varied experiences of such countries, “postcolonial” has to be a loose term. The United States, for instance, was colonized by Europeans and fought a war for independence from Britain. Is the United States a postcolony? It usually isn’t perceived as such, given its current world power position, its treatment of native Americans (sometimes called internal colonization), and its annexation of other parts of the world (Petraglia-Bahri 1996). Research in postcolonial studies is growing, permitting a wide-ranging investigation of power relations in varied contexts. Broad topics in the field include the formation of an empire, the impact of colonization, and the state of the postcolony today (Petraglia-Bahri 1996).

**Development**

During the Industrial Revolution, a strong current of thought viewed industrialization as a beneficial process of organic development and progress. Many economists still assume that industrialization increases production and income. They seek to create in Third World (“developing”) countries a process like the one that first occurred spontaneously in 18th-century Great Britain.

We have seen that Britain used the notion of a white man’s burden to justify its imperialist expansion and that France claimed to be engaged in a *mission civilisatrice*, a civilizing mission, in its colonies. Both these ideas illustrate an *intervention philosophy*, an ideological justification for outsiders to guide native peoples in specific directions. Economic development plans also have intervention philosophies. John Bodley (2008) argues that the basic belief behind interventions—whether by colonialists, missionaries, governments, or development planners—has been the same for more than 100 years. This belief is that industrialization, modernization, Westernization, and individualism are desirable evolutionary advances and that development schemes that promote them will bring long-term benefits to local people. In a more extreme form, intervention philosophy may pit the assumed wisdom of enlightened colonial or other First World planners against the purported conservatism, ignorance, or “obsolescence” of “inferior” or “backward” local people.

**Neoliberalism**

One currently influential intervention philosophy is neoliberalism. This term encompasses a set of assumptions that have become widespread during the last 30 years. Neoliberal policies are being implemented in developing nations, including postsocialist
societies (e.g., those of the former Soviet Union). Neoliberalism is the current form of the classic economic liberalism laid out in Adam Smith’s famous capitalist manifesto, *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, soon after the Industrial Revolution. Smith advocated laissez-faire (hands-off) economics as the basis of capitalism: the government should stay out of its nation’s economic affairs. Free trade, Smith thought, was the best way for a nation’s economy to develop. There should be no restrictions on manufacturing, no barriers to commerce, and no tariffs. This philosophy is called “liberalism” because it aimed at liberating or freeing the economy from government controls. Economic liberalism encouraged “free” enterprise and competition, with the goal of generating profits. (Note the difference between this meaning of *liberal* and the one that has been popularized on American talk radio, in which “liberal” is used—usually as a derogatory term—as the opposite of “conservative.”) Ironically, Adam Smith’s liberalism is today’s capitalist “conservatism.”

Economic liberalism prevailed in the United States until President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal during the 1930s. The Great Depression produced a turn to Keynesian economics, which challenged liberalism. John Maynard Keynes (1927, 1936) insisted that full employment was necessary for capitalism to grow, that governments and central banks should intervene to increase employment, and that government should promote the common good.

Especially since the fall of Communism (1989–1991), there has been a revival of economic liberalism, now known as neoliberalism, which has been spreading globally. Around the world, neoliberal policies have been imposed by powerful financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank (see Edelman and Haugerud 2004). Neoliberalism entails open (tariff- and barrier-free) international trade and investment. Profits are sought through lowering of costs, whether through improving productivity, laying off workers, or seeking workers who accept lower wages. In exchange for loans, the governments of postsocialist and developing nations have been required to accept the neoliberal premise that deregulation leads to economic growth, which will eventually benefit everyone through a process sometimes called “trickle down.” Accompanying the belief in free markets and the idea of cutting costs is a tendency to impose austerity measures that cut government expenses. This can entail reduced public spending on education, health care, and other social services (Martinez and Garcia 2000).

### The Second World

The Second World

The labels “First World,” “Second World,” and “Third World” represent a common, although ethnocentric, way of categorizing nations. The First World refers to the “democratic West”—traditionally conceived in opposition to a “Second World” ruled by “Communism.” The Second World refers to the former Soviet Union and the socialist and once-socialist countries of Eastern Europe and Asia. Proceeding with this classification, the “less-developed countries” or “developing nations” make up the Third World.

### Communism

The two meanings of communism involve how it is written, whether with a lowercase (small-c) or an uppercase (large-C). Small-c communism describes a social system in which property is owned by the community and in which people work for the common good. Large-C Communism was a political movement and doctrine seeking to overthrow capitalism and to establish a form of communism such as that which prevailed in the Soviet Union (USSR) from 1917 to 1991. The heyday of Communism was a 40-year period from 1949 to 1989, when more Communist regimes existed than at any time before or after. Today only five Communist states remain—China, Cuba, Laos, North Korea, and Vietnam, compared with 23 in 1985.

Communism, which originated with Russia’s Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and took its inspiration from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, was not uniform over time or among countries. All Communist systems were authoritarian (promoting obedience to authority rather than individual freedom). Many were totalitarian (banning rival parties and demanding total submission of the individual to the state). Several features distinguished Communist societies from other authoritarian regimes (e.g., Spain under Franco) and from socialism of a social democratic type. First, the Communist Party monopolized power in every Communist state. Second, relations within the party were highly centralized and strictly disciplined. Third, Communist nations had state ownership, rather than private ownership, of the means of production. Finally, all Communist regimes, with the goal of advancing communism, cultivated a sense of belonging to an international movement (Brown 2001).

Social scientists have tended to refer to such societies as socialist rather than Communist. Today research by anthropologists is thriving in postsocialist societies—those that once emphasized bureaucratic redistribution of wealth according to a central plan (Verdery 2001). In the postsocialist period, states that once had planned economies have been following the neoliberal agenda, by divesting themselves of state-owned resources in favor of privatization. Some of them have moved toward formal liberal democracy, with political parties, elections, and a balance of powers (Grekov 2001).

### Postsocialist Transitions

Neoliberal economists assumed that dismantling the Soviet Union’s planned economy would raise gross domestic product (GDP) and living standards. The goal was to enhance production by substituting a decentralized market system and providing incentives through privatization. In October 1991, Boris Yeltsin, who had been elected president of Russia that June, announced a program of radical market-oriented reform, pursuing a changeover to capitalism. Yeltsin’s program of “shock therapy” cut subsidies to farms and industries and ended price controls. Since then, postsocialist Russia has faced many problems. The anticipated gains in productivity did not materialize. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia’s GDP fell by half. Poverty increased, with a quarter of the population now living below the poverty line. Life expectancy and the birth rate declined. Another problem to emerge in the postsocialist transition is corruption. In response, the World Bank and other international organizations have launched anticorruption programs worldwide. Corruption is defined as the abuse of public office for private gain.
The World Bank's approach to corruption assumes a clear and sharp distinction between the state (the public or official domain) and the private sphere, and that the two should be kept separate. The idea that the public sphere can be separated neatly from the private sphere is ethnocentric. According to Janine Wedel (2002), postsocialist states provide rich contexts in which to explore variability in relations between public and private domains. Alexei Yurchak (2002, 2005) describes two spheres that operate in Russia today: these spheres do not mesh neatly with the assumption of a public–private split. He calls them the official–public sphere and the personal–public sphere, referring to domains that coexist and sometimes overlap. State officials may respect the law (official–public), while also working with informal or even criminal groups (personal–public). Officials switch from official–public to personal–public behavior all the time, in order to accomplish specific tasks.

### The World System Today

The process of industrialization continues today, although nations have shifted their positions within the world system (Table 10.1). By 1900, the United States had become a core nation within the world system and had overtaken Great Britain in iron, coal, and cotton production. In a few decades (1868–1900), Japan had changed from a medieval handcraft economy to an industrial one, joining the semiperiphery by 1900 and moving to the core between 1945 and 1970. Figure 10.3 is a map showing the modern world system.

Twentieth-century industrialization added hundreds of new industries and millions of new jobs. Production increased, often beyond immediate demand, spurring strategies, such as advertising, to sell everything industry could churn out. Mass production gave rise to a culture of consumption, which valued acquisitiveness and conspicuous consumption (Veblen 1934). Industrialization entailed a shift from reliance on renewable resources to the use of fossil fuels. Fossil fuel energy, stored over millions of years, is being depleted rapidly to support a previously unknown and probably unsustainable level of consumption. (See also the chapter "Global Issues Today").

#### Table 10.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ascent and Decline of Nations within the World System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Periphery to Semiperiphery</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States (1800–1860)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (1868–1900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan (1949–1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Korea (1953–1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semiperiphery to Core</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States (1860–1900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (1945–1970)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany (1870–1900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain (1620–1700)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


### Table 10.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Energy Consumption in Various Contexts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Society</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bands and tribes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preindustrial states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early industrial states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans in 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans in 1990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 10.3

Energy Consumption in Selected Countries, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Per Capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World</td>
<td>462.8*</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>100.7</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*462.8 quadrillion (462,800,000,000,000,000) Btu.
172 million Btu.
SOURCE: Based on data in Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2009 (Table 1356), p. 841.

Industrial Degradation

Industrialization and factory labor now characterize many societies in Latin America, Africa, the Pacific, and Asia. One effect of the spread of industrialization has been the destruction of indigenous economies, ecologies, and populations. Two centuries ago, as industrialization was developing, 50 million people still lived in politically independent bands, tribes, and chiefdoms. Occupying vast areas, those nonstate societies, although not totally isolated, were only marginally affected by nation-states and the world capitalist economy. In 1800 bands, tribes, and chiefdoms controlled half the globe and 20 percent of its population (Bodley 2008). Industrialization tipped the balance in favor of states (see Hornborg and Crumley 2007).

As industrial states have conquered, annexed, and “developed” nonstates, there has been genocide on a grand scale. Genocide refers to a deliberate policy of exterminating a group through warfare or murder. Examples include the Holocaust, Rwanda in 1994, and Bosnia in the early 1990s. Bodley (2008) estimates that an average of 250,000 indigenous people perished annually between 1800 and 1950. Besides warfare, the causes included foreign diseases (to which natives lacked resistance), slavery, land grabbing, and other forms of dispossession and impoverishment.

Many native groups have been incorporated within nation-states, in which they have become ethnic minorities. Some such groups have been able to recoup their population. Many indigenous peoples survive and maintain their ethnic identity despite having lost their ancestral cultures to varying degrees (partial ethnocide). And many descendants of tribespeople live on as culturally distinct and self-conscious colonized peoples, many of whom aspire to autonomy. As the original inhabitants of their territories, they are called indigenous peoples (see Maybury-Lewis 2002).

Industrial degradation today. In Cape Town, a South African boy crosses a severely polluted river. In this impoverished slum, 1,000 families share three toilets and two water taps.

Around the world many contemporary nations are repeating—at an accelerated rate—the process of resource depletion that started in Europe and the United States during the Industrial Revolution. Fortunately, however, today’s world has some environmental watchdogs that did not exist during the first centuries of the Industrial Revolution. Given national and international cooperation and sanctions, the modern world may benefit from the lessons of the past (see Hornborg, McNeill, and Martinez-Alier, eds. 2007).

ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY

Mining Giant Compatible with Sustainability Institute?

The spread of industrialization, illustrated by the mining described here, has contributed to the destruction of indigenous economies, ecologies, and populations. Today, multinational conglomerates, along with nations such as Papua New Guinea as described here, are repeating—at an accelerated rate—the process of resource depletion that started in Europe and the United States during the Industrial Revolution. Fortunately, however, today’s world has some environmental watchdogs, including anthropologists, that did not exist during the first centuries of the Industrial Revolution. Described here is a conundrum confronting a major university. Is a firm whose operations have destroyed the landscapes and livelihoods of indigenous peoples a proper advisor for an institute devoted to ecological sustainability?
I n the 1990s, the giant mining company
now known as BHP Billiton drew world-
wide condemnation for the environmental
damage caused by its copper and gold mine
in Papua New Guinea. Its mining practices
destroyed the way of life of thousands of
farming and fishing families who lived
along and subsisted on the rivers polluted
by the mine, and it was only after being
sued in a landmark class-action case that
the company agreed to compensate them.

Today several activists and academics
who work on behalf of indigenous people
around the world say the company contin-
ues to dodge responsibility for the problems
its mines create for communities in unde-
veloped parts of the world.

Yet at the University of Michigan at
Ann Arbor, BHP Billiton enjoys a lofter
reputation: It is one of 14 corporate mem-
er of an External Advisory Board for the
university's new Graham Environmental
Sustainability Institute.

Critics at and outside the university
contend that Michigan's decision to enlist
BHP Billiton as an adviser to an institute
devoted to sustainability reflects badly on
the institution and allows the company to
claim a mantle of environmental and social
responsibility that it does not deserve.

The institute's director says he is satis-
fixed that the company is serious about oper-
ating in a more sustainable way.

The arguments echo the discussions
about corporate "greenwashing" that have
arisen at Stanford University and the
University of California at Berkeley over
major grants from ExxonMobil
and BP, respectively, and more recently,
the debate at the Smithsonian Institution
among its trustees over whether to accept
a gift from the American Petroleum Insti-
tute for a museum exhibition about oceans.
(The gift was withdrawn in November.)

For one BHP Billiton critic at Michigan,
the issue is personal. Stuart Kirsch, an
associate professor of anthropology, has
spent most of his academic career docu-
menting the damage caused by BHP
Billiton's Ok Tedi mine in Papua New
Guinea ...

Mr. Kirsch, who first visited some of
the affected communities as a young eth-
ographer in 1987, became involved in the
class-action lawsuit brought against
the company and helped villagers partici-
pate in the 1996 legal settlement. "I put
my career on hold while being an activ-
ist," he says.

He subsequently published several pa-
ers related to his work with the Yonggom
people as they fought for recognition
and compensation from mine operators—
scholarship that helped him win tenure this
year—and he remains involved with the
network of activists and academics who fol-
low mining and its impact on underdeveloped
communities around the world ...

The company's practices polluted the
Ok Tedi and Fly Rivers and caused thou-
sands of people to leave their homes be-
cause of the mining-induced flooding; made it
impossible for them to grow food to feed
themselves, says Mr. Kirsch ...

BHP Billiton, based in Australia, later
acknowledged that the mine was "not com-
patible with our environmental values," and
spun it off to an independent company that
pays all of its mining royalties to the gov-
ernment of Papua New Guinea.

But Mr. Kirsch says that in doing so,
the company skirted responsibility for ameliorating the damage it caused. BHP
Billiton says it would have preferred to
close the mine, but the Papua New Guinea
government, in need of the mine revenues,
pressed to keep it open. The deal freed BHP
Billiton from any future liabilities for envi-
ronmental damage.

"They didn't clean it up; they didn't
take responsibility for the damage they had
done," Mr. Kirsch says of the company. With
that record, "it's supposed to provide educa-
tion to the University of Michigan?"

Illud Harri, a BHP Billiton spokes-
man, says the company regrets its past with
Ok Tedi but considers its pullout from the
mine "a responsible exit" that left in place a
system that supports educational, agricul-
tural, and social programs for the people of
the community.

He says the company also aims for the
most ethical standards in its projects. The
company mines only when it can fully com-
ply with the host country's environmental
laws. In places where those regulatory re-
quirements fall below the company's, "we
will always be guided by our higher stand-
rds," he says.

Mr. Talbot, the interim director of the
two-year-old sustainability institute, says ...

"We intentionally selected a cross-sector
group of organizations" for the advisory
board from a list of about 140 nominees ...

and several companies that "weren't mak-
ing any serious efforts" toward sustainabil-
ity were rejected ...

BHP Billiton, a company formed from
the 2001 merger of the Australian mining
enterprise Broken Hill Proprietary Company
with London-based Billiton, is now the
world's largest mining company, with more
than 105 operations in 25 countries ...
7. Spelled with a lowercase c, communism describes a social system in which property is owned by the community and in which people work for the common good. Spelled with an uppercase C, Communism indicates a political movement and doctrine seeking to overthrow capitalism and to establish a form of communism such as that which prevailed in the Soviet Union from 1917 to 1991. The heyday of Communism was between 1949 and 1989. The fall of Communism can be traced to 1989–1990 in eastern Europe and 1991 in the Soviet Union. Postsocialist states have followed the neoliberal agenda, through privatization, deregulation, and democratization.

8. By 1900 the United States had become a core nation. Mass production gave rise to a culture that valued acquisitiveness and conspicuous consumption. One effect of industrialization has been the destruction of indigenous economies, ecologies, and populations. Another has been the accelerated rate of resource depletion.

Key Terms

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