

## Editorial Foreword

**CONVERGENCES** Evenly matched opponents are not always quick to acknowledge, or even notice, their similarities. This was certainly the case during the Cold War. The global standoff between the Soviet Union and the United States was understood as a conflict between radically different sociopolitical systems. It was also a conflict between two large, expansionist states, each heavily invested in centralized planning, each with a muscular military-industrial complex, each obsessed with the propagation of its own version of political and economic modernity. These opposed systems produced shared patterns of global culture that have survived the Cold War, and members of their elite intellectual and governmental institutions often arrived at the awkward realization that their competition generated and masked a proliferating array of common agendas and interests.

**Johanna Bockman** and **Michael Bernstein** explore the vexed, politically sensitive relationship between Soviet and American economists who developed mathematical models for centralized production and resource allocation. Much of this work had military applications and was classified, but Russian and American economists gradually found ways to recognize each other as colleagues in a universal discipline. Bockman and Bernstein chart the efforts of Tjalling Koopmans to collaborate with Leonid Kantorovich, a Russian economist who made key breakthroughs in linear programming. Their work, which received a Nobel Prize in 1975, involved many years of censorship, shifting lines of official secrecy, the renegotiation of intellectual property rights, and personal risk to both men. Ironically, the mathematical models Koopmans and Kantorovich developed lost much of their appeal with the end of the Cold War, when governmental investment in the science of centralized planning withered, and neoliberal market ideologies became the new language of global economics.

**Laura Adams** examines the globalization of culture in the Central Asian republics. Arguing that modernism, not capitalism, is the driving force behind public culture in Uzbekistan, Adams shows how mass spectacle, ethnic festivals, and “folklore” have taken on obvious formal resemblances, whether they are encountered in Central Asia or North America. Although these convergent trends flourished during the long Soviet era, when capitalism was absent, they persist in Uzbekistan today without substantial private sector investment. Elite culture makers in Tashkent are fully aware of the global contexts in which Central Asian cultures are ranked and compared. This awareness, Adams insists, cannot be adequately explained by market principles or global commodity

flows. Instead, it is the universalizing tendency of modernity that produces the homogeneity of form, and the heterogeneity of content, that characterize national spectacles designed, quite literally, for the world to see.

**BUILDING TRANSREGIONAL SYSTEMS** The formal convergences that arose during the Cold War are examples of how political systems interact across difference, and distance, to produce similarities in knowledge production and cultural display. Integrative logics akin to these can be discerned wherever dynamic regional polities are drawn into competitive and collaborative relations. The essays that follow explore how integrative processes create transregional systems of diverse kinds, shaping the organizational life of cities, the expansion of states, and the alignment of civilizations and imperial formations within geopolitical blocs that endure for centuries.

**Erik Lindberg** reconsiders the rise of Hamburg as a marketplace and financial center in the seventeenth century, a success story usually explained by Hamburg's ideal location at the center of the North Sea trade. By comparing Hamburg's rapid growth to the decline of Lübeck, a nearby city that once dominated regional trade, Lindberg shows that legal and political factors internal to Hamburg allowed for its higher level of commercial integration with London, Amsterdam, and other dominant market cities. Whereas Lübeck protected the privileges of its guilds and placed heavy restrictions on foreign merchants, Hamburg was an open city that secured the property rights of outsiders, a commercial style that quickly became dominant in Northern Europe, sweeping aside old financial and trading networks and facilitating new links to England, Hungary, Poland, the Baltic, and Italy.

**Erica Schoenberger** explores the formative relationship between money-based commodity markets and the logistical demands of state-sponsored war machines. The evolution of money economies, Schoenberger argues, was directly related to resource management problems encountered by armies that operated over long distances and had to concentrate labor in places and at rates that could not be sustained by barter or in-kind exchanges. Money was an innovation that allowed armies to provision themselves over long distances. It could also be used to support mobile, non-local workforces engaged in building fortresses, constructing heavy weaponry, and otherwise maintaining military infrastructure. Examining cases from ancient Greece, imperial Rome, and the European Middle Ages, Schoenberger details the extent to which the emergence of monetized markets was a feature of state building and the territorial ambitions of states were part of market development.

**Victor Lieberman** dramatically reconfigures dominant approaches to Eurasian history by fashioning an overview of premodern civilizational development on the continent, from roughly 800 to 1830 C.E. Dispensing with East-West models, Lieberman divides the Eurasian landmass into two geopolitical categories: the "protected rimlands" and the "exposed zones." The rimlands,

which include Europe, Japan, and mainland Southeast Asia, are marked by secondary state formation, rule by indigenous elites, and more centralized administration. The exposed zones, which include much of China, South Asia, and Southwest Asia, were sites of primary state formation. Vulnerable to periodic incursions by Inner Asian nomadic populations (and later, to domination by European imperialists), the exposed zones were less amenable to sustained administrative centralization. Protected rimlands, like the exposed zones, were found in the East and the West, as were the traits associated with each category. Lieberman argues that these traits explain the broad contours of political development within and across the zones and allow us to view premodern Eurasia as an internally diverse, yet coherent and increasingly coordinated world.

**COMPARATIVE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE** Convergences of the sort featured in this issue are analytically useful because they provoke an awareness of difference as well as similarity. In fact, convergences are apparent only when differences are. Insisting on difference—by celebrating, fetishizing, and intensifying it; by creating it where it did not exist before—is a well-established habit of national politics and its imperial forms. Three of our essays explore how differences in racial, cultural, and linguistic identity are built up, or strategically ignored, in ways that determine the political significance of comparison itself.

**Katherine Hoffman** demonstrates how committed French authorities in Morocco were to maintaining the differences they saw, or wanted to see, between Berbers and Arabs. French scholars and military administrators believed strongly that Morocco was a Berber country and that Arabization, which they associated with insurrection, nationalism, and Islam, should be vigorously discouraged. As they disputed the essence of Berber identity, finding it sometimes in language, sometimes in bloodlines, sometimes in law or culture, the French unwittingly spread Arab fluency wherever they established their political dominance. Colonial rule was impossible without writing, and textual administration was carried out in partnership with local elites who were literate in Arabic, or French, or both. Berber, during the French protectorate, was not a written language. Heavy reliance on Arabic as a lingua franca, Hoffman argues, strengthened Muslim and Arab nationalist political trends the French sought to undermine, while their attempts to drive a wedge between Arabs and Berbers eventuated (a half-century later) in the Berber cultural rights movement.

**Choi Chatterjee** offers us a grand tour of American representations of Russia during the late nineteenth century, a period in which Russophobia and Russophilia mixed freely in American public culture. Although political and scholarly elites were likely to depict Russia as politically backward and impervious to economic development, Chatterjee argues that views of Russia circulating in more popular media—in adventure novels, plays, and travel

literature—were less consistently negative. In the popular quarters of American print capitalism, critiques of Russian primitivism were replaced by romantic portraits of glamorous Old World aristocrats or defiant revolutionaries in pursuit of social justice. These more positive images were part of a longstanding American fascination with (both) hereditary nobility and radicalism, but they also reflected the prominent role Russian émigrés played in producing American novels and plays about Russia. The transcultural effort invested in creating popular models of Russian/American difference set them apart from the derogatory motifs that pervaded American images of colonized Asian and African peoples. Attention to how this representational difference worked, Chatterjee suggests, can shed new light on the politics and practice of Orientalism.

**Robert Shilliam** develops a critical analysis of the “failed state,” a concept now popular in the study of international relations. The failed state is posed as a threat to the global world order, yet the historical content of this threat is obscured by new approaches to geopolitics that ignore the politics of race, a discourse once central to analysis of first and third world disparities. Shilliam argues that neo-Weberian and Marxian approaches to global politics cannot make adequate sense of the racial formations that have shaped modernity. To show how a more race-conscious stance might improve analysis of the “security/development nexus,” Shilliam reconsiders the Haitian slave revolution (1791–1804), arguing that a politics of race explains the revolution and its aftermath much better than do factors such as class formation, status hierarchy, or state monopolization of force. Drawing lessons from the Haitian case, Shilliam concludes that international security and development studies must tackle the ambiguous, under-theorized relationship between slavery, racial inequality, and the modern world system.

**CSSH DISCUSSION** Problems of agency are central to modern social theory, just as free labor and the autonomous individual are central to modern political economy. Yet all talk of agents and their subjectivity calls attention to larger (equally modern) structures of power that constrain agency and somehow pre-exist it. **Peter van der Veer** evaluates four recent works that bring together secular-theoretical and religious-doctrinal thought about agency. Dividing his attention between studies of Abrahamic and Chinese religious traditions, he argues that these authors provide brilliant, insightful critiques of well-established notions of embodiment, materiality, and power. He also contends that the books uphold the contrast between agency as an expressive discourse and agency as the product and object of institutional control. This chronic distinction calls for new kinds of analysis that, according to van der Veer, combine experiential and structural features of human agency in ways that enhance our understanding of religious movements in the modern world.