



 [Rapid urbanization in economic globalization by Michelle Brenner](#) by Louise

S. [2017, May 20]

I am coming to San Francisco in July but only for 1 week, I am doing a course to be trained as a Forest Healing Guide. This is my personal journey to relieve my pain in how the urban environment has become a monster of modern development gone berserk.

Is there something we can do about urbanization and raising consciousness around the world????

love Michelle

Michelle Brenner

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 [Comment by Louise Sundararajan](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 20]

Hi Michelle,

To answer your question, let me tell you about a book to be published by Palgrave Studies in Indigenous Psychology:

The voice of suffering: Culture, cognition, and emotion of religious Yi communities in China. by Sing-Kiat Ting & Louise Sundararajan

I have attached below some relevant passages.

Enjoy,
Louise

Sundararajan (2015) claims that the modern West and traditional East are ecological niches that are the upside-down universes of each other-- one privileging analytical reasoning, the other undifferentiated wholeness. Consistent with this hypothesis, Bourdieu (2000) claims that it is the “overturning of the table of values [of the traditional societies] which gave rise to the economy as we know it” (p. 26). He explains: “To subject all the behaviours of existence to calculating reason, as demanded by the economy, is to break with . . . the logic of good faith, trust and

equity which is supposed to govern relations between kin and which is founded on the repression, or rather the degeneration, of calculation” (p. 25). Cast in the framework of Sundararajan’s (2015) ecological rationality, the price for economic progress in the globalizing era is the demise of traditional values of strong ties societies.

The price of turning the table on traditional values of strong ties societies is steep. As Bourdieu (2000) points out, global economy suddenly renders “obsolete” (p. 40) or “literally unthinkable” (p. 39) the collective representations and dispositions of the pre-capitalist societies. Worse yet, the whole process is “submitted to a kind of historical acceleration which caused two forms of economic organization, normally separated by a gap of several centuries and making contradictory demands on their participants, to co-exist . . .” (p. 18, emphasis in original). Adaptation in the sense of letting go of the traditional values is a form of conversion, according to Bourdieu (2000): “Acquiring the spirit of calculation required by the modern economy entails a veritable conversion via the apostasy of the embodied beliefs that underpin exchange in traditional . . . society” (p. 17). He claims that it is not an exaggeration to call it conversion, because transformations of economic practices in rural societies entail the change of “a whole lifestyle or, better, a whole system of solidary beliefs” (p. 23) such that one must speak of conversion instead of adaptation. In less psychological and more objective terms, Bourdieu (2000) refers to this process as a “mismatch” which is a “mismatch between economic dispositions fashioned in a precapitalist economy and the economic cosmos imported and imposed, oftentimes in the most brutal way, by colonization” (p. 18, emphasis in original). Our data on the Yi people, especially the migrant workers who did not make it in the city and returned home with severe physical disabilities including HIV infection, call attention to the plight of “economic agents devoid of the dispositions tacitly demanded by an economic order” (p. 18). The following blog by a Yi writer gives a vivid description of the Yi migrant workers as economic agents who are paying a toll for the mismatch between their strong-ties economic dispositions and the urban economic universe they find themselves in once they leave home:

Since Yi people are hardworking and can persevere in hardship, they are quite well-liked. However, due to their ethnic identity, lack of fluency in Mandarin, young age, and personal habits problems, they face high elimination rate at job interviews. Even if they get the job to work in the factory, they can only do manual labor or low technical work, which could only be paid for about 3 thousand rmb per month. Although the income sounds pretty good, it does not last, due to their need to gain social prestige (face) by splurging, their sense of social obligation and drinking habits, plus the absence of an elder to exert guidance and control, they spent all that salary very quickly. Very few of them could have money left by the end of the month. I once know a 19 year old Yi teenager, ShamaXX, who bought his first Nike sneakers right after he received the first month salary, then treated his friends to dining, drinking, and karaoke. On the third day, he was penniless, and had to depend on his relatives and friends for help. (retrieved from <http://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/6EE3o7Ng4rMtqK83QW4ekw>)

Our analysis also calls attention to the role experts play as high priest in the conversion process of globalization by diagnosing “backwardness” or deficiencies. What Bourdieu (2000) says about economics applies equally well to cross cultural psychology: “. . . economics treats the prospective and calculating disposition towards the world and time . . . as a universal ‘given,’ a gift of nature. In doing so, it tacitly condemns in moral terms those who have already been condemned in reality to the fate of economic ‘misfits’ by the economic system . . .” (p. 28).

How can indigenous psychology do better? A place to start would be to recognize the fact that global economy is the most dangerous superstition in human history:

. . . although money builds universal trust between strangers, this trust is invested not in humans, communities or sacred values, but in money itself and in the impersonal systems that back it. . . . As money brings down the dams of community, religion and state, the world is in danger of becoming one big and rather heartless marketplace. (Harari, 2011, p. 208)

The historian professor Harari (2011) claims that the replacement of family and community by states and markets in the global economy is “the most momentous social revolution that ever befell humankind” (p. 398). This modernization process leaves the Yi people in the middle of nowhere—the traditional family is undermined by the migrant workers who either do not return, or return to burden their family with illness and disabilities, while the state is not able to resume the full responsibility for the welfare and health system as a modern state would, resulting in the utter destitution of the poor that we have witnessed.



 [Comment by Michelle Brenner](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 20]

Thank you, I will get that book if it is in English.

I think this research needs to be done everywhere not just China, I think this is going to be as critical to society as the beginning of the industrial revolution, with all the pollution, yet to be realised.

You cant destroy beauty and it not matter.

love michelle

Michelle Brenner

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[Comment by Olga Louchakova-Schwartz](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 21]

Not sure. See this report <http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/global-migrations-impact-and-opportunity> - its all about urbanized economics.

We can, perhaps, use the persuasion power of psychology if we start advocating the psychological benefits of forests, Needs conceptual frames, pushing for a separate division, development of treatment modalities, conferences, whole nine yards but it will eventually work. I can help to promote something like this and take part in it if somebody leads; cannot take it fully on because of other commitments.

Olga



[Comment by Anthony J. Marsella](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 21]

Can post in response to Michelle's concerns.

Thank you.

Tony



[Urban History](#)



[Comment by Hans Bakker](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 21]

Hi Louise,

This discussion is quite interesting to me. As you know I wear many hats. One hat is "rural sociologist." I will be going to the Rural Sociological Society in Columbus, Ohio, this summer.

I edited a book entitled: The Methodology of Political Economy: Studying the Global Rural-Urban Matrix. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington.

I believe the rural and the urban are part of one "ecological" and political economic, global modern finance capitalist system.

Sincerely,'

Hans

[https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781498521871/The-Methodology-of-Political-Economy-Studying-the-Global-Rural%E2%80%93Urban-Matrix.](https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781498521871/The-Methodology-of-Political-Economy-Studying-the-Global-Rural%E2%80%93Urban-Matrix)

The Methodology of Political Economy: Studying the Global ...
rowman.com

The importance of the global rural-urban matrix is often overlooked due to urban-normativity. But sometimes agrarian populism and a pastoral rural imaginary result in ...

 [Comment by Christian Chan](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 21]

Hi Louise,

A colleague of mine just published the following article. I thought members of the IP group might be interested in it.

Thanks,
Christian

Christian Chan, PhD | 陳濬靈
Assistant Professor
Department of Psychology
The University of Hong Kong

 [Atallah_2017_Transcultural Psychiatry Publication](#)

Dear Christian,

I wanted to share this article of mine with you that has finally been published - it took years to publish, in part, because writing about Palestine in English and from Western academic perspectives is not easy. Though, it is done, and the work is out there... Here is the link:

<http://journals.sagepub.com/eprint/XIYat8qMWNH5m5BPmtzp/full>

Feel free to share widely, considering the importance of our making space for the voices of marginalized communities to be expressed, discussed, and heard - in fact, many of the participants in this research explicitly shared their hopes with me that their struggles would be heard across wide audiences - beyond the Israeli Wall, beyond the localized militarization, and beyond the systems of global domination, which so profoundly and unjustly, shape and violently constrain Palestinian refugee efforts and opportunities for health, justice, and resilience.

In struggle,

-Devin

--

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 [Comment by Anthony J. Marsella](#) by Louise S. [2017, May 21]

Found this older publication. Continues our common concern.

Best , tony



[Urbanization & Mental Health](#)



 [Comment by Michelle Brenner](#) by Louise S. [2017, Jun 22]

You inspired me to look up Harari and have just finished his book, Sapiens. Here is a quote:

"On 20th July 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the surface of the moon. In the months leading up to their expedition, the Apollo 11 astronauts trained in a remote moon like desert in the western United States. The area is home to several Native American communities, and there is a story - or legend- describing an encounter between the astronauts and one of the locals.

One day as they were training, the astronauts came across an old Native American. The man asked them what they were doing there. They replied that they were part of a reserach expedition that would shortly travel to explore the moon. When the old man heart that, he fell silent for a few moments, and then asked the astronauts if they could do him a favour.

"What do you want?" they asked.

"Well," said the old man, "the people of my tribe believe that holy spirits like on the moon. I was wondering if you could pass an important message to them from my people."

"Whats the message?" asked the astronauts.

The man uttered something in his tribal language, and then asked the astronauts to repeat it again and again until they had memorized it correctly.

"What does it mean?" asked the astronauts.

"Oh, I cannot tell you. It's a secret that only our tribe and the moon spirits are allowed to know."

When they returned to their base, the astronauts searched and searched until they found someone who could speak the tribal language, and asked him to translate the secret message. When they repeated what they had memorized, the translator started to laugh uproariously. When he calmed down, the astronauts asked him what it meant. The man explained that the sentence they had memorized so carefully meant, "Don't believe a single word these people are telling you. They have come to steal your lands."

Harari then goes on to talk about explore and conquer mentality.

I really chuckled when I read that.

love michelle

I couldn't sleep after reading your excerpt from your new book you sent me, the quote of the test of suffering. I wanted to know who was this Harari, and you took me to him on Ted talk and I couldn't stop laughing, he is so right, and so clever and so funny. So I wrote to him, to tell him what I thought, and his secretary responded, via him I am sure. We had a bit of a conversation. Anyway I ordered his book, and couldn't put it down, 500 pages of it. I just ordered his latest book about our future possibilities. He is great. Thank you.

Michelle Brenner

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