

# GENDER, GLOBALIZATION, &



# DEMOCRATIZATION



Edited by  
**Rita Mae Kelly**  
**Jane H. Bayes**  
**Mary E. Hawkesworth**  
**Brigitte Young**

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## Globalization, Democratization, and Gender Regimes

*Jane H. Bayes, Mary E. Hawkesworth, and Rita Mae Kelly*

**T**his book is concerned with three major twentieth-century phenomena—globalization, democratization, and feminization—and their interrelationship and impact on gender regimes in various parts of the world. While many have described both globalization and democratization, few have paid attention to the gendered aspects of these processes. The purpose of this book is to incorporate gender analyses into a critical study of the processes of globalization and democratization.

In the case of globalization, the book focuses on how the economic aspects of twentieth-century globalization—the international movement of capital, goods, and labor—have impacted gender relations or gender regimes, including the movement by women into public arenas, which we term feminization. The nature of gender regimes in a society is critical to the possibility of establishing a full democracy in its richest and most “thick” version, a version that recognizes women as equal citizens of a democratic state. This book argues that a “full democracy” (as opposed to a “limited” or partial democracy) is one that recognizes women as citizens equally with men, one where the institutionalized gender relationships or gender regimes are egalitarian (Mill 1989).

Contrary to prevailing concepts of gender as a role, a norm, or a status category, this book uses Robert Connell’s (1987) concept of gender as an active process that creates divisions of labor, power, and emotions between men and women as well as modes of dress, deportment, and identity. Rather than accepting that sex provides a “natural” assignment of roles and responsibilities for men and women, Connell suggests that economic, political, and interpersonal practices create what are taken to be “natural” sex differences. In arguing that gender acts through diverse domains of labor, power, and cathexis, Connell emphasizes that these processes need not reinforce one another. Indeed, tensions among the gender regimes operative in the institutions of family, market, and governance make “lived contradictions” a common experience. A society may include many conflicting gender regimes or it may be more homogeneous.

A major argument of this book is that if established patterns of interaction between men and women in the family, the marketplace, and other nongovernmental institutions in the society deny women physical and economic security, access to education, and access to social and political institutions and offices, then the democratization process, although it may constitutionally claim that men and women are equal, can be no more than a facade, a thin veneer. So long as women are confined to a "separate sphere," confined to reproduction, housework, and child care, so long as women are left uneducated, unable to control their bodies, and unrecognized as citizens on an equal footing with men, democracy, if it exists at all in the form of regular competitive elections, constitutional government, and accountability to the governed, is more a stated goal than a reality. Yet changing gender regimes in a society is no easy task. Economic conditions often establish a division of labor between the sexes, which becomes routinized and institutionalized long after those economic conditions have changed. New economic conditions can create new kinds of division of labor and new gender regimes that can clash with the old forms of gender relationships.

Most of the chapters in the collection explore the complex tensions between the gender regimes that structure work relations and those operative in the family. Several of the chapters examine the complex interplay of gendering processes in politics and sexual practices, while others explore interactions and antagonisms in gender regimes in politics and economics. Collectively, the essays emphasize that gender regimes are in transition under globalization and democratization, but the direction of change is neither unilinear nor inherently progressive. Contradictions in gender regimes in politics, economics, and interpersonal relations create sites of contestation, but the outcome of these diverse and locally specific struggles remains an open question.

While both globalization and democratization have the capacity to alter dramatically gender regimes, the relationship between the two movements is complex. Globalization, both today and in the past, has always had political and economic components that depend heavily on the economy and technology of the period as well as the political ideas and institutions of those who are successful in expanding their operations to other parts of the globe. The idea of conquering foreign lands to generate a political and economic empire is at least as old as Alexander the Great. When Elizabeth I, Queen of England, signed the charter for the British East India Company on New Year's Eve, 1600, she signed a document that was "for the honour of this our realm of England as for the increase of our navigation and advancement of trade of merchandise" (Gardner 1971, 17). England and the other early imperialist nations (Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands) took not only their economic ideas of trade and commerce, but also their languages, political ideas, and political institutions with them as they established settlements and colonies abroad. In their colonial territories, each of these imperialist countries (including France, Belgium, Germany) imposed their political institutions, language, and political ideas as well as their economic means of

exploitation. During this period, economics and politics were linked through the rhetoric of nationalism, a rhetoric that these colonies eventually adopted to attain independence.

In contrast, globalization in the late twentieth century links economics and politics primarily through the rhetoric of neoliberalism, which ironically tries to drive a wedge between economics and politics to make each appear independent at a fundamental level. Global corporations with only limited national attachments are the primary engines of production. Yet neoliberalism requires particular functions of government, functions that can be performed by military dictators or juntas, by “thin” democratic states, and even to some extent by socialist and communist regimes. Neoliberalism requires that governments provide for the free movement of capital, the free movement of goods, unrestricted labor markets, responsible banking systems, stable monetary policies, limited fiscal policies, attractive investment opportunities, and political stability. Neoliberalism provides rules for economies, not for societies.

The first argument of this book is that globalization represents a set of economic forces that changes the division of labor between the sexes in many different contexts as well as the nature of the state, creates enormous social disruption and dislocation, and because of all this, can change established gender regimes. The first wave of globalization in the fifteenth century brought Europeans to many parts of the globe intent upon establishing empires, settler colonies, and trading posts. These conquerors and immigrants brought with them their ideas about gender relations as well as their ideas about race and class and imposed them on indigenous populations. Conditions in the new societies or colonies generated further changes (chapter 2). The more recent wave of globalization in the last half of the twentieth century has been fueled by a neoliberal ideology of free trade, free flow of capital, limited governmental regulation, and democratization. Established gender regimes have been altered as the waged labor force has become feminized and women have for the first time in large numbers been drawn out of the household or the family farm into the waged economy (chapter 9 and chapter 6). Gender regimes have changed as foreign investment has disrupted traditional subsistence agricultural communities and encouraged large-scale migration patterns (chapter 5). Foreign lenders, international groups, unions, industrialized governments, and human rights groups demanding human rights for women have been a force for change (chapter 9, chapter 2). States that previously supported a “male bread (or rice) winner” model of gender relations have found themselves compelled to cut social services at the same time that “family wages” are being trimmed to be competitive with the enlarged, feminized, and highly “flexible” global labor force (chapter 3). Multinational global corporations invade on an increasing scale countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, making deals with governmental elites to drain valuable natural resources from countries with weak or corrupt governments. In other instances, international organizations promoting the neoliberal capitalist agenda such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank demand that

export production replace production for domestic consumption in exchange for loans, or the World Trade Organization demands that small, local industries go unprotected in competition with huge global giants. Often these are deals that degrade the environment, upset local economies, disrupt local food supplies, and put women and children into deeper poverty (chapter 4). In some situations, established male-dominant gender regimes are so entrenched they are able to thwart the global trends that would draw women into export production (chapter 7). In other situations, globalization has expanded and internationalized what was formerly a more contained patriarchal gender regime (chapter 8).

Chapters 2–4 provide case studies of specific ways that globalization (either the first wave or the more recent wave) has impacted existing gender regimes. Chapters 5–8 highlight how globalization itself contains contradictions, and the changes it initiates often generate conflicts that can become sites of gender regime contestation. These chapters, and chapter 9 in particular, show how these contradictions offer insights and hope for positive social, economic, and political change for women, how they can create new political spaces for women in both the private and public spheres. The argument in chapters 10–13 is that, in general, the prospects for the establishment of rich and full democracies around the world, democracies where women are recognized as equal citizens with men, still need to be improved markedly.

The impact of globalization on women throughout the world has been as negative and undemocratic as it has been positive and liberating. While some educated women in developed countries have prospered, larger numbers of women in the world have become poorer. The movement of foreign capital into subsistence agricultural communities often induces men to seek waged work elsewhere, leaving their farms to the women and children. The resulting poverty disrupts local social organization, herds people into crowded urban areas and into international migration, and in some parts of the world drives many women and children into slavery, prostitution, and sex trafficking. The same kind of result, as well as a general reduction in the quality of life, occurs for many women in indebted nation-states, in newly democratizing states (as in Eastern Europe), or in those states trying to meet neoliberal deficit standards (as in the European Union countries, Canada, or even the United States). These negative consequences stem from the reduction of housing, food, health, and other social welfare programs or diversion of local resources to export production in order to improve the balance of payments and reduce debt loads. In many Latin American, Eastern European, Asian, and central Asian countries, the mechanisms of old patriarchal gender regimes have reasserted themselves after women mobilized in revolutionary ways to overthrow military dictators (chapter 10) or after unpopular communist regimes fell in 1989. In most northern industrialized countries, women and workers, in general, are losing their battles with the state and the society to retain safety net and social provisions for reproductive work as well as caretaking work, losing the battle to live in a society rather than in an economy.

Faced with the institutionalized sets of gender relationships or gender regimes that perpetuate male dominance in the family, church, temple, mosque, school, university, marketplace, business organizations, military, and in the history and the literary oral traditions of almost all societies in the world, obtaining "full democratization" is a tall order, one that has not yet been attained in any society. Yet the world has definitely become more democratized in the past two hundred years. Political action if undertaken strategically can make a difference. Democratic ideas, once established in at least some institutions of a society, can have a logical progression that presses for greater equality and inclusion for all members of the society. With industrialization beginning in the early nineteenth century—the flourishing of liberal thought, the French Revolution, and the rise of the merchant class— notions of equality, individual rights, and governments authorized by and accountable to "the people" gained legitimacy. In Europe, many monarchies evolved in irregular paths toward constitutional democracies during the nineteenth century. Initially, these constitutional democracies recognized only men as citizens.

Recent feminist scholarship (Kerber 1980; Landes 1988; J. W. Scott 1996; McDonagh 1999) suggests that democratization is not a linear process nor is it the same for men and women. Times of dramatic change are often gendered. As was the case during the Renaissance and the French Revolution (Landes 1988; J. W. Scott 1996), the age of the "rights of man" was an age in which women lost status and power. In the colonial United States, for example, rights of participation were tied to property. When the new states formed constitutions after the Revolutionary War, male gender was added to property as a constitutional requirement for participation. Some propertied women lost their rights of participation. Women who had been politicized and active in the Revolutionary War were privatized by constitutional fiat. The "ideology of Republican Motherhood," which accorded women the narrow political role of bearing children and educating them to be virtuous citizens, was subsequently created to legitimate this restriction of women's political activism (Kerber 1980; McDonagh 1999).

When Elizabeth Cady Stanton called the first Women's Rights Convention together in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, women in the United States and Europe were not allowed to own property. With few exceptions, they were unable to attend college, were generally unable to control their reproductive lives, and were unable to vote, to sit on juries, to speak in public, or to serve in elected bodies. Slavery still existed in the United States, and a large percentage of black women in the United States were slaves. Drawing on the ideas and rhetoric of the Declaration of Independence (a document that did not include women), the Seneca Falls Declaration of the Rights of Women declared that all men *and women* were equal and entitled to inalienable rights. As the franchise expanded for men and slaves were freed, women, first in New Zealand and Australia and later in other parts of the world, demanded and received the right to be recognized as voting citizens. The next notable expansion of democratization came after World War II

when the United States emerged as the dominant Western economy and the dominant Western power. Japan under the occupation democratized. Germany reestablished its constitutional democracy. India and some African nations broke their colonial yokes to establish fledgling democratic governments. A third wave of democratization came in Southeast Asia and Latin America in the 1980s as popular uprisings toppled military dictatorships and in the 1990s in Eastern Europe and central Asia as communist regimes crumbled. The struggle for democracy for women involves not only the transition of military dictatorships, communist regimes, and traditional monarchies or fiefdoms to political systems that uphold the rule of law, regular competitive elections, and accountable government, but also involves a struggle for the equal recognition of women in and the subsequent democratization of both state institutions, such as legislatures, state bureaucracies, courts, and local governments, and of nonstate institutions, such as the family, the business corporation, religious institutions, and voluntary organizations. Many women participated in the struggles that involved overthrowing dictatorships or welcomed their release from communist regimes only to find themselves marginalized politically and economically in both old and new ways. A partial and thin democratization process may establish ostensibly democratic institutions that operate for men, but tends to exclude women from political participation and the processes of democratic citizenship. A rich and complete democratization process requires significant changes in the traditional relationships between men and women, changes in the socialization of men and women, and changes not only in formal institutions such as parties, legislatures, bureaucracies, and courts, but also changes in the customs and practices of families, religious organizations, businesses, and voluntary associations.

While prospects for democracies that include women equally with men are not good, the situation is not one-dimensional. The contradictions and conflicts created in the sites of gender regime contestation that globalization creates open up political opportunities for gender regime change that can move toward providing the basis for a more full and complete democratization process. For example, women who are drawn into the paid labor force do not all immediately change the gender relationships in their families or in other institutions; however, some gain a certain independence and do become political actors. They change the gender regimes of their families and communities. Migrants moving from societies with patriarchal gender regimes to societies with more egalitarian gender regimes do not all change, nor do they change immediately; but some do and some become politically active.

Globalization and democratization as social movements are peculiarly linked in ways that generate other conundrums and contradictions. The current wave of globalization that promotes and glorifies the rewards of unfettered capitalist markets has its intellectual origins in some of the same seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European thinkers that championed the rewards of democracy, the overthrow of dictatorial tyrannies, and "rule by and for the people." Both valorize the

individual either as a free-thinking entrepreneur or consumer or as an independently minded, self-governing citizen (John Locke, Adam Smith, David Hume, Jean Jacques Rousseau). Democratization, even in its thin form that excludes women, depends heavily on the idea of inalienable individual human rights, the concept of a universal juridical male citizen undifferentiated by race, class, ethnicity, or other differentiating characteristics. The logical extension of a rights discourse in a situation of discrimination is to ask (as did Elizabeth Cady Stanton) why should the universal juridical citizen be differentiated by sex or gender? Why should the universal citizen be male only? This question becomes particularly poignant when the forces of globalization are generating conflict in the traditional organization of gender relationships in families and other heavily gendered social institutions.

Certainly in the last half of the twentieth century the global human rights movement has been extremely important in legitimating the global demand for women's political citizenship. The human rights agenda supports an undifferentiated juridical citizenship for all human beings regardless of sex or gender. A major symbolic and conceptual breakthrough on this issue occurred at the United Nations Human Rights Congress held in Vienna in 1994, when the delegates agreed that women's rights are human rights. At the same time that the global economic expansion in the 1990s has enabled global corporations to challenge the sovereignty of nation-states, erode the accountability of ostensibly democratic governments, propagate and support neoliberal ideas that fuel debt crises, deregulation, privatization, and structural adjustment policies, the same neoliberal forces and governments have also advocated and supported ideas of individual human rights and even the idea that women's rights are human rights.

The relationship between globalization and democratization and the political citizenship of women has been quite different outside Europe and the United States. Liberal ideas do not dominate most cultures as they do in the United States (chapter 12). In these situations, international public opinion and the influence of Western liberal ideas become factors that can generate contestation. The recent institution of quota systems in a large number of European, Latin American, and Asian countries is an example of trying to enforce gender regime change from the top down. Since many countries have entrenched patriarchal gender regimes that prevent women from running for office or standing for party seats, quotas have been adopted as a solution to help break this impasse (chapter 11). Whether this practice improves the political potency of women is a topic of considerable debate. Another site of contestation is in the international organization of non-governmental organizations to oppose some of the dictates of global financial and trade organizations. The existence of the fax machine, Internet, and e-mail as well as global news broadcasts such as CNN make it possible to organize environmental, labor, women's groups, and human rights advocates to engage in global political activities such as the Seattle protest in November 1999 against the World Trade Organization.



Both globalization and democratization (including a human rights agenda) are processes supported by the U.S. government since 1945 in the form of tax breaks for direct foreign investment by U.S. multinational firms, foreign aid, military assistance, direct contracts for democratizing countries, structural adjustment policies that link aid to the development of competing party systems, and the establishment of thinly democratic legislatures and court systems. Yet globalization and democratization processes are often quite separate. The U.S. government and other developed “democracies” have also been eager to give aid to dictators who support global capitalism. When these industrial economies do encourage democratization, their insistence on democratic procedures rarely goes beyond the imposition of a thin democratic facade that rarely includes an insistence on the equal participation of women. This is due in part to the fact that even the advanced “democratic” capitalist countries pushing this agenda are incompletely democratized themselves. Here, too, women struggle to compete on an equal footing with men.

In the most recent globalization movement of the last half of the twentieth century, the life prospects and opportunities for political participation have improved for some women, but for many others, globalization has meant social and economic dislocation, the separation of families due to migration, interruption of food supplies, environmental degradation, increased poverty, and a decline in the public welfare role of the state. Social disruption is particularly intense in certain sites such as global cities where immigrants from many different cultures congregate and different social classes live next to one another, in areas where capitalist agriculture has displaced traditional farming, in areas where women are for the first time drawn into the waged labor force, in situations where rights-based legal systems clash with legal systems unsupported by an individual rights discourse, and in situations where international human rights, labor, environmental, and women’s groups can advertise the injustices generated by globalization. All of these sites of contestation are arenas for political action, places where the gender order is permeable (in Connell’s terms), places where change from patriarchal gender regimes may be changed to more egalitarian ones. Quota systems, international organizing efforts in sites of gender regime contestation, and human rights work are all strategies that deserve support and continued effort. However, as both Mushakoji (chapter 12) and Hawkesworth (chapter 13) note, major conceptual changes are also necessary in both “old” and “new” “democracies” if democratization is ever to be full and complete.

## GLOBALIZATION AND GENDER REGIME CHANGE

Chapters 2–8 identify some of the characteristics of globalization from different regional perspectives and also identify and discuss the impact of globalization on established gender relations in various societies. Marian Simms of Australia



(chapter 2) argues that the globalization of the last half of the twentieth century is nothing new, but rather is a continuation of a previous wave of globalization that created settler societies and colonies bent on exploiting the raw materials of any new lands they could conquer, invade, and control. She traces the consequences of this interaction in Oceania as it impacted political institutions and suggests that Oceania's response to globalization, its decentralization and reliance on federalism, and its linkages with the international community have much to teach the rest of the world in dealing with the most recent wave of globalization. She notes that in settler societies, immigrants brought with them the "male breadwinner" gender regime, wherein the male is expected to earn a "family wage" and the female is to occupy a separate unwaged wife and family sphere. However, she notes that the economic conditions in settler societies, especially Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, encouraged the development of a "partnership" gender regime where men and women were related to each other in a more equitable partnership in making a living.

Brigitte Young (chapter 3) from Germany presents a European perspective on globalization. Her particular concern is the change that recent globalization forces have imposed on European states, states that prided themselves on having highly developed "societies" with well-established social safety nets, health care systems, and provisions for reproduction and child care as well as well-developed "economies." Young notes that globalization has changed the focus of the state from the overall welfare of its citizens and directed it instead toward competing in the global economy, often at the expense of its citizenry, especially its women and children. Young draws upon the theoretical insights of the French Regulation School, which stipulates capitalist modes of production as a series, but not necessarily a linear projection, of different historic regimes of accumulation and modes of regulation. Young links recent periods of capitalist accumulation with gender regimes. In particular, she examines the complex connection between the transformation from the Fordist regime of accumulation and the construction of new gender regimes.

In chapter 4 Yassine Fall from Senegal examines gender and globalization from an African perspective. As in Oceania and Central and Latin America, globalization has a long history in Africa. African economies have been integrated into global networks for hundreds of years as sources of raw materials and labor. African labor was first internationalized through the slave trade and later through the development of colonies founded to serve the needs of colonial powers. In the 1960s and 1970s many newly independent African states borrowed international funds at high interest rates in attempts to modernize their economies. The resulting accumulation of debt has resulted in the stabilization and structural adjustment policies prescribed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These policies that stress production for export draw both men and women out of agrarian subsistence economies into an urban context, into a variety of informal economy activities, and into the migrant worker labor force. The international