A Global Approach to American Indigenous History

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Abstract: The American Indigenous history has long been ignored by mainstream historical narratives. The emergence of New Indian history and the simultaneous boom of a global turn in the late 20th century had contributed to Indigenous history, but Indigenous history has not been studied in a fully global perspective yet. By discussing the global approach's contributions to the Indigenous people, America as a nation, and the borderland history, this essay argues that the global turn had brought a range of new perspectives and territories to the Indigenous history. As for the future, this paper highlights that a more transnational study of the Indigenous people around the world is needed and warns that the global approach should not be overused.

A Global Approach to American Indigenous History

Indigenous Americans are an important demographic in the American nation, yet their history has long been distorted and even ignored by white American historical narratives. Indigenous people were often interpreted as uncivilized barbarians or conquered antagonists. It was not until the rise of the Civil Rights movement and multiculturalism in the 1960s that the Indigenous past began to gain academic attention. Since the late 20th

century, the emergence of New Indian history has focused not only on conflicts between Europeans and Indigenous people, but also on the complicated relations amongst Indigenous people and on the power that the Indigenous groups exercised over Europeans. The simultaneous boom of the global approach has further contributed to scholarship on Indigenous history, bringing in a range of new perspectives and territories. This article will focus on how the newer approach has contributed to Indigenous history.

Compared to the long history of national historical writing, the global approach is relatively new. Along with the term "global," some historians also use transnational, international, or comparative history. None of the terms are interchangeable, but when compared with national history, "they all are characterized by a desire to break out of the nation-state or singular nation-state as the category of analysis."[1] This article will shelve the disputes by using global history as a general term of the newer approach. According to Richard Drayton and David Motadel's definition, global history is an approach with two key modes: a comparative approach examining an event's similarities with and differences from things somewhere else, and a connective approach elucidating how history is made through the interactions of geographically separated historical communities.[2]

This article will start with a general discussion about how the global approach has contributed to Indigenous history. It will then analyse this contribution in two tiers, namely by examining the history of Indigenous Americans and America as a nation. After that,

[1] C. Bayly, S. Beckert, M. Connelly, I. Hofmeyr, W. Kozol & P. Seed, 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History,' *The American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (2006): 1441.
[2] D. Motadel and R. Drayton, 'Discussion: The Futures of Global History,' *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018): 3.

this article will discuss how borderlands history makes up for the shortcoming of the two tiers and contributes to our understanding of Indigenous history by bringing in social history perspectives.

I. How the Global Approach Contributed to Indigenous History in General

Prior to the introduction of the global approach, the dominant method of Indigenous studies was called ethnohistory. Since the establishment of the American Society for Ethnohistory and the initial issue of its journal *Ethnohistory* in the mid-1950s, the ethnohistorical method has become widely received in the study of Indigenous history. Generally, according to historian James Axtell, the ethnohistorical method is comprised of three characteristics that "tend to focus on one society or culture at a time," with "emphasis on socio-cultural change" and "the use of historical methods and materials."[3] Historian Francis Jennings' work is a typical example of this sort of approach. In *The Invasion of America*, he emphasizes the difficulty for white historians to understand the logic of Indigenous people because of their bias of outlook and dependence for source materials on the literate Europeans' corpus of documents."[4] The application of the ethnohistorical method greatly enriches Indigenous history by placing Indigenous Americans at the centre of historical narratives. As historian John Wunder explicitly put it, "no Indigenous people is too small to consider…no era is off-limits to chronicle…Native American history is here to stay, and it is irrevocably connected to the ethnohistorical method."[5]

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[3] J. Axtell, 'Ethnohistory: An Historian's Viewpoint,' *Ethnohistory* 26, no. 1 (1979): 2-3.
[4] F. Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975): 14.
[5] J. Wunder, 'Native American History, Ethnohistory, and Context,' *Ethnohistory* 54, no. 4 (2007): 602.

It is a great achievement for ethnohistory to emphasize interactions and conflicts among Indigenous groups. Ethnohistory significantly transcends white Americans' historical narratives, yet, this approach leaves out a focus on interactions between Indigenous Americans and Euro-Americans. As historian Harry Porter writes, ethnohistorical historians tend to form an exclusive "school," despising those who do not employ the Indigenous perspective.[6] Under such a context, the introduction of the global approach helps Indigenous history further transcend the confinement of ethnohistory, breaking through the stereotypes caused by a single narrative.

Most importantly, the global approach extends the interpretation framework of Indigenous history. By the 1990s, historians of New Indian history had already begun to adopt the global approach to their studies. In *Middle Ground*, Richard White argues that although Indigenous people seldom got involved in affairs in the coastal areas, they formed a middle ground with French traders inland. According to White, the middle ground is a place where different cultures emerge with each other, until it is impossible to determine whether "a particular practice or way of doing things was French or Indian."[7] The global approach provides a stage where researchers can examine how different groups of people and cultures interplay with each other in a global world. Since the Columbus Quincentenary in 1992, a more global perspective has been integrated into the scholarship with the emergence of the term "encounter." According to James Axtell, "encounter" can occur "at any time in any place, before or after 1492, around the globe."[8]

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[6]H. Porter, 'Reflections on the Ethnohistory of Early Colonial North America,' *Journal of American Studies* 16, no. 2 (1982): 244.
[7] R. White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 50.
[8] J. Axtell, 'Columbian Encounters: Beyond 1992,' *The William and Mary Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (1992): 336.

The concept “encounter” was highly valued by New Indian historians because it broke through the traditional idea that Indigenous people were found by Westerners, that instead, they encountered each other in a part of the global world. Historian Donald Fixico states that under a more global perspective, 1492 was an encounter of two ways of thinking.[9] Thus, the global approach enriches Indigenous history and opens up broad fields for follow-up research.

Furthermore, the introduction of the global approach broke through the centring of the West that has long been branded in Indigenous history. Since the 1960s, historians have begun to reinterpret history from the Indigenous perspective, but what they focused on was the contributions made by Indigenous people to white American society. Bruce Johansen’s work *Forgotten Founders*, for example, traces the long-ignored history of how the Constitution of the Iroquois Confederation contributed to the American Constitution. However, although Indigenous people were set in the centre of the historical narrative, the yardstick still lay in the interests of white Americans. The culture, tradition, and sentiments of Indigenous peoples were consequently deemed unimportant to the scholarship. As the Indigenous-born scholar Vine Deloria, Jr. vividly puts it, Indigenous history of this kind simply “takes a basic ‘manifest destiny’ white interpretation of history and lovingly plugs a few feathers, wooly heads and sombreros into the famous events of American history.”[10] By comparison, in transcending the boundaries of the nation-state, the global approach has enabled Indigenous history to be interpreted in global perspective, thus breaking through the binary structure of Western centralism and setting

[9] D. Fixico, ‘Encounter of Two Different Worlds: The Columbus-Indian Legacy of History,’ *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 17, no. 3 (1993): 30.
[10] G. Nash, ‘Whither Indian History?,’ *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 4, no. 3 (1976): 71.

Indigenous history in a more entangled context.

II. First Tier: Indigenous People

The emergence of Indigenous history has already transformed the image of Indigenous people as victims of the colonial powers to active participants in affairs such as trans-Atlantic trade and international politics on the North American continent. The introduction of the global approach further extends the scope of Indigenous history.

As for Atlantic trade, traditional histories of early America regarded Indigenous people as passive recipients, while Indigenous historians emphasized the benefit Indigenous people received and how they in turn influenced the trade. It is widely held by Indigenous historians that Indigenous people absorbed not only the trade goods but also the technology and new lifestyles into their societies, transforming them in the process. However, the global approach has enabled historians to reinterpret interaction between Indigenous people and Westerners in a vaster background. For example, in *Empire of Cotton*, historian Sven Beckert sets America's encroachment on Indian lands into the background of the global cotton trade, drawing the link between Indigenous America and other regions of the world, such as India and China, that have been excluded from the narratives of former Indigenous history.[11]

Another example is historian Susan Sleeper-Smith's work *Encounter and Trade in the Early Atlantic World*, where she goes beyond the traditional perspective, which regards the foundation of Jamestown as the starting point of American history. Sleeper-Smith instead focuses on the trans-Atlantic trade that developed before the arrival of

[11] S. Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004): 3-28.

English colonizers. As she argues, “furs from North America became enmeshed in a global spider web of exchange processes” and Indigenous Americans “controlled the landscape where the richest peltry was harvested, and their demand for specific goods determined what Europeans produced for the North American trade.”[12] Under such perspectives, Indigenous people not only turned out to be the dominant power in transnational trade, but also influenced social fashion and lifestyles in Europe. By employing a global perspective, Sleeper-Smith challenges the mythology of early America as “a masculine landscape where hardy Europeans transported trade goods, disease, and alcohol to Indian villages.”[13] A global perspective on Indigenous history instead reveals the opposite story. It is the beaver hat of Indigenous people that, for instance, became the icon of the upper class in Europe.

As for international politics, global history also transcends both traditional histories of white America and ethnohistory, which regards Indigenous Americans as either barbarians or victims, by placing the Indigenous Americans in a more entangled context and underscoring the manoeuvres of Indigenous people amongst various colonial powers. In the first chapter of *Lakota America*, historian Pekka Hämäläinen starts by focusing on the place of an Indigenous empire in the world. He describes early North America as “a vast Indigenous ocean speckled with tiny European islands,” where “Indians controlled the balance of power.”[14] Therefore, from the global perspective, the story is the other way around: it is Indigenous people who played the dominant role in

[12] S. Sleeper-Smith, ‘Encounter and Trade in the Early Atlantic World,’ in *Why You Can’t Teach United States History without American Indians*, eds. S. Sleeper-Smith, J. Barr, N. Shoemaker, and J. O’Brien (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015): 31.
[13] Ibid., 40.
[14] P. Hämäläinen, *Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019): 46.

politics on the North American continent. As Hämäläinen puts forward, “through shrewd diplomacy, warfare, and sheer force of numbers, the Indians held the line.”[15] It is widely assumed that Indigenous people were compelled to cooperate with Western powers, however, the global perspective reveals that Indigenous people benefited no less than the colonizers. An example is the alliance between the French and Sioux people against the British in the 1750s. By helping the French secure the Ohio Country to contain the British, the Sioux people in return “prevailed over their rivals and continued their expansion into the West” with French assistance.[16] In other words, prior to the introduction of the global perspective, political history in the early North American continent was studied in a binary structure wherein Indigenous and colonial powers were two independent forces fighting for dominance. On the other hand, the contribution of the global perspective is breaking through the structure and placing all players in the same global context.

Another contribution of the global approach to international politics is rediscovering the role Indigenous people played after the founding of the United States. Under the traditional 19th century US history narratives, Indigenous people were marginalized or even excluded from international politics owing to “the field's (US foreign relations) disinclination to meaningfully integrate North America's native peoples in analyses of U.S. empire.”[17] As a result, the role of the Indigenous people has long been underestimated. Historian Brian Delay, however, adopts a global perspective and argues the opposite. By showing examples such as Indigenous powers’ ongoing tensions with the British and

[15] Ibid., 46.
[16] Ibid,. 80.
[17] B. DeLay, ‘Indian Polities, Empire, and the History of American Foreign Relations,’ *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 5 (2015): 932.

Spanish after the Independence of 1776, the influence of the defeat of Tecumseh's confederacy, the impact of the Red Stick Creeks on the War of 1812, and the involvement of Indigenous people in the Texas Revolution, Daley reveals how the Indigenous people continued to influence international politics profoundly after 1776.[18]

III. Second Tier: America as a Nation

One of the biggest contributions from the global approach to American history is the breakthrough ideology that American exceptionalism is bound to American history. Dating back to the American Revolution, Americans purported that they were exceptional thanks to, for example, America's representative democracy, equality before the law, and republicanism. As a result, American history became what historian François Weil describes as "a nationalized view that contributed to the marginalization of local history."[19] Thomas Bender puts it more explicitly, stating that "if there is a practical aim in this enterprise of rethinking and deprovincializing the narrative of American history, it is to integrate the stories of American history with other, larger stories from which, with a kind of continental self-sufficiency, the United States has isolated itself."[20]

From the global perspective, the biggest challenge Indigenous history poses to American exceptionalism is that the United States was not the only country established in North America by 1776. American exceptionalism may seem plausible for studying the people who lived in the thirteen colonies, but when viewing the history from the Lakota narrative, in 1776 "not one but two nations had been born in North America, both destined

[18] Ibid., 937.
[19] F. Weil, 'Do American Historical Narratives Travel?,' in *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. T. Bender (London: University of California Press, 2002): 322.
[20] Ibid., 5-6.

for greatness, discoveries of new lands, and, perhaps, respectful coexistence."[21] By considering Lakota America in the Black Hills as an independent nation instead of restless tribes to be conquered, the isolated American national history after its founding may be understood as global history. Lakota America was just a fraction of the thriving Indigenous powers on the vast American continent. As historian Claudio Saunt puts forward, the Osages along the Mississippi River were still enjoying the flourishment brought about by the trade with Britons and Spaniards, just as the Creeks in Florida were seeking the help of Spanish allies to fight against Britain's encroachment on their lands.[22] Referred to by Saunt as a "continental approach," this global perspective challenged the parochialism embodied in American exceptionalism by presenting the diverse people and cultures on the American continent.

The application of the global approach also challenges the notion of manifest destiny. The phrasing of manifest destiny claimed that the American nation and spirit were exceptional, and that it was the mission of the American people to conduct the westward movement. Although manifest destiny has been challenged for decades, recent scholarship further attacks it by showing that the Lakota nation had already conducted several westward expansions into the Midwest earlier than the American westward movement. Furthermore, it was the supply of horses and firearms from the colonial powers that made the Lakota's expeditions possible. Given that even the "less civilized" Indigenous people were able to conquer the west with the help of modern technologies, the exceptionality of the American nation is under doubt.

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[21] Hämäläinen, *Lakota America*, 93.
[22] C. Saunt, *West of the Revolution: An Uncommon History of 1776* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014): 124-208.

The second influence of the global approach on America history is turning the Indigenous problem from the domestic to the transnational focus. To begin with, historians of New Capitalism have recently begun to examine what Indigenous land meant to the United States, by viewing global comparisons, such as the exploitation of the African continent by Western Europe. Since the 1870s, the worries of "American danger" had dominated in Europe. Europeans envied the vast benefits America gleaned from Indigenous land. As Sven Beckert puts forward, European elites believed that "colonizing Africa seemed to promise a powerful promotion of…labor, land, minerals, agricultural commodities and markets needed to better compete with the United States."[23] Traditionally, the removal and killing of Indigenous Americans during the American westward movement has been considered a domestic affair instead of a problem of colonization. Thus, the global approach embodied in the New Capitalist history provides another perspective to Indigenous history.

In addition, historians of Native America have also begun to focus on how Indigenous people get involved in the international community. Historian Nick Estes, a citizen of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe, points out that Indigenous Americans never stopped resisting and fighting for their rights within their tribes, on the battlefields against white Americans, and on the reservations. However, it was not until the 1960s that Indigenous people attempted to draw relationships with other Indigenous people in other countries, to speak out about what they felt and thought on international stages. Although the achievement was not significant in the short run, the voices of the Indigenous people to some extent "provincialized the influence of North Atlantic powers to dictate their diplomatic relations

[23] S. Beckert, 'American Danger: United States Empire, Eurafrica, and the Territorialization of Industrial Capitalism, 1870-1950,' *The American Historical Review* 122, no. 4 (2017): 1151.

"outside" the settler colony."[24] The first climax of the awakening of Indigenous Americans happened in 1973, when approximately 200 Lakota citizens organized by the American Indian Movement (AIM) occupied the town of Wounded Knee, to protest the Sioux Treaty of 1868 and the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890. During the Wounded Knee Occupation, the AIM attached great importance to the relationships with world media to express the real thoughts of Indigenous Americans globally. Gradually, Indigenous people began to develop a "global Indigenous identity." As Estes concludes, "far beyond the project of seeking equality within the colonial state, the tradition of radical Indigenous internationalism imagined a world altogether free of colonial hierarchies of race, class, and nation."[25]

IV. Borderlands History

The introduction of global history has separately contributed to the studies of Indigenous people and America in a variety of aspects, however, problems come along with achievements. According to Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, the division between the field of colonial history and national American history leads to two different "worlds": "one grounded in an earlier America of empires and Indians, and the other in a modern America of nations and transnational denizens."[26] The emergence of borderlands history in recent years opens a continental aperture for the two "worlds" to confluence, as Hämäläinen and Truett further point out, "it has challenged tales of settler colonization and expansion—the making of a new people in a new world—with narratives of cultural

[24] N. Estes, *Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (New York: Verso Books, 2019): 170.
[25] Ibid., 171.
[26] P. Hämäläinen and S. Truett, 'On Borderlands,' *Journal of American History* 98, no. 2 (2011): 355.

convergence."[27]

Borderlands history strongly benefits from the global approach. Traditional national history has long been restrained within the nation's borders, while the activities of the Indigenous people did not necessarily fit into the modern borders. As a result, previous historians could only adopt a "piecemeal method" to study the Indigenous histories of the borderlands. The application of the global approach in borderlands history breaks through the national boundary and sets the Indigenous people in the centre of historical narratives under a transnational context, thus opening many new domains other than political history in the studies of Indigenous history.

One typical example is that borderlands history provides a useful lens for gender studies. As Hämäläinen and Truett put forward, "Scholars of early America have shown how native women assumed roles as cultural brokers, wives, commodities, and objects of sexual desire, dynamically inflecting how Indian and Euro-American relations unfolded."[28] For example, in the days of Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Indigenous women served as mediators and guides in the Texas Spanish-Comanche borderland because "as noncombatants, they enjoyed safe passage across ethnic borders."[29] The borderlands provided a stage for Indigenous women to display their national characteristics and leave their marks on history. One example was when Comanche leaders and Spaniards made their first treaty in 1785, "the resulting parade of women journeying to San Antonio de Béxar made quite an impression."[30] The movement of

[27] Ibid., 346.
[28] Ibid., 347.
[29] J. Barr, 'Geographies of Power: Mapping Indian Borders in the 'Borderlands' of the Early Southwest,' *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (2011): 37.
[30] Ibid., 38

Indigenous women at the crossing of the borderlands offers a new angle to interpret Indigenous history.

Another example is intermarriage in the borderlands. Tracing intermarriages enables researchers to not only collect sources about the lives and experiences of Indigenous women and their mixed-blood children, but also to learn more about the cultural attitude of both sides of the borderlands towards racial integration. A classic interpretation is that through intermarriage, Indigenous women contributed to forging an economic, diplomatic, and cultural tie between Indigenous tribes and Westerners. Borderlands history provides many new perspectives on this topic. In *Indian Intermarriage and Métissage in Colonial Louisiana*, historian Kathleen DuVal studies the intermarriages between the French and a range of Indigenous tribes in the borderlands of French Louisiana, finding that the experience and influence of intermarriages were totally different, and in the end, no community had fully integrated into "one people and one blood." According to DuVal, the Indigenous peoples of the Illinois country used intermarriage to establish good relationships with Westerners; Apalachee people resisted intermarriage to protect their society from Western incursions; while intermarriage was marginalized in Quapaw society because of its patriarchal institution.[31] This diversity was affected by a range of factors such as geographical position, dominant modes of production, and reliance on trade, reflecting that there was no general rule that governed intermarriage. The lens of borderlands history offers a new way to examine the economic, cultural, social, and sexual interactions embodied in intermarriage.

Other social history aspects such as sacrificial activities and hospitality etiquette

[31] K. Duval, 'Indian Intermarriage and Métissage in Colonial Louisiana,' *The William and Mary Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (2008): 280-303.

could also be observed from the borderland. In sum, by zooming the focal point to borderlands, historians could see what has been ignored by the grand narratives of American history. While Indigenous history places Indigenous Americans at the centre of research, borderlands history places Indigenous people at the centre of transnational history.

V. Future of the Global Approach

There is no doubt that the global approach has been applied to and contributed to Indigenous history, especially New Indian history, in the past 30 years. But it also should be noted that Indigenous history has not yet been studied with a truly global perspective. As Pekka Hämäläinen looked to the future of Indigenous history in 2012, "It is already clear that one of the futures of Native American history will be comparative and transnational."[32] There is still much work to be done in this field.

The existing global approach mainly focuses on American Indigenous people, however, what lacks is a cross-border comparative study on the similarities and differences of Indigenous people around the globe. Indigenous people in the United States share many similarities with other Indigenous people in the Americas, Oceania, Japan, etc. Studying Indigenous history under a transnational perspective will not only transcend the confinement of American history, but it will also reveal the characteristics and connections that are harder to identify without a comparative perspective. Few scholars have studied Indigenous history in a transnational way, with Margret Jacobs'

[32] Pekka Hämäläinen, "The Futures of Native American History in the United States," *Perspectives on History* (1 Dec. 2012), https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/december-2012/the-futures-of-native-american-history-in-the-united-states.

White Mother to a Dark Race as an exception. Jacobs' novel employment of the comparative approach is particularly strong, by contrasting the different policies of transforming removed Indigenous children, such as through the process of assimilation in America or absorption in Australia.[33] By examining the two similar policies comparatively, Jacobs believes the difference stems from America and Australia's different ideologies towards environmental determinism and race, which is difficult to discover without the use of comparison. Besides Jacobs' research on colonialism and gender, there are still plenty of other Indigenous history topics to be studied between America and Australia, as well as in other parts of the world. Indigenous people around the world, such as the Emishi in Japan and the Māori in New Zealand, all have a different but somewhat similar history. A more global approach should be applied to fully understand the many different issues faced by Indigenous peoples around the world.

Another area that requires further global research is the historiography of Indigenous studies, particularly for colonial American history. As historian Nicolas Rosenthal observes, "when the study of North American historiography shifted to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, American Indians disappeared from our reading lists altogether."[34] However, Rosenthal's perspective goes too far in considering some classic works, such as Hämäläinen's *Comanche Empire*. But his perspective is still convincing since most of his chapters on the 19th and 20th centuries only constitute a continuation and an ending to the discussion of Indigenous history before 1776, while specialized

[33] M. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009): 25-192.
[34] G. Rosenthal, 'Beyond the New Indian History: Recent Trends in the Historiography on the Native Peoples of North America,' *History Compass* 4, no. 5 (2006): 964.

studies of the Indigenous history after the founding of the United States are relatively few. The marginalization of Indigenous people in American politics since the 19th century rendered it difficult for researchers to integrate them into the analyses of broader American history. As historian Richard Immerman points out, America did not respect the liberty and interests of Indigenous Americans during the westward movement.[35] However, the introduction of the global approach could enrich the scholarship of 19th and 20th century Indigenous history. As the discussion of New Capitalist history reveals, a global comparison of the different perspectives of 19th century industrialized countries towards Indigenous people is needed. Nick Estes' work also shows that there is much still to be unravelled regarding the struggles and achievements of Indigenous people on the world stage after WWII.

Although the global approach can contribute to Indigenous history in a variety of ways, it should not be overused either. In 'This Is What Happens When Historians Overuse the Idea of the Network,' historian David Bell puts forward that one of the biggest problems of global history is that "past events are not always best dealt with by setting them within a vast context."[36] The global approach offers a lens to examine Indigenous history more extensively, but it cannot and should not wholly replace micro-studies. As global historian Jeremy Adelman explains, "the story of the globalists illuminates some at the expense of others, the left behind, the ones who cannot move, and those who become immobilised because the light no longer shines on them."[37] For example, borderlands

[35] R. Immerman, *Empire for Liberty: A History of American Imperialism from Benjamin Franklin to Paul Wolfowitz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 6.
[36] David Bell, 'This is What Happens When Historians Overuse the Idea of the Network,' *New Republic* (26 Oct. 2013): https://newrepublic.com/article/114709/world-connecting-reviewed-historians-overuse-network-metaphor.
[37] Jeremy Adelman, 'What is Global History Now?,' *Aeon* (2 Mar. 2017): https://aeon.co/essays/is-global-history-still-possible-or-has-it-had-its-moment.

history provides a useful global context to examine the politics and cultures of Indigenous people through cross-border interactions, but without an ethnohistorical study on how the Indigenous society operates inside the tribes, the research will not be complete. It is important to balance global history with other histories such as New Indian history and ethnohistory when conducting future research.

VI. Conclusion

Indigenous history challenges traditional historical methodology by placing the Indigenous Americans at the centre of historical narratives, whilst the emergence of the global approach further contributes to Indigenous history by expanding its scope and depth. The global approach transcends former Indigenous histories, and opens up a wider range of domains for historical studies. What's more, the emergence of borderland history further contributes to the scholarship.

However, Indigenous history has not been studied within a truly global perspective yet. There is still plenty of work left for future students studying these histories. Amongst all the work to be done, a comparative study of Indigenous groups in different regions is most needed, yet this must be balanced against the detriment of overusing the global approach. The global approach has already contributed to Indigenous history significantly. As historian Daniel Richter puts forward,

> "If we shift our perspective to try to view the past in a way that faces the east from Indian country…Native Americans appear in the foreground, and Europeans enter from distant shores. North America became the 'old world' and western Europe the 'new.'"[38]

[38] D. Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (London: Harvard University Press, 2001): 8.

With the global perspective, Indigenous history breaks through the confines of both national history and ethnohistory, thus becoming not only a history of Indigenous people of the Americas but also a history of the wider world.