

Labour and Globalisation



Results and Prospects

Edited by Ronaldo Munck

Foreword by Denis MacShane MP

Labour and Globalisation: Results and Prospects, Ronaldo Munck, Liverpool University Press, 2004, 0853238170, 9780853238171, 254 pages. Globalization is transforming the world in ways that we are only just beginning to understand. It is often assumed that social movements, such as that of labor, will simply be overwhelmed by these changes. This book carries out a wide-ranging examination of theoretical and practical dimensions of globalization and the responses of the labor movement to the challenges it poses. Contributors explore the trend towards the globalization of labor, the influences of globalization at the sub-global spatial level, and the effects of globalization in a social dimension. In different ways, from different angles and taking up different positions, all the chapters in Labour and Globalisation can be seen as contributions to the development of a labor-based challenge to the ravages of globalization. They are, on the whole, neither optimistic nor pessimistic but seek out possibilities as well as establishing limits to labor transnationalism in the era of globalization..

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The Imagined Economies of Globalization , Angus Cameron, Ronen Palan, 2004, Business & Economics, 186 pages. This book critically introduces the main contemporary debates on globalization and demonstrates how conventional versions or narratives of globalization have served to shape

Transnational Cooperation Among Labor Unions , Michael E. Gordon, Lowell Turner, 2000, Business & Economics, 310 pages. Organized labour faces many challenges in the increasingly global economy, including the portability of technology and capital, and lowered trade barriers. This text, however

The Next Upsurge Labor and the New Social Movements, Dan Clawson, 2003, Business & Economics, 235 pages. The U.S. labor movement may be on the verge of massive growth, according to Dan Clawson. He argues that unions don't grow slowly and incrementally, but rather in bursts. Even

Globaloney 2.0 The Crash of 2008 and the Future of Globalization, Michael Veseth, 2010, Political Science, 230 pages. Globalization is in retreat, but history tells us that this is but a temporary reversal. Globalization will return, but in what form? More cycles of boom and bust? Or can

Globalization and Labour The New 'Great Transformation', Ronaldo Munck, Oct 4, 2002, Business & Economics, 216 pages. Intellectual fashion likes to see us as consumers, but the world of production and services still needs workers. Globalization has been driven by the transnational corporations

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions , Anthony Carew, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 2000, Business & Economics, 624 pages. Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt/M., New York, Oxford, Wien. Issued by the International Institute of Social History Amsterdam. The International Confederation of Free Trade

Behind the Scenes at the WTO The Real World of International Trade Negotiations, Updated Edition, Fatoumata Jawara, Aileen Kwa, 2004, Business & Economics, 329 pages. The economic prospects of developing and developed countries alike are being shaped by the international negotiations in progress at the WTO. Based on interviews with people

Current Issues in Globalization , Robert E. Westerfield, J. Abbink, 2004, Political Science, 216 pages. People around the globe are more connected to each other than ever before. Information and money flow more quickly than ever. Goods and services produced in one part of the

Globalization of labour markets challenges, adjustment, and policy response in the EU and LDCs, Olga Memedović, 1998, , 336 pages. To the classical driving forces of migration such as poverty, oppression and war, yet another is being added: globalization. The trend toward globalization has created new

The Global Political Economy Evolution and Dynamics, Robert O'Brien, Marc A. Williams, 2004, Political Science, 370 pages. This text provides a broad-ranging historical account of the emergence of a worldwide economy since the 15th century, combined with a systematic analysis of the frameworks of

Globalization is transforming the world in ways that we are only just beginning to understand. It is often assumed that social movements, such as that of labor, will simply be overwhelmed by these changes. This book carries out a wide-ranging examination of theoretical and practical dimensions of globalization and the responses of the labor movement to the challenges it poses. Contributors explore the trend towards the globalization of labor, the influences of globalization at the sub-global spatial level, and the effects of globalization in a social dimension. In different ways, from different angles and taking up different positions, all the chapters in Labour and Globalisation can be seen as contributions to the development of a labor-based challenge to the ravages of globalization. They are, on the whole, neither optimistic nor pessimistic but seek out possibilities as well as establishing limits to labor transnationalism in the era of globalization.

RONALDO MUNCK is Professor of Political Sociology at the University of Liverpool. Born and educated in Argentina, Ronaldo went on to do a PhD at the University of Essex on the Brazilian Military Coup in 1964. Since then he has published widely on Latin America, from the best-selling Politics and Dependency in the Third World: The Case of Latin America (1984) to Contemporary Latin America (forthcoming). He is currently Senior Editor of the Bulletin of Latin American Research as well as an editor of the US journal Latin American Perspectives, and has been engaged to edit a book series on globalization for the Kumarian Press in the USA.

action activists activity affiliates AFL-CIO African Trade Unions agenda agreements airlines American argued Australia Bendiner campaign capital capitalist cent CFMEU challenge child labour civil aviation Codes of Conduct concerns Confederation corporate COSATU debate developing countries dispute economic employee employment European Works Councils example exploitation Federation Free Trade global globalisation governments groups human rights ICEM ICFTU Industrial Relations international labour International Labour Organisation international trade union involved issues ITs labour internationalism labour market labour movement Labour Organisation labour standards LabourStart Lavalette Liverpool dockers London MDHC ment Michael Lavalette MNCs multinational NAFTA negotiations networks NGOs picket political Press problem programmes regulation Report response Rio Tinto role SACTU sector shareholder social clause social movement unionism solidarity South African Labour strategy struggle TGWU tion trade union movement trade unionists transnational union organisation Waterman Western wharfies workers workplace

Ronaldo Munck is currently working at the President's Office at Dublin City University as strategic director of the university's engagement with globalization and social development. He was recently Professor of Political Sociology and Head of the Globalisation and Social Exclusion Unit at the University of Liverpool. He has published over twenty books in the areas of development studies, labor studies, and the new globalization studies. He is currently researching the role of global social movements in regulating free market global capitalism.

Can Labor Standards Improve Under Globalization? begins by posing several critical questions. Should labor standards be part of global trade agreements and, if so, can they improve the lives of workers? Who should administer and enforce these standards and how? How effective are corporate "codes of conduct" and what role do consumers, activists, unions, and others play in improving working conditions and empowering workers in poor countries?

Elliott and Freeman reject globalization's dichotomization of proponents of free trade and their opponents who argue for strong labor standards to stop the free-trader's "race to the bottom." Using the image of Siamese twins, they argue that both proponents of liberalized trade and proponents of higher labor standards share vital common interests, just as Siamese twins oftentimes share vital organs. One side may be stronger than the other, but neither can survive or advance without the

other.

They debunk many of the neo-liberal homilies, such as that globalization and liberalized trade make labor standards unnecessary and that increased labor standards will strip less developed countries of their comparative advantage. But neither do Elliott and Freeman spare the sacred canon of neo-liberalism's opponents. They argue strenuously against protectionism and counter that liberalized trade is not simply a downward spiral of working conditions and standards of living.

This book's strength is its refusal to present a simplistic program. Elliot and Freeman argue that only through multiple market and political strategies will liberalized global trade be a positive force for improving the lives of workers. Consumers have a role in creating a market for products produced under favorable labor practices, and human rights activists must continue to campaign for effective corporate codes of conduct and for certification processes that ensure consumers can make educated choices. The authors argue for an expanded role for the ILO, and they promote specific ways core labor standards could be incorporated into trade agreements themselves.

Labour and Globalisation aspires to be a collection of essays read "by trade union activists themselves as well as by academics and researchers." Unfortunately, the introduction's multiple quotations and poststructuralist deconstruction of the "globalization narrative" will deter many rank and file trade unionists (and not a few academics and researchers).

This is unfortunate since the collection's key premise is a sound one – "globalization is neither monolithic nor are its outcomes pre-determined. Munck sees that organized labor has a critical role in shaping this global economy, but that it faces serious challenges with declining membership and employer anti-union activities. To be relevant, he asserts, the labor movement must re-establish itself as a social movement within the global economy.

From this simple starting point, the collection's essays go every which way and ultimately do not add up to a satisfying whole. Most of the essays do well identifying the challenges unions face under globalization, and U.S. readers will see striking familiarities with the assault on labor unions by transnational corporations in Great Britain and elsewhere. But as a whole they do a rather poor job of posing concrete examples for new directions.

A notable exception is Richard Hyman's opening essay, "An Emerging Agenda for Trade Unions." According to Hyman, trade unions have historically acted both as "sword of justice" and as "vested interest." He suggests that labor can reclaim relevancy by again acting as a "sword of justice" and winning the battle for the "hearts and minds of people." He identifies five values appropriated by the neo-liberals and argues that unions can win this battle over ideas only by offering an alternative interpretation and agenda that benefits rather than harms workers...

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Strategy: Evidence from the International Civil Aviation Industry Paul Blyton, Miguel Martinez Lucio, John McGurk and Peter Turnbull

Globalization is transforming the world in ways that we are only just beginning to understand. It is often assumed that social movements, such as that of labour, will simply be overwhelmed by these changes. The contributions in this volume point to this conclusion as at best premature and possibly also misguided. The text is split into three parts, globalisation, spatial dimensions and social dimensions, each of which contains four chapters. Each chapter offers a perspective from differing spatial and social realities thus providing the reader with a balanced overview of the development of labour-based challenge to the ravages of globalisation.

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