

BOOK REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

Marieke Riethof. 2002. *Responses of the Brazilian Labour Movement to Economic and Political Reforms*, Amsterdam, Rosenberg Publishers, 240 pp.

Ce livre est le résultat d'une thèse de doctorat en relations internationales produite à Amsterdam, suite à des terrains de recherche au Brésil. Le titre est un peu trompeur, car guère plus d'un chapitre est effectivement consacré au mouvement ouvrier. L'essentiel de l'ouvrage est constitué d'une revue de littérature sur les politiques socio économiques mises en place au Brésil, au fil des gouvernements qui se sont succédé depuis 1930, et jusqu'en 2002. La question de recherche principale renvoie à l'évolution des réactions syndicales face aux évolutions des années quatre-vingt-dix. En pratique, l'essentiel de l'ouvrage est consacré à une mise en contexte éco-socio-politique permettant de mieux comprendre les années 1990.

Le chapitre 1 est l'occasion pour l'auteure d'exposer les principaux concepts et stratégies en sociologie et économie du développement des pays en émergence ou rattrapage. Le chapitre 2 nous entraîne dans l'histoire des transformations de l'État et des stratégies des acteurs (principalement État, Travail et Capital). La nature du régime corporatiste-assistancialiste, qui remonte à la dictature de Vargas (années trente) est expliquée, de même que son évolution, avec accent sur la construction des législations en matière de travail et de protection sociale. Le chapitre 3 nous ramène sur le terrain des politiques économiques et sociales avec insistance sur les années plus récentes des présidences de Collor et Cardoso.

Dans une sorte d'acrobatie chronologique, le chapitre 4 est consacré au *novo sindicalismo*, dont Lula et les métallurgistes de ABC (banlieues de Sao Paulo) furent les figures emblématiques. Ce chapitre est, avec le suivant, le plus intéressant et rend bien compte des débats internes au mouvement syndical brésilien à l'époque des

années quatre-vingt. Le chapitre 5 nous amène presque au cœur de l'actualité, puisqu'il fait le bilan des réactions du syndicalisme brésilien (surtout de la célèbre CUT), mais tout autant des paradoxes soigneusement cultivés par ce dernier. Le dernier chapitre (6) arrive en porte-à-faux, car il est consacré à l'histoire des privatisations (années quatre-vingt-dix) de larges secteurs de l'économie brésilienne, ce qui fait que du général nous revenons au spécifique.

L'auteure présente le cas des stratégies du mouvement ouvrier et des privatisations comme deux « histoires de cas » dérivant de l'étude de la société brésilienne et des rapports de pouvoir qui s'y sont incarnés, ce choix apparaissant assez singulier car faisant appel à des catégories non mutuellement exclusives.

Ce livre manque de ligne directrice, mais il constitue une excellente introduction aux études brésiliennes. Les brésilianistes éprouvés n'y apprendront pas nécessairement beaucoup, mais les novices pourront en faire un excellent usage. Les principaux auteurs y sont, la construction sociohistorique des arrangements institutionnels ordonnant les relations entre État, Capital et Travail ressort bien. Certes, au final il s'agit d'une très bonne revue de littérature et de rien d'autre. Il n'y a pas de « thèse ». Il s'agit d'une mise en forme de la littérature déjà existante, qui ressemble à certains travaux historiques peu analytiques et a-théoriques. L'exposé est scolaire (et marqué par cette habitude très états-unienne d'annoncer inlassablement ce qu'on dira et de rappeler ce qu'on a dit, avec introductions et conclusion-résumés systématiques à l'intention du lecteur paresseux). L'auteure se garde d'avoir des opinions sur le sujet qu'elle traite. Mais elle présente très bien les opinions des autres.

Il faut reprocher à l'auteure – et sûrement à son éditeur – une certaine nonchalance. On ne publie pas une thèse de doctorat telle quelle, sans faire l'effort de la transformer en livre. Il est inacceptable que la lectrice se retrouve devant des mentions de « *this dissertation* », en plus que de lire des pages balayées par scan et de chercher des références inexistantes. Dès que j'ai commencé à lire cet ouvrage, je me suis sentie comme un professeur qui évalue une thèse de doctorat – ce que je fais à l'occasion –.

En annexe, l'auteure expose méthodiquement sa méthodologie, et nous informe qu'elle a non seulement lu et dépouillé des

documents syndicaux, mais également interviewé et observé abondamment au sein des milieux syndicaux. Or, pratiquement rien ne ressort de ce travail de terrain, à peine quelques paragraphes qui paraissent incongrus car ils contiennent des affirmations qui ne sont pas appuyées par des sources. Voilà qui est dommage. Peut-être l'auteure veut-elle en faire un usage ultérieur, ce qui serait une stratégie universitaire logique. Mais, comme lectrice, je me suis sentie privée d'informations. Peut-être également l'auteure a-t-elle craint de miser sur ces matériaux d'enquête plus « mous », comme il arrive souvent chez les jeunes chercheurs qui préfèrent respecter une démarche plus « positiviste », donc à leurs yeux moins critiquable.

En dépit de ces réserves, je n'hésite pas à recommander la lecture de cet ouvrage pour ceux qui veulent s'introduire aux relations du travail au Brésil dans une perspective sociohistorique. Le cas du syndicalisme brésilien est de fait très intéressant. Il est réputé, avec les syndicalismes sud-africain et sud-coréen, être le plus vigoureux des pays en émergence. Or, les encadrements juridiques et arrangements institutionnels y sont encore très marqués par leur origine corporatiste et une gênante inspiration mussolinienne, et les modernisations postérieures à la dictature n'ont réussi qu'à abâtardir le système brésilien, de même qu'à enfoncer le syndicalisme dans ses propres contradictions. Ce livre permettra à ceux et celles qui ne veulent pas aller plus loin de réfléchir aux retombées de la présidence de F.H. Cardoso de même qu'à la situation du syndicalisme brésilien, dans des termes mieux informés que les habituels raccourcis. Tout spécialement, les responsables syndicaux du « Nord » qui entretiennent des liens avec le syndicalisme brésilien devraient de toute urgence lire ce livre. Et cela d'autant plus que la société brésilienne est saisie, au moment où ces lignes sont écrites (mars 2005), d'un projet de réforme des lois du travail.

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Chitra Joshi. *Lost Worlds: Indian Labour and Its Forgotten Histories*. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003, 359 pp.

The work *Lost Worlds* is a seminal study which focuses on the redefining of community and religious ties in a new working and living environment. Joshi does not merely document the socio-cultural baggage of the workers and its repercussions but seeks to provide a balanced account with consideration of employer recalcitrance and police intolerance within the framework of twentieth century South Asian labour history.

The book's nine chapters are divided into three sections. However, the author could have given a suitable title or theme to each of the three sections or parts to indicate the rationale for separating the chapters. Despite this oversight, the chapters are interrelated and the study is coherent.

Section one with its four chapters creates the environment of the workers and the space which involved conflict and negotiation. This included a discussion on the transition from village to city, the discourse between the working class and industrialists, creation of an identity and defining the culture of work in a new host society.

The second part, and shortest of the sections with two chapters, examined the disturbances in 1919 and 1937-1938 and their representation in the unofficial and colonial discourse. There was an analysis of the relationship among the employers, workers and local government. The final section comprising two chapters explores the links between the labour movement and nationalism, the ways in which cultural ties were redefined and the nature of class identities. A noteworthy aspect of the book is the inclusion of the labour historiography in the Introduction. This enables the reader to appreciate the evolution of the writing of Indian labour history and revisionist perspectives.

The author frequently highlights the humiliation, beatings and verbal abuse endured by workers in the quest of employers to ensure authority was properly constituted. "Intimidation was expected to produce docile, submissive workers, respectful of hierarchies at the workplace" (p.149). Additionally there is mention of the vile acts perpetrated by the police against protesting workers during the 1920s and in 1947.

Joshi must be credited for not overlooking the fact that the exploitation and oppression of the working class was not confined

to a village or town in India. However, there should have been more elucidation on the interconnectedness of the experiences of the working class in India with other areas in the world. An interesting parallel which can be gleaned from *Lost Worlds* is the similar experiences of the working class in the British Caribbean colonies. The strikes of 1937-1938 in Lal Kanpur (Chapter 6) occurred almost simultaneously with the convulsion in the Caribbean as the working class reacted to economic instability resulting from the Great Depression. Collective solidarities were temporarily forged during protests but cleavages among the working class was a phenomenon which seriously jeopardized the creation of a movement to resist the exploitation of the capitalists. In South Africa, Trinidad and British Guiana there was considerable tension between the Indian and African working class. This was notably absent from a racially homogeneous society as India which displayed divisive caste, religious and community ties which undermined class solidarity. This is illustrated in Chapter 7 and pages 78 to 83 in *Lost Worlds*.

A noteworthy feature of the book is the judicious representation of data to reinforce arguments and photographs to assist the reader in understanding the plight of the working class. For instance, there was the use of pie charts to represent district origins of workers in 1906 and 1931 (p.92), line graphs indicating variations in absenteeism (p.94), and a table indicating castes employed in the leather industry (p.240). Also an asset were the colonial images of factories which starkly contrasted with actual conditions of the workers' environment (pp.40-41, 322-325). The comprehensive footnotes reveal a commendable utilization of diverse archival sources and secondary literature. These included interviews, colonial reports, newspapers and journal articles. The inclusion of local dialects and accompanying translations provided a vivid testimony of the workers' experiences.

Undoubtedly, *Lost Worlds* is a scholarly masterpiece which will prove to be a significant contribution to Indian labour historiography. It will be relevant in understanding the conditions of today's workers who are at the mercy of globalization.

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Virginia Hooker and Amin Saikal (eds.) *Islamic Perspectives on the New Millennium*. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 2004, pp. xi+262.

This book is an important addition to the recent literature on the place of Islam in the modern world. Its objective, as Virginia Hooker explains in her introductory chapter, is to underline the fact that there is no single “Muslim” position on issues facing the Islamic world today. No unique religious point of view can be identified. The book succeeds in this goal.

An Australian project, the perspective of the book is Southeast Asian, with a special focus on Indonesia. It is a collection of essays written by twelve contributors, of which seven are associated with Australian universities, as is one of the editors. The main part of the book is divided into six sections, with each section consisting of two chapters. Six of the twelve chapters offer Southeast Asian points of view on the issues concerned. Four of the remaining chapters represent comparative Middle Eastern ideas.

The main theme of the book is summed up under the following titles: The New World Order, The New Age, The Economy, The Nation-State, Muslim Women, and Law and Knowledge. The concluding chapter by Virginia Hooker, under the title of “Developing Islamic Arguments for Change through ‘Liberal Islam’”, provides a summary that gives a distinct focus to the underlining issues which are common among the contributions.

Each of the contributors has made an effort to maintain a balance in representing both the orthodox position and the modernizing trends in the challenges facing the Muslim. On issues such as globalization and the economy, their aim is to show how the reactions to these issues are informed by factors such as regional differences and local conditions, ranging from a call to pure Islam (*al-Islam huwa al-hall* – Islam is the answer) to emphasis on reinterpretation and adjustment of the Islamic laws in light of modern reality.

In the post-World War II era, for example, many leaders in the newly independent Muslim countries, and the *ulama*, decided to establish the place of Islam in their political and economic structure as a third option to the existing systems of capitalism and communism. In the spirit of this endeavour, the Qur’anic injunctions against certain practices such as *riba* were interpreted

to include all forms of interest as used in modern times. Islamic banking and finance emerged to offer interest free financing of economic activity, as defined by the traditionalist *ulama*. The Islamic institutions have gradually discovered, however, that a strict and narrow interpretation of the Qur'anic injunctions as advocated in the *Sharia* are impractical. They have been working on new interpretations of the rules for an Islamic mode of finance. The contribution on "Islamic Banking and Finance: In Search of the Pragmatic Model" delineates this transition very judiciously.

All this is related to the larger issue of relations between religion and state, which is implicit in the above third option. It is possible to argue that a Muslim state, qua Muslim, is by definition an Islamic state. The orthodox view, led by the *ulama*, is to formally require the allegiance of the Muslim state to the *Sharia* Law. This position has been followed by many Muslim countries with various degrees of rigour. Indonesia has been a notable exception to this trend.

The chapter entitled "Perspectives on the Sharia and the State: The Indonesia Debates" contributed by a well-known scholar of Islam, M.B. Hooker, offers an important insight into this subject. His discussion of the subject has considerable relevance for all Muslim societies. He traces the evolution of the state from Dutch colonial rule to the establishment of an independent republic. In tracing the Islamic thought in the country that philosophers such as Harun Nasution (1919-1998) held the view that Islam is expressed in plural forms, and that this is a natural occurrence for the revealed religion. Hooker refers to another Islamic thinker, Nurcholish Madjid, who in his opinion touches upon a core issue facing the Muslim world. What is the place of the Qur'anic law in modern times and how should it be interpreted? For Madjid, he notes, that a priori assumption among the faithful must be that the Qur'an is absolute and inviolate. The idiom of the revelation, however, is in the Seventh Century (CE) Arabic language and culture. From these facts, the conclusion follows that the Qur'anic prescriptions should be examined in the context of the Seventh Century culture obtaining in Mecca. There is a glimpse of the influence of Professor Fazlur Rahman in Madjid's approach to Islam.

Referring to both Nasution and Madjid, M.B. Hooker suggests that their arguments lend themselves to whatever ideology

contemporary Indonesia happens to possess. The “Islamic State” is really a state of mind. *Pancasila*, for example, can be accommodated in the same Islam and, in turn, it can accommodate Islam. This may explain, at least partly, why the leaders have not been inclined to declare the country an Islamic state. The other development which may also have been a contributing factor includes the colonial heritage that promoted separation of religion and state in all matters of government. It may be a necessary condition, however, but not sufficiently strong to put the country on the path to secularism. As Virginia Hooker explains in her concluding chapter, the colonial tradition was maintained by the nationalists who became the founding leaders of the new Indonesia.

During the New Order under Soeharto, many members of the newly active middle class show a yearning to know about their religion. The Asian economic crisis of 1997 became a turning point for the economy with a widespread mood about the injustices produced by the lop-sided growth of the last two decades, with the poor becoming poorer. The atmosphere of uncertainty created by this situation led to a renewed interest in the study of Islam among the people.

It is worth noting, however, that the active debates which followed the trend led to a focus on the role of “liberal Islam” and its propensity to encourage a creative interpretation of the religion. Of course, there are critics who are suspicious about this approach to Islam. How vocal and effective they will become is a difficult question to answer. If history is any guide, however, a possible threat to eclecticism and tolerance may emerge in the future if the political system or the economy suffer from a real setback.

What does the future hold for liberal Islam in Indonesia? The book offers important and rich information about this issue. It has direct relevance for the Muslim world as a whole, in the context of the New Millennium.

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Ronaldo Munck. *Globalization and Social Exclusion: A Transformationalist Perspective*. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2005, 190 pp.

Ronaldo Munck will be familiar to many readers, particularly for his important and influential work on labour. Here the focus is broader, considering different dimensions of social exclusion and inclusion and their contemporary transformation. The concept of transformation is also used after the style of Karl Polanyi. Just as capitalism's establishment was from the beginning essentially a political process, so contemporary globalization cannot endure unmanaged. Institutional change is required to address and ameliorate the world's manifold iniquities and injustices.

Running throughout the book is a firmly oppositionalist viewpoint, a rejection of the way neo-liberal globalization shreds people's lives and of academic orthodoxies, particularly in economics, which justify this. Similarly, Munck makes plain his opposition to the recent US wars and the doublespeak of human rights and democracy used to defend them.

As ever, the book is clearly and succinctly written. It tackles both broad conceptual themes and different dimensions of social exclusion. Issues of gender, race and class may have become unfashionable in much of mainstream social theory but the chapters here show clearly how they remain central features of contemporary society and vital issues for any agenda for change.

The sweep is wide. Nevertheless, Munck determinedly rejects any simplistic interpretation of the world while insisting that a transformative politics must overcome a dualist opposition between reform and revolution. He recognizes and discusses the contested nature of the central themes of globalization and social exclusion. The perspective here ultimately remains strongly globalist but the power of elements of the 'sceptical' critique are acknowledged and the description should certainly not be confused with unapologetic endorsement. Similarly, although social exclusion is preferred to other terms like poverty and inequality some of the difficulties with this are elaborated. The general discussion shows how inclusion can be a tool for achieving greater efficiency rather than emancipation, while the chapter on gender makes clear that it can be the manner of inclusion which is the problem. For neither sex slaves nor

sweatshop workers does 'exclusion' adequately summarize their situation.

The overall ambition and generality of the account does not then preclude an argument of considerable subtlety. So although I want to turn to some problems with the book, many of the limitations are indeed already recognized, or at least hard to avoid in so concise an account. Sketching so broad a canvas perhaps inevitably leaves the paint spread a little thinly in places.

Sometimes this is a problem with the empirical evidence. For example, sections on 'people on the move' and a 'case study' of mail order brides seem rather cursory and to rely on particularly limited literatures. Elsewhere there are minor but annoying contradictions – for example in terms of migration, north-south inequalities are thought the main motivation, yet the majority of migrants confirmed to live in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. The vast majority of migrants are women, or then again perhaps not. These undermine what otherwise might be useful introductory chapters to students of the particular issues. In fairness, this, of course, is not the book's intended role.

However, the problem of abbreviation increases in relation to the conceptual issues and the overall argument. Munck's erudition is not in doubt; the vital debates are invariably acknowledged and a wide range of sources, from anarchist to mainstream, are cited. But the antagonisms are seldom elaborated with crucial debates too often apparently casually resolved with a line or two to indicate the direction taken. This level of engagement seems unlikely either to convince doubters or to provide sufficient ammunition to those who support the perspectives here. For example, I broadly share the criticisms of mainstream economics but suspect the evidence of a single study of increasing inequalities in the UK would do little to dissuade any adherents of marginalism. It may indeed be questioned whether Thatcher ever practiced anything close to neo-classical preaching. Conversely, the eventual assertion that globalization holds sway over the whole world seems inadequately supported to dent more sceptical perspectives. Often the processes described appear to be policy driven while the reported differences between countries might also seem to confirm that we do not simply experience an uncontrollable global dynamic. There is very little engagement with the powerful theoretical critiques, for

example of the work of Castells and Scholte, who are taken as reliable authorities here.

The acceptance of mainstream discourse of globalization and of rupture in social theory then adopts the language of networks and competition states and of post-modern knowledge. We live in a world where social relations are ‘no longer pure’ (p.13) as if we have left some such enlightened order behind. Justifying the central theme of the perceived need for a new conception of poverty and social exclusion this simultaneously seems to undermine the more careful and contingent characterizations of change presented elsewhere.

Finally, questions of description and advocacy can also become blurred. For example, we are offered a ‘Socio-Spatial Matrix’ of labour’s institutions’ complex interaction. Although written in the present tense, the apparent equivalence of the different ‘force fields’, such as Social Movement Unionism and Business Unionism – and the absence from the map of more familiar trade union practices – appears more putative than established.

Yet where the book turns to open advocacy it seems in greatest need of further elaboration. The nuance and complexity appear to give way to some rather lightly argued and conservative perspectives. Despite the earlier rejection of a dualism between reform and revolution, a very modest reform is finally envisaged. Socialism and communism are written-off in favour of strategies to ‘overcome the undoubted social and political risks associated with neo-liberalism’ (p.164). The ‘crucial question’ is one of regulating free markets and Polanyi is used explicitly in the name of achieving ‘stability’ (p.140). The EU is praised for its social regulation of the market and the UN institutions appear beyond criticism. The perspectives of the UNDP in particular offer ‘genuine emancipation’. Even amongst the key vehicles of neo-liberalism, the ‘post-Washington consensus’ is seen as a substantial advance.

For Munck, it is not simply these institutions but the mobilization of oppositional movements which offer the hope of opposing tendencies towards ever-greater social exclusion. However, this all represents a significant retreat from the ‘transformative utopian project’ promised at the outset and the evidence here seems unlikely to be compelling for readers who come to this book with a more critical bias. Perhaps, indeed, such

limited aspirations are all that is now realistic. But as with the double movement described by Polanyi, which achieved the reform or an earlier capitalism, even these seem most likely to be realized by – but also against – those struggling for a bolder more thorough-going rejection of capitalism.

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Alexandre, Lucie et Guy Bessette (sous la direction de). *L'Appui au développement communautaire : une expérience de communication en Afrique rurale de l'Ouest*. Ottawa : Centre de recherches pour le développement international; Paris : Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie, 2000. ix, 214 pp.

Caiden, Gerald E., O.P. Dwivedi and Joseph Jabbra (eds.) *Where Corruption Lives*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian, 2001. xii, 273 pp.

Chang, Ha-Joon. *Kicking Away the Ladder: Development Strategy in Historical Perspective*. London: Anthem Press, 2002. 187 pp.

Edwards, Michael. *Future Positive: International Co-operation in the 21st Century*. London: Earthscan, 2001. xii, 292 pp.

Fair, Laura. *Pastimes & Politics: Culture, Community, and Identity in Post-Abolition Urban Zanzibar, 1890-1945*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001. xvi, 370 pp.

Gentili, Pablo and Gaudencia Frigotto (eds.) *A Cidadania Negada: Políticas de exclusão na educação e no trabalho*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2000. 275 pp.

Goldsmith, Edward and Jerry Mander. *The Case Against the Global Economy & for a Turn Towards Localization*. London: Earthscan, 2001. viii, 328 pp.

Hardoy, Jorge E., Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite. *Environmental Problems in an Urbanizing World: Finding*

- Solutions for Cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America*. London: Earthscan, 2001. xv, 448 pp.
- Hoon, Hian Teck. *Trade, Jobs and Wages*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2000. xi, 207 pp.
- Isbister, John. *Promises Not Kept: Poverty and the Betrayal of the Third World*. 6th Edition. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian, 2003. xi, 272 pp.
- Lee Hock Guan (ed.) *Civil Society in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004. xi, 276 pp.
- Lomborg, Bjørn (ed.) *Global Crises, Global Solutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xxii, 648 pp.
- Manning, Chris and Peter Van Diermen (eds.) *Indonesia in Transition: Social Aspects of Reformasi and Crisis*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000. xxviii, 379 pp.
- McDonald, David A. (ed.) *Environmental Justice in South Africa*. Athens: Ohio University Press; Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2002. xi, 341 pp.
- McGranahan, Gordon...[et al.] *The Citizens at Risk: From Urban Sanitation to Sustainable Cities*. London: Earthscan, 2001. xvi, 200 pp.
- Morales-Gómez, Daniel, Necla Tschirgi and Jennifer L. Moher (eds.) *Reforming Social Policy: Changing Perspectives on Sustainable Human Development*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2000. viii, 160 pp.
- Razin, Assaf and Efraim Sadka. *Labor, Capital and Finance: International Flows*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xii, 181 pp.
- Santin Quiroz, Osvaldo. *The Political Economy of Mexico's Financial Reform*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001. ix, 293 pp.
- Van Der Geest, Willem and Rolf Van Der Hoeven (eds.) *Adjustment Employment & Missing Institutions in Africa: The Experience in Eastern & Southern Africa*. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1999. x, 276 pp.
- Wise, Timothy A., Hilda Salazar and Laura Carlsen (eds.) *Confronting Globalization: Economic Integration and Popular Resistance in Mexico*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian, 2003. xi, 248 pp.
- Women Seafarers: Global Employment Policies and Practices*. Geneva: International Labour Office, 2003. xvi, 128 pp.