

## **Book Review: *Globalization and Labour in the Twenty-First Century* by Verity Burgmann**

Reviewed by Rashmi C.K, Bangalore University, India

*Globalization and Labour in the Twenty-First Century*, London: Routledge, 2016;  
272 pp. ISBN 0415528534, £118.02

---

The Global Society is facing discontent mainly due to the adverse effects of globalisation. '*Globalization and labour in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*' by Verity Burgmann provides one such focus on the effects of globalisation amongst the working class organisations, globally. It is a thorough study of the emerging trends in the labour movement across the world where capitalists' political economies and labour force has become transcended beyond borders. The book has examined the drastic effect globalization has had on the working class sector.

Ms. Burgmann's detailed insight into this phenomenon is supported by her systematic and chronical observation and various case studies. The author provides an analytical view of the un-favouring side of globalisation towards the struggles of the global working class. Ms. Burgmann's views that, globalisation, instead of bringing about equality and contributing towards egalitarian society, has reinforced the stand by favouring giant transnational firms and capitalist states, who continue to hold the reins of the global economy.

The base of the book is the rift between the working class organisations and the capitalists within the neoliberal phase of globalisation. Further the author provides thorough analysis with validated statistical data regarding labour concerns such as increasing wage gaps, increasing accumulation of wealth among the wealthier, control of economy by capitalists states etc. At the same time she validates these datas with the support of literature provided by Picketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*.

The focus is on the evolution of the new form of labour movement organisation with consistent mobilisation and how they have evolved and adapted new initiatives to challenge the increasing capitalist base due to globalisation since 1990 and hence forth. She has observed and listed eight characteristics of globalisation adversely affecting the workers' rights.

She has also discussed in detail through case studies on how labour organizations have responded and reacted innovatively that have forced the capitalist corporates and political institutions to bring about change. The book takes the reader through various forms of resistance to capital mobility across the world. Labour movement in varied forms from Argentina, Poland, China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Greece etc has been broadly captured in this book. The reader can impressively understand through evidences as the chapters of the book covers how the workers organisations have transformed themselves in voicing out against the gaint multinational employers world-wide. In a positive note it can be said that Ms.Brugmann has provided evidence of the rising global solidarity of the labour movement that has

innovatively changed with the changing global economic scenario and further challenged the un-favouring and exploiting neoliberal global policies.

Paul Doughty, who has earlier reviewed this book for *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 2017, Sage Publication, puts forth that *'Each chapter heading is couched as an objective, and an exploration, of the extent to which these have been met by the initiatives described would also be of interest, but defining, let alone measuring, success in this way is certainly fraught, and to do so with every example is beyond the scope of this volume.'*

However as Ronaldo Munck, Head of Civic Engagement at Dublin City University, who reviewed this work for : Routledge, 2016, puts it, *'This is undoubtedly a first class introduction of labour's fraught relationship with globalisation. It is on top of the literature around these topics, the case studies are well chosen and it is well written. I would, however, want to bring out what seems to me like a Northern focus.'*

This book is an excellent source of information to students and scholars who pursue reach and study modern day labour organisational structure, effects of globalization, Sociology and Humanities study in Labour Marxism and Political Economy.