

Relations industrielles Industrial Relations



Globalization, Labor, and the Transformation of Work: Readings for Seeking a Competitive Advantage in an Increasingly Global Economy, Edited by Jonathan H. Westover, Altona, Vic.: Common Ground, 2010, ISBN: 978-1-8633-5660-2, 572 pp.

Carol-Anne Gauthier

Volume 66, Number 4, Fall 2011

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1007640ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1007640ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (print)

1703-8138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Gauthier, C.-A. (2011). Review of [*Globalization, Labor, and the Transformation of Work: Readings for Seeking a Competitive Advantage in an Increasingly Global Economy*, Edited by Jonathan H. Westover, Altona, Vic.: Common Ground, 2010, ISBN: 978-1-8633-5660-2, 572 pp.] *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 66(4), 684–686. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1007640ar>

Tous droits réservés © Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval, 2011

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

Érudit

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

dit, cet ouvrage réunit un ensemble de textes de grande qualité qui font ressortir les enjeux complexes auxquels la représentation des salariés est aujourd'hui confrontée. Au final, on se retrouve donc devant un ouvrage fort intéressant, dense et riche qui saura intéresser tout lecteur ayant un intérêt pour les nouvelles dynamiques de la régulation du travail à l'ère de la mondialisation.

Marc-Antonin Hennebert
HEC Montréal

Globalization, Labor, and the Transformation of Work: Readings for Seeking a Competitive Advantage in an Increasingly Global Economy

Edited by Jonathan H. Westover,
Altona, Vic.: Common Ground, 2010,
ISBN: 978-1-8633-5660-2, 572 pp.

The first part of the book focuses on globalization and encompasses chapters one through three. Chapter one provides an overview of globalization and global development theory and background. Here the authors discuss concerns about the novelty of current political ideology, the emergence of a global consciousness and changing conceptions of the nation. Three readings within this chapter explore sociological theories of global development in order to: explain and critique one of its approaches (commodity chain analysis) (Dogherty), compare approaches within it (modernization theory, dependency theory, world systems theory and neoliberalism) (Westover) and offer an overview of studies in which authors show a renewed interest in the role of the state in development (Westover).

Chapter two explores cases relating to economic development in an increasingly globalized world economy. Here Kauffman provides an overview of indigenous employment in four OECD countries – the USA, Canada, New Zealand and

Australia – in an effort to examine the link between these and the causes of economic development and underdevelopment in the aforementioned countries. Didelon and Richard then discuss the EU's position as a major global player according to three approaches or "strategic perceptions" – continents, centre-periphery and archipelago – then critiques these approaches and offer a fourth: regionalism. This approach, the authors argue, would allow the EU to take advantage of complementarities within regional economies – such as a growing workforce in Northern Africa to counterbalance labour shortages in Europe. Finally, Akhter and Pounder offer a case study of Barbados small and mid-sized enterprises' perceptions of and reactions to globalization, in an effort to develop knowledge pertaining to very small economies, a field yet to be developed by scholars.

Chapter three explores the effects of globalization on culture and identity in an effort to relate these to the workplace and organizational culture. Here Hadgis explores leadership behaviours through a cross-cultural research lens and argues that local cultures must be taken into account in the process of globalization. Then, using the World Bank as an illustration, Muto and Khilji explore the convergence and divergence theses of organizational culture, to argue for a crossvergence theory. Morrison explores models of cultural identity development and offers a new typology designed to address the specific context of increased flow of information and globalization. Nguyen, Umamoto, Nakamori and Ito explore concepts of knowledge in cross-cultural perspectives in an effort to argue that culture can be considered as knowledge. Ghosh and Purkayastha offer a thoughtful text based on experiential knowledge to showcase dialectical tensions between different dimensions of globalization (economic and social/moral; material and human experience/

consciousness effects). Benitez's then contributes by showcasing evidence of American ethnocentrism and its redefinition in an increasingly globalized context. Finally, Marcello directs our attention to empathy and its effect on one's use of language in an intercultural setting. Overall this chapter offers tools to encourage readers' (and, presumably, future managers') awareness of the extent to which culture affects worldviews and, by extension, views on behaviour, communication and leadership in the workplace.

Chapter four makes up part two of the book, which deals with labour issues. This chapter opens with Westover's exploration of the literature pertaining to global cities and their roles in the global economy. Here the author briefly presents the impacts of these spaces on the individuals who live there; namely, increasing income inequality, tendency toward fiscal crisis, a concentration of unemployment and low-paid workers, weak unions, etc. Sluyer-Beltrao then illustrates how global-level dynamics of change have led to the decline of social movement unionism, widely acclaimed as the key to union revitalization. Finally, Segal, Segal, Segal and Segal discuss how values, attitudes and behaviours influence leadership and communication in cross-cultural business contexts.

Part 3 encompasses chapters five through seven and explores how workplaces are transformed in a globalized economy. In the first article presented in chapter five, Hooi discusses how multinational companies' recruitment practices affect employee satisfaction and performance. Then, Lepadatu explores the sociological roots of the concept of teamwork and argues that revisiting the classics as well as adopting a cross-disciplinary approach may be key elements in renewing theoretical approaches in the study of teams. This theoretical paper is followed by a discussion by Bayley and Mc Tavish, pertaining

to management applying arrangements to counter presenteeism in the workplace, and Randeree who discusses the reasons behind why so many attempts to implement Total Quality Management (TQM) in organizations fail, thereby analyzing the role of TQM in the management of organizational change. Mustafa and Werthner engage in an exercise of attempting to establish theoretical links between business models and knowledge management literatures, which is followed by Lynn and Salzman discussing the globalization of knowledge work and its implications for multinationals, multinational home countries and newly industrializing countries.

Chapter six deals with successful multinational organizations. Here, Moissello, Gorbunova and Gottardo discuss strategic, cost and risk management perspectives on inter-firm relations and competitive advantage, by focusing on supplier selection. Then, Ilg proposes an interdisciplinary approach to promote systemic equality and autonomy as goals for a normative system that encourages state cooperation and equitable competition, in an effort to promote the significance of international legal theory.

Chapter seven concerns executives' perceptions of how globalization affects business. Munoz and Katsioloudes explore the travel industry's viewpoint while Engle and Kossakowski explore U.S. multinational executives' perceptions.

In the final part of the book, four case studies showcase different aspects of the workplace in an effort to help develop a successful global strategy. These case studies take us from the role of national culture in corporate social responsibility in Iran, to attitudes and management practices in Malaysia, then to globalization versus glocalization debates in Latin America and finally, to deindustrialization and labour market structure changes such as casualization of work in Algeria.

The book is an interesting project as its diverse content from varying global viewpoints provides a rich understanding of the impacts of globalization on different markets and workplaces. The inclusion of both research articles and theoretical discussions from different disciplines and frameworks enables readers to contemplate phenomena from different perspectives. The diversity of authors and their backgrounds – both personal and academic – adds to the quality of the reflections offered by the book and encourages readers to pursue their own in a critical fashion. Finally, the inclusion of international scholars as well as graduate students permits a certain openness concerning knowledge, as it helps readers shift from an ethnocentric western paradigm to a more inclusive, international, if not to say, globalized point of view. However, the book's potential as a reference piece is somewhat overshadowed by poor editing, especially in the first 100 pages. While in some cases it only causes minor annoyances, it makes other contributions difficult to comprehend.

Carol-Anne Gauthier
Université Laval

Droit fédéral du travail

Par Michel Coutu, Julie Bourgault, Annick Desjardins, avec la collaboration de Guy Dufort et de Annie Pelletier, Cowansville : Yvon Blais (coll. « Droit fondamental du travail »), 2011, 772 p., ISBN : 978-2-89635-312-5.

Enfin ! Une présentation d'ensemble du droit fédéral du travail de cette envergure, du moins en langue française, faisait en effet défaut. Michel Coutu, professeur titulaire à l'École de relations industrielles de l'Université de Montréal, Julie Bourgault, professeure au Département de relations industrielles de l'Université du Québec en Outaouais, et Annick Desjardins, avocate au Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique, avec la collaboration de M^e Guy Dufort

et de Annie Pelletier, ont su combler avec brio cette lacune.

Les principales lois du travail en cause sont le *Code canadien du travail*, dans ses trois parties traitant respectivement des normes du travail, des rapports collectifs du travail et de la santé et sécurité au travail. Il s'agit aussi de deux lois se rattachant au champ des droits et libertés de la personne : la *Loi canadienne sur les droits de la personne* et de la *Loi sur l'équité en matière d'emploi*. L'étude détaillée des lois touchant à la fonction publique fédérale est toutefois volontairement exclue. Mais, l'évocation immédiate de ces lois pour situer l'ouvrage d'emblée est trompeuse : il y va beaucoup plus globalement de l'ensemble du droit relatif au travail subordonné relevant de la compétence du Parlement canadien, y compris, mais au-delà de ses sources législatives, le droit constitutionnel, la jurisprudence, surtout des tribunaux fédéraux et des instances spécialisées, la doctrine et le droit international qui s'intègrent tout naturellement. On est loin d'un code annoté ; il s'agit d'une véritable synthèse de ce droit fédéral du travail.

L'ouvrage est donc d'une grande importance. Pratique, car il met en cause les entreprises fédérales, celles qui se situent dans des secteurs comme celui des banques, du transport terrestre interprovincial et international, de la navigation, aérienne et maritime, de la radiodiffusion, pour n'en nommer que quelques-uns. Théorique, il reflète les différents courants juridiques qui traversent le pays entier et il fait aussi à l'occasion des rapprochements intéressants avec le droit du travail québécois. La loi fédérale sait aussi, parfois subtilement, préserver la place de l'autonomie collective, par exemple, pour ce qui est de la désignation de l'agent négociateur, possible du fait des parties elles-mêmes, sans l'intervention du Conseil canadien des relations industrielles.