

INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (ISA)

Labour Movements Research Committee (RC 44)

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Mission

To encourage international research on labour movements, with a focus on their role both in industrial relations and in the political arena. Membership is open to any person engaged in research into Labour Movements or in Labour Movement activities.

Secretary's Notes

In the first edition of this Newsletter after the 1998 World Congress of Sociology in Montreal, we wrote that 'the global challenge facing labour opens up the possibility of RC44 becoming a forum for an interchange of ideas between researchers in the OECD countries and the developing world'. This edition of the Newsletter begins to reach this goal.

We have decided to include an article on fishworkers in India to draw our attention to the large number of workers in the developing world who are outside of the formal sector and the industrial relations system. What implications does this have for our research agenda and for the mission of our research committee?

As reported in the last Newsletter, union revitalisation has become a major research interest in the North. Geoff Wood reports on the highly successful Toronto conference in April on Union Growth, and Kim Scipes on the establishment of a new section of the American Sociological Association (ASA) on Labour and Labour Movements. I would also like to draw your attention to Richard Hyman's innovative study of trade unions in Europe. To prepare for Brisbane, we have included a report on contemporary industrial relations in Australia.

At the end of the Newsletter, we have reproduced the titles of the forty papers we have accepted so far for the conference in Brisbane. Anthea will be writing formally to all those who have had papers accepted by the middle of December at the latest.

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**New
Doctoral
Programme**

PHD in Sociology, Specialisation in Social Justice
University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada

An exciting new doctoral programme, specialising in Social Justice is being offered in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Windsor, commencing in September 2002. Doctoral students will be accepted into the programme with the possibility of a graduate assistantship, tuition waiver and a competitive scholarship totalling more than \$15000 for the first year. Students will work with faculty staff who have a wide range of expertise in social justice issues and will participate in a stimulating intellectual environment for pursuing their own interests in this growing field of specialisation.

Our 28 full-time faculty members have strong scholarly records with expertise in the areas of criminology and law, gender and equity issues, health, HIV/AIDS, international development, racism and ethnicity, sexuality, gay and lesbian studies, social movements, and work. The concept of social justice encapsulates the department's common interest in the consequences of social inequality and the possibilities for social change. It also addresses our desire to push the boundaries of the discipline of Sociology to address the current dramatic changes taking place in the world due to the effects of globalisation and restructuring. The programme will enable students to develop advanced sociological training, both methodologically and theoretically, for pursuing their interests in the Social Justice field. The department offers excellent resources for doctoral research in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

The deadline for applications is **January 31, 2002** to be considered for scholarship support. For further information about admissions, contact **Dr Barry Adam**, Chair of the Graduate Committee, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada N9B3P4.

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“No Women, No Fish” A Feminist Perspective on Fisheries in Developing Countries

By **Nalini Nayak**

‘Without Women in Fisheries, no fish in the sea’, was the conclusion of a Workshop that was conducted by the Women in Fisheries Programme of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers in Senegal in 1996. This would seem to be a rather outlandish conclusion given that women are largely invisible in this sector the world over. Fisheries has come to be considered a domain of men alone as they have been the fishers for a sufficiently long period of time with women only exceptionally putting to sea for capture unless in the estuarine areas or as a helping hand to their men.

Fisheries, like all other sectors of primary production, have grown to become an extremely modern industry. Although in most parts of the southern world, there still exists a large artisanal fishing sector with thousands of people reaping a livelihood from the open access fishery, in countries of the north it is a highly sophisticated industry, with fishers registered as professionals and possessing limited access to the fishery. Access depends on the management regimes of the various countries where quota allotments are made either to groups of fishers who are lucky to obtain them or to those individuals who can pay.

A few basic facts

Fish is a natural resource more bountiful in coastal waters than in the deep sea. Significantly, most of the species, at some point in their life cycle, enter the shallow waters. Humans have been using this ocean resource from time immemorial. Coastal communities invented their own ingenious ways of capturing this resource employing both the elements of hunting in the deeper waters and gathering in the shallower waters. The gatherers were predominantly women as is still seen in the island nations today. Nevertheless, fishing was probably never seen as an exclusive activity, which it later became, and even when it did, the activities of pre-harvest, harvest and post harvest were closely related and shared among men and women in a complementary manner. It was indeed a way of life. What remains of this sexual division of labour today in many of the developing countries is that while men fish, women take care of the processing and distribution of fish.

Despite being artisanal, the fishing and processing skills are at the same time advanced in that they depend generally on renewable resources, suit the diversity of the resource base and are therefore economically viable. They also are adapted to the timely change of season and the fish and food chain as evidenced by the use of multiple gears to target specific species in specific seasons. This kind of fishery was sustainable over many centuries but it gradually succumbed under duress with the urge to expand and dominate the oceans as modern technology promised higher returns.

Today’s fishing industry is dysfunctional as it is over capitalized and held afloat by state subsidies. Interestingly, technologies that were developed for war like electronic navigation systems and sonars began to be adapted for commercial fishing and the era of large-scale capital-intensive fisheries commenced. By the early 1950s, European shipyards began to build factory trawlers with a catch capacity of 500 tonnes of fish a day. These vessels were fitted with freezing and processing

facilities that threw all women workers in Europe out of their shore jobs. As there were initially no laws governing the movement of these vessels, they were free to fish wherever they wanted moving from one area to another as they extinguished the resource. It was only in the 1980s that some of the island nations in the south reacted to this uncontrolled fishing activity demanding a right over their waters. This process resulted in the declaration of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) that was finally ratified in 1982 creating the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) for each riparian nation and in 1994 the Straddling Stock Convention to manage the stocks beyond.

The modernizing of the fishery that accompanied the development of the modern State had a drastic impact on the life in the coastal communities too. Communitarian norms were shattered with the State taking over the ownership right of the ocean resources. With the realisation that fish stocks were being over fished, management regimes were put in place. The fishery became 'professionalised' with only men being recognized as fishers and thereby restricting access to the resource. In these transformation processes, there were changes in the coastal fishery and the division of labour in community life as well. In areas where export agents took over the catches, women lost access to fish for sale and were turned into wage labourers to sort and dry fish for the exporters. In cases where new technology for higher productivity was introduced, the fish landings initially grew in size and could not be handled by women merchants who were ill equipped or who did not have the liquid cash to purchase fish in bulk. No state funds were ever made available to help women enhance their activity.

The only exceptional cases where women in fisheries managed on their own to retain their prominence in the post-harvest activity, were in some African countries. In countries where women were engaged in net weaving, the new net machines drove them out of work. In other cases, women went to work as migrant contract workers in the modern fish processing industry no longer considered as fishworkers and when the fishery began to be considered a professional activity, they were relegated to the household. The labour they continued to provide to keep their husbands at sea and even their role in the management of the fishing craft, was unrecognized and passed off as free labour thereby further subsidizing the fishery. Women began to be considered as 'wives of fishermen'. In countries which traditionally followed the matrilineal system, which implied that the woman inherited the right to the fishing equipment and therefore a share of the catch, this right was displaced when the banks began funding the fishing craft. The banks recognized the men as fishers, gave them the loans and the craft henceforward belonged to the man.

Development riddled with contradictions

With the new GATT regulations, the pressures of the free market on the one hand, the competition for the access to fishing rights on the other, and the impending economic crisis, the fisheries have been hit more drastically with the result that the environment and women have borne the largest brunt. With the free movement of capital, the processing industry moves constantly to areas where it can make use of cheap female labour. Women workers in the northern world were made redundant when it was cheaper to process fish in the islands of the South Pacific and later in Thailand, with the result that Thailand ranked first in the export of canned tuna when it did not catch a single tuna itself. The 'free trade' regime is also built on the logic that any commodity can be acquired at any time of the year with no question of seasonality. Shrimp and other seafood on which the industry has set a premium, have to be made available all the year round which implies that they will be targeted no matter what the cost. This has caused a greater divide between the north and the south as the industry in the north expects the southern fishing grounds to be opened to them and the south loses its multi species resource base as it is only shrimp that is targeted using the destructive trawl nets.

The fisheries management regimes that are based on competition and privatisation of the resources and the assigning of quotas to those who can pay for them, again is in favour of greater centralization. On the other hand, the south does not even have the infrastructure to monitor what these fishing vessels take from its waters. These fishing agreements are mediated by northern governments that come with a package agreement, linking trade and aid, knowing that the poor southern governments will agree to their terms because they are in urgent need of development aid. Since 1997, the Senegalese women processors lost access to the pelagic resources when Senegal signed a fishing agreement for these resources with the EU. West African countries, where women have not only been heavily involved in post harvest work but whose processing and marketing skills have provided food and employment to thousands of people, have gradually been dispossessed of their access rights to fish on their shores. They now have to buy frozen fish dumped at the big ports by foreign vessels. Looking at this kind of 'development' from the point of view of food security is even more astonishing. Of food products that are internationally traded, 85% originate in the developing nations where small-scale fishers also provide a majority of fish for more than one billion people who rely on fish as their primary source of animal protein.

According to an FAO report of 1996, more than 21 million people worldwide are fishers. Of these, 90% are small-scale operators and 95% live in developing countries. Coastal fisheries in the south and Southeast Asia alone employ around 6.7 million people directly – approximately 15 million if the processing sector is included. Of this number, 50% are women. About 200 million people around the world depend on fisheries for an income. More than half of the fish eaten today comes from inshore and coastal areas that are dominated by more than 19 million small and medium fishers.¹ Approximately 16 % of the animal protein consumption of people worldwide comes from fish but people in the developed countries eat three times as much fish as people in developing countries consuming on an average 28 kg per person as compared to 9.2 kg in the developing world. Yet today, despite the fact that the demand for fish is increasing, a little more than one third of the world's fish production goes to non-food uses like fish meal, fertilizers and oils. This hits the poor coastal communities in numerous ways.

Destructive fishing technologies at the same time deplete the resources by not only over fishing but also by destroying juveniles and commercially 'non viable' species which would otherwise be the food of the poor. These fishing technologies that are increasingly in the hands of fewer companies also control the processing and fish meal industries through their subsidiaries in the south. The circle is then complete. Fish is transformed into an industrial product for industrial use snatched out of the hands and stomachs of those who most need it for life and livelihood.

The aquaculture myth

Estimated to be 91 million tones in 2010 the demand for fish in the world is increasing. The more recent technological answer to increase fish production is aquaculture. In 1995, the World Bank called aquaculture the next great leap in food production. The modern methods of aquaculture are a great shift away from the traditional ones. In the traditional systems, it was integrated with other food production thereby making efficient use of natural resources. These are recorded instances of the way farmers and especially women in Asia achieved impressive economic results when integrating fish and paddy farming. Today, modern intensive aquaculture which is highly capital intensive, using genetically altered species, greater technological inputs, industrial feeds and strong antibiotics have not only proved to be ecologically damaging but also has a crucial link to the degradation of the marine resources and access to fish as food in the developing countries.

¹ FAO, State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture, Rome, 1996

With the growing demand for fish by the countries that can pay, investors in developing countries have transformed rich wetlands into shrimp and fishponds. While shrimp exports bring fast economic returns, especially the hard currencies that developing countries need, this does not compensate for the economic and ecological losses in the coastal regions in the long run. By converting diverse eco systems to simple ones, as is the case with monoculture, a host of other products like fish, shellfish and timber from the cleared mangroves are also lost.

The crucial link nevertheless, is the manner in which modern capture fishing technology destroys the natural resources or wastes them and, simultaneously, creates culture technology to increase production. These methods of modern food production are seriously detrimental to the production of life and livelihood for which food is supposed to be intended. This is an even more aggressive combination ousting women and further exploiting nature. Examine how it works. When the use of aggressive and large fishing gear like trawls and purse seines become wide spread, they were not only highly efficient in their ability to trap fish but they were also ecologically destructive. The trawls literally ruined the fish habitat by levelling the ocean flow into flat football grounds. In order to make their operations viable, they concentrated on selecting only the high value fish species that the otherwise indiscriminate trawl and purse-seine nets hauled in. All the rest of the catches were either thrown overboard, dead or dumped as discards.

Where women, men and nature matter

Coming back to the conclusion of the international workshop referred to at the beginning of this article, it is probably clearer now why the women raised the slogan. Sustaining the fish resource is the only way towards sustaining life in the coastal communities. Respect for the cycles of production at sea necessitates a respect for the cycles of production of life on land, that is, aquatic life in the sea and human life on land. Sustaining life has been possible only because of the immense non-remunerative labour that goes into it where women have contributed the most. Nurture of the fish resource and nurture of life has to become the concern of both men and women and this will happen only when women's rightful role and space in production is recognized. No matter what sophisticated regimes of fisheries management are put into place, without women in fisheries there will be no fish in the sea.

The author of this article has been working in coastal fishing communities for several years. She has been a member of the National Fishworkers' Forum, a trade union of small-scale fishworkers in India, and a founder member of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)

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Revitalise or Marginalise: Labour in South and Southern Africa

A recent (August) Conference held in Johannesburg assessed these competing claims by grounding these discussions in southern Africa. The conference brought together leading scholars, researchers, trade union and government officials from Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and abroad. They examined the challenges facing labour in the region and explored ways research can help labour engage with the new world order. It was organised by the Sociology of Work Unit (SWOP), and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), in association with the Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC). The South Africa Minister of Trade & Industry, Alec Erwin, was the keynote speaker at the conference. He argued that the challenges facing unions are profound and that unions need to adjust. Those unions that do not adjust, will die.

From the conference, four main challenges facing labour in the region were identified:

- 1. The regional challenge** – The question raised was how labour could shape the evolving process of regional integration. It was suggested that this new regionalism is a response to globalisation and economic liberalisation. Drawing lessons from the EU, Roland Schneider from the Trade Union Advisory Council of the OECD in Paris pointed out that political communities are organized largely within nation states, and are likely to remain so in the immediate future. Schneider also said that the objective of international economic arrangements must be to allow the maximum of economic transactions while still maintaining labour standards through such mechanisms as codes of conduct.
- 2. The political challenge** - From the 1960s to the 1980s, labour was linked to the ruling parties in most of Southern Africa. Trade unions played a major role in demanding and establishing democracy. These unions then entered into alliances with ruling parties. However, argued Sakhela Buhlungu of SWOP, in most SADC countries the labour movement has had a paradoxical victory. After gaining political power, many parties forgot their mandates. Often tension would develop in the alliances as the ruling party attempted to subordinate the union movement.
- 3. The economic challenge** - The impact of economic liberalisation on labour and employment has been great in the region. According to Guy Mhone of the Public and Development Management School at Wits University, this liberalisation has not complimented the development agenda in the region. The result has been the growing informalisation of employment and growth of the livelihoods sector. A development agenda should transform the informal and communal sectors. Mhone urged labour to adopt a development agenda that finds new growth strategies.
- 4. The organisational challenge** -The shrinking formal sector in the region poses serious questions for the labour movement and its ability to tackle the challenges it faces. Only one in ten of the workforce of Southern Africa is organised. The growth of the informal sector reduces labour's power and represents a growing 'representational gap' in the labour movement. A new labour internationalism might help labour to challenge economic liberalisation. An example of this is the Southern Initiative on Globalization and Trade Union Rights (SIGTUR). However, labour needs to establish new social alliances and regional networks for this labour internationalism to work.

So, marginalisation or revitalisation for labour in the region? Is globalisation creating or closing down space for unions? Do unions adjust to or shape realities? Judging from Erwin's talk to the conference, he believes labour should 'adjust' to the market. Erwin defended the export-orientated manufacturing model. However, Mhone suggested a developmental approach for the region that does not only focus on the formal sector. This approach looks for new growth strategies by stimulating domestic demand. Mhone challenged unions to play a major role in this developmental approach.

Labour is faced with a complex challenge; it needs to find a way of both responding to the challenge of international competitiveness while widening its support base to respond to the non-traditional constituencies emerging in the labour market. This is a challenge that requires new forms of organisation, alliances and knowledge

Contact Sarah Mosoetsa for a copy of the full report, smosoetsa@hotmail.com

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

São Paulo, 24th September, 2001

The second World Social Forum is going to take place in Porto Alegre (Brazil) from the 31st January to the 5th February 2002. **We have the pleasure to invite your organization to participate and to register representatives in this activity.** The proposal of the World Social Forum emerged, between some Brazilian social movements, trade unions and NGOs, and several organizations of the civil society of the whole world joined it, as one of the expressions of the movement that was being developed against the neoliberal globalisation since Seattle, United States (November, 1999).

The Forum bases on the idea of promoting the convergence of the several critical sections to the neoliberalism through an open process. It is not an international political organization that deliberates initiatives or politics, but an open space of exchange of information, change of experiences, searches of coalitions and convergences in relation to campaigns and themes. Those besides can assume the character of assemblies but only among the delegates that want to discuss it. The first World Social Forum was a great success. You can find more information about it in the page of the Forum in the Internet: www.forumsocialmundial.org.br or www.worldsocialforum.org The delegates' registration should also be done by these web pages. CUT and others trade unions are discussing the accomplishment of some activities about themes of the world's work within the World Social Forum. Who has interest in adding to such initiatives should contact us by the e-mail sri@cut.org.br (to: Gustavo). We look forward to seeing you in the second WSF in Porto Alegre!

Kjeld Jakobsen, Secretary of International Relations, CUT, Brasil

**RC44 Survey - Top 10 most influential books for Industrial Sociologists
published in the 20th Century**

1	H Braverman, Labour and Monopoly Capital	R Luxemburg, The Mass Strike, the Political Party and the Trade Unions
2	M Burawoy, Manufacturing Consent	E P Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class
3	A Flanders, Trade Unions	K Moody, Workers in a Lean World
4	A Fox, Beyond Contract: Power, Work and Trust Relations	C Goodrich, The Miner's Freedom: A Study of Working Life
5	R Hollingsworth & R Boyer, Contemporary Capitalism: The Embeddedness of Institutions	J Lewis, Industrialisation and Trade Union Organisation in South Africa
6	R Hyman, Strikes	D Giardina, Storming Heaven: a Novel
7	J Kelly, Rethinking Industrial Relations: Mobilization, Collectivism and Long Waves.	H R Cayton & G S Mitchell, Black Workers and the New Unions
8	M Piore & C Sable, The Second Industrial Divide	T Cliff & D Gluckstein, Marxism and Trade Union Struggle
9	S & B Webb, The History of Trade Unionism	A Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks
10	R Whitley, Divergent Capitalisms	A Leon, The Jewish Question

The Role of the ICFTU - Asian and Pacific Regional Organisation (ICFTU-APRO) and its Relationship with other International Organisations in the Region

by
Kim Sung-Jin, Director of Education, ICFTU-APRO

An ICFTU 7-member mission visited 14 countries in Asia during the period in July and August 1950 and made recommendations for an ICFTU regional organisation for Asia. In the following year, the founding congress of ICFTU Asian Regional Organisation (ICFTU-ARO) was held in Karachi, Pakistan. The organisation name of the ICFTU-ARO changed to ICFTU-APRO in the 1984 Regional Congress in Seoul, Korea, as its geographical jurisdiction expanded to cover the Pacific. Current ICFTU-APRO membership is 30 million with 40 affiliated organizations from 27 countries. The ICFTU-APRO, at its 17th Regional Congress in November 2000 adopted a thematic paper, titled “Building A Global Social Partnership” in which ten priority areas were highlighted as follows: 1) peace, 2) environment and health, 3) democracy, 4) future of trade union movement, 5) labour standards, 6) social safety nets, 7) industrial relations and good governance, 8) equality, 9) new global financial architecture, 10) trade union option in the globalised economy. To this end, first, trade unions should be strengthened in terms of power of membership mobilisation and policy development capacity. Another equally important factor is the recognition of trade unions as social partners.

Absence of regional employers’ organisation: It is only natural and logical to think that the ICFTU-APRO as a regional trade union organisation of the ICFTU could have a lot of interactions and discussions with the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) at the Asia and Pacific level. However, the reality is disappointing, as the IOE does not have any regional organisation that could be a counterpart to the ICFTU-APRO. Nevertheless, progress was made during the 13th ILO Asia Pacific Regional Meeting in Bangkok in August this year when the Confederation of Asia Pacific Employers (CAPE) was inaugurated. This move will certainly boost the regional level social dialogue between CAPE and ICFTU-APRO.

International Labour Organisation (ILO): Social dialogue at the regional level is maintained and promoted through the activities of the ILO where ILO constituents participate, including representatives of international employers and trade union organisations. The 12th ILO Asia Pacific Regional Meeting was held in December 1997. It was just a few months after Thailand was first hit by the financial crisis that spread its contagious effects to other neighbouring countries, and the East and Southeast Asian region fell in the turmoil. No doubt, the crisis hit the working population and their family members most. Social safety nets became the prime issue of ICFTU-APRO since then, in line with ILO’s campaign for “decent work”.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs): The IMF came to rescue those emerging Asian markets hit by the financial crisis, but the prescribed conditionality attached for bailouts was exacerbating the ailing economy. More and more companies, including viable ones, went bankrupt due to high interest rates and the subsequent credit crunch, for example. Asian emerging markets have yet to institutionalise any meaningful social security schemes for those retrenched and laid-off. Poverty and child labour increased, school dropouts increased drastically, families broke down, and so did the number of suicides committed by the workers and employers alike. The ICFTU-APRO put greater organisational devotion to assist affiliates and jointly tackle the hardship of the workers, particularly strengthening its interaction with IFIs such as International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB). The ICFTU-APRO organised meetings and visits to express trade union views in the wake of Asian financial and economic crisis, and pinpointed the wrong prescriptions imposed by the IMF on the crisis-hit countries in Asia and highlighted the danger of social disintegration and the importance of social safety nets. The ICFTU-APRO also invited IFI officers to a series of seminars and workshops to raise awareness towards the role of trade unions in the crisis. The latest event being a two-day meeting between ICFTU-APRO and IFIs that will be organised in conjunction with ICFTU-APRO Executive Board Meeting in the end of October 2001.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC): The ICFTU has been pursuing a labour forum, namely Asia Pacific Labour Network (APLN), to be recognised by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) since 1995. The ICFTU-APRO has played a key role in organising conferences with a view to discussing the ICFTU/APLN statement and presenting it to the APEC Leaders. The conference makes a request in an arranged meeting with the head of the hosting country to bring it to the notice of the assemblage of the APEC summit meeting. The ICFTU/APLN conferences look into the developments taking place in the APEC region

to point out the areas of concerns to the trade union movement, to make proposals for effecting improvements and importantly, to invite the attention of the leadership to the need for a level playing field in the APEC structures, a presence of the labour movement on a basis similar to those of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC). However, our efforts are yet to see any remarkable progress, as any decision in the APEC structure shall be made in consensus by the APEC member economies. Other interaction which the ICFTU-APRO organises are conferences with Asian and European trade unions prior to the bi-annual Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), which aims at promoting common development and prosperity between Asia and Europe. Three such events were held by the joint efforts of the ICFTU, ETUC and ICFTU-APRO in Bangkok (1996), London (1998) and Seoul (2000). As the numbers of informal and atypical workers increase in many countries of Asia and the Pacific, workers' cooperatives gain the recognition of an effective and sustainable organising mechanism for those marginalised and unprotected workers. The ICFTU-APRO works together with the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) in the areas of mutual concerns and interests.

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**Labor and Labor Movements Section of the American Sociology Association (ASA)
By Kim Scipes**

ASA member sociologists have established a new Section in the ASA: Labor and Labor Movements. It was established to encourage and enhance the currently growing interest among North American sociologists in labor. Over 300 members of ASA, mostly from the US and Canada, have joined the new Section, which has been formally accepted by the Association. Establishment of this Section allows those focusing on labor to have two formal panels in addition to a set of roundtable presentations each year at future ASA annual meetings. More importantly, it provides an organizational form to facilitate research and communication among those interested in labor. The Section has already published the first issue of its newsletter, "In Critical Solidarity," and this issue featured a piece by Peter Evans on "Why Renewed Interest in the Labor Movement," with responses by Edna Bonacich, Ian Robinson, and Gay Seidman. The Section has already taken major steps in developing its web site at www.bgsu.edu/dept/soc/prof/mason/ASA, and the Newsletter is posted on it in a PDF file. The web site is accessible to non-ASA members, and members hope that sociologists around the world will contribute to making it better.

The Section (then still officially "in formation") made an impressive debut at the 2001 ASA Meeting this past August in Anaheim, California. Although unable to get official panels, the Section was still able to organize a quite exciting set of roundtable presentations that were well attended, and several other events. It sponsored sessions on "The New Labor Movement in Los Angeles: Achievements and Prospects" (LA is where some of the hottest organizing is taking place in the US), "Workers Across Borders" and, in collaboration with the Political Economy of the World System (PEWS) Section, "Globalization and Labor." In addition, the Section sponsored a tour of Los Angeles sweatshops. While this is an academic project, members have consciously decided that its work will be in interaction with labor movements in the US and around the world. We hope to help to assist workers and their organizations as they confront the problems facing all of us.

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Conference Report

International Conference on Union Growth, Toronto, Canada by Geoffrey Wood

From 30 April to 1 May 2001, an international conference on Union Growth was held at the University of Toronto, Canada on the occasion of the retirement of Noah Meltz. The conference represented one of the largest gatherings of distinguished labour scholars and trade union activists to be held for the past few years, and included representatives from both mature and emerging economies. Moreover, the standard of the papers presented was generally high, particularly if the regrettably mediocre standard of recent International Industrial Relations Association conferences is considered.

Space precludes a detailed dissection of all the papers presented. However, the most interesting and innovative papers fell into two categories. Firstly, there are those who looked at new union organizational forms and policy options, including, inter alia, papers by Richard Freeman and Tom Kochan, which looked at the impact of new forms of information technology on union organization, and the possibilities opened for new forms of network organization. Whilst Kochan's analysis did veer on the side of a "best practice" paradigm that may be inapplicable to unions in less developed nations, it does, like Freeman's paper, constitute a refreshingly innovative attempt to transcend "conventional" wisdom as to how unions should be structured.

Secondly, there were most interesting papers presented by scholars from Far Eastern universities (such as Marasigan and Tan, from the University of the Philippines), complemented by a paper by Kuruvilla et al, on the findings of a Cornell study on Asian unions. In many Asian countries, the performance of unions has been relatively robust; the papers highlighted not just similarities, but also differences in national experiences. Whilst there is little doubt that Western unions can learn much from their Asian counterparts, differing national experiences highlight the diversity of contemporary capitalism; differing institutional configurations mean that organizational models – no matter how successful – cannot be readily transposed across national boundaries.

The title of the conference and the innovative nature of many papers did not, however, totally banish the general pessimism hanging over proceedings; perhaps the title "International Conference on Union Decline" would have been appropriate. The bulk of papers repeated the depressingly familiar story of union decline that has been acted out in most of the advanced societies. However, it must be reiterated that, even in the "worst cases" of the USA and New Zealand, union decline has been uneven; pockets of robustness persist. The challenge facing critical trade union studies is two fold. Firstly, we now know a great deal about contemporary union decline; more needs to be done on *contemporary union growth*, a gap that was only partially filled by some of the more innovative papers at the conference. Secondly, in thinking about trade unions, more enquiry on a desirable progressive policy agenda would be most welcome; the literature on union renewal tends to concentrate more on organizational strategies, than on a long term "vision for social upliftment". The Toronto conference provided both a most stimulating overview of the state of the art in contemporary trade union studies, but also highlighted the current gaps in contemporary debates, and new possible areas for enquiry. Finally, any report on this conference would be incomplete without a brief tribute to Noah Meltz. Noah Meltz was – and is – remarkable not only for his many distinguished contributions to the literature in the field, but also for his role in drawing in and encouraging younger scholars, a vital task that is often overlooked or discounted.

Geoffrey Wood

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Understanding European Trade Unionism: *Between Market, Class & Society*

by Richard Hyman

London School of Economics and Political Science

A very innovative study of trade unionism... a brilliant analysis of distinct types to be found within Europe - *Marino Regini, Università degli Studi di Milano*

This book provides a timely insight into organized labour in an increasingly capitalist world.... It provides a scholarly insight that begs reading by policymakers in labour, business and the government - *Professor Anil Verma, University of Toronto*

In this comprehensive overview of trade unionism in Europe and beyond, Richard Hyman offers a fresh perspective on trade union identity, ideology and strategy. He shows how the varied forms and impact of different national movements reflect historical choices on whether to emphasize a role as market bargainers, mobilizers of class opposition or partners in social integration. This engaging and compelling work demonstrates how these inherited traditions can serve as both resources and constraints in responding to the challenges which confront trade unions in today's working world.

Contents

1. The Strategic Orientations of Trade Unionism: A Stylized Introduction
2. Trade Unions as Economic Actors: Regulating the Labour Market
3. Trade Unions and Class Struggle: Contesting the System
4. Trade Unions in Civil Society: Pursuing Social Dialogue
5. British Trade Unionism: Between Market and Class
6. German Trade Unionism: Between Society and Market
7. Italian Trade Unionism: Between Class and Society
8. Challenges and Changes: The Variable Geometry of Trade Unionism

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The 1999 Yearbook of the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI)

This yearbook contains, as in previous years, a large number of articles on the Europeanisation of industrial relations, employment, the labour market and social protection, the expansion of the EU and the European institutions. In addition, an article by Emilio Gabaglio, the General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), reviews the debates held during the ETUC Congress in Helsinki. Two guest contributions, one by the former US labour minister, Robert Reich, the other by Pierre-Alain Muet, economic adviser to the French president, Lionel Jospin, discuss the European and the American social model.

<http://www.etuc.org/etui/New/Yearbook99.cfm>

Industrial Relations in Australia: The Contemporary Context

By George Lafferty

Historically, Australia's industrial relations system has been distinctive for its centralised system of wage fixation; at both Federal and State levels, and for the integral role trade has played within that system. However, both these distinctive features have changed significantly in recent years. Since before the establishment of the Australian Commonwealth through the amalgamation of six colonies a century ago, the set of arbitration and conciliation institutions have provided a legal framework within which employers and unions (recognised as the sole legal bargaining representatives for workers) can negotiate. The system's industrial courts have possessed the power to reach judgments on pay and conditions that are legally binding on employers, employer associations, workers and unions. These judgments have been given legal expression through industrial awards, documents on which the regulation of wages and conditions in specific industries and occupations has been based.

However, over the past decade, Australia has experienced a decentralisation and deregulation of its industrial relations system. This process has been considerably slower than in New Zealand, whose own system of conciliation and arbitration shared much with Australia's, but was dismantled by the *Employment Contracts Act 1991*. Australia's system of government, which is both federal and bicameral, and the Accord between the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and the Australian Labor Party (ALP) Commonwealth government, which held power from 1983 to 1996, ensured that the process of decentralisation and deregulation was relatively measured. The industrial relations system itself also acted to slow the process. Even the right-wing Liberal-National Coalition government, which won government by a huge lower house majority in March 1996, was unable to pursue its more extreme industrial relations policies, largely since it lacked a majority in the upper house, the Senate. It required the support of the minority Australian Democrats party to ensure the passage of its *Workplace Relations and Other Legislation Bill*. The eventual *Workplace Relations Act 1996* still left the conciliation and arbitration system in place, although with reduced authority, and it limited the scope of industrial awards. Rather than the comprehensive documents they had previously been, they became limited to 'twenty allowable matters', thus being reduced to 'safety net' provisions, mainly for the lowest paid.

Decentralisation had begun under the ALP, with the introduction of enterprise-based bargaining and the legal possibility of non-union agreements. The *Workplace Relations Act* continued the process. Its most radical innovation took the form of Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs). These are employment contracts that may be negotiated, usually without any union involvement, between the employer and an individual employee or a group of employees. A new agency, the Office of the Employment Advocate (OEA), was established to administer AWAs. The *Workplace Relations Act* constituted only the 'first wave' of the Coalition government's industrial relations agenda. The first major test of strength between the government and the labour movement was provided in 1998 with the waterfront dispute, in which the direct participants were the Maritime Union of Australia and Patrick Stevedores, who received considerable government support (particularly from the Minister for Workplace Relations, Peter Reith). Evidence of collusion between the employer and the government emerged, in a complex, secretive plan of corporate restructuring whereby Patricks replaced its union workforce with non-union labour. After a month-long dispute, the Federal Court and the High Court found the company (and ironically, by implication, the government itself) in breach of the *Workplace Relations Act*. Eventually, the original union employees returned to their jobs and a new enterprise agreement was negotiated, in which agreement was reached on a considerable number of redundancies. However, this was a significant setback for the government.

The implementation of the government's 'second wave' of further 'reforms' was made even more difficult by the result of the October 1998 Federal Election. They were re-elected, but with a substantially reduced lower house majority, and still no majority in the Senate. Few further changes have been introduced, although they have diluted both Equal Employment Opportunity and Occupational Health and Safety legislation. Peter Reith, on being replaced recently as Workplace Relations Minister by the no less zealous Tony Abbot, expressed frustration at the impediments he had experienced in attempting to achieve industrial relations change. The impact of the current government's most radical changes has been limited. AWAs, in particular, have not proved popular with employers, being limited to a tiny minority of workplaces, and the outcomes they have provided for employees have been generally poorer than those attained through union-negotiated awards and enterprise agreements. Overall, while the impetus of recent industrial relations change in Australia has been towards a less centralised, less regulated system in which unions no longer have a guaranteed role, the conciliation and arbitration remains in place and centralised wage fixing remains crucial, particularly for lower-paid workers.

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ISA WORLD CONGRESS, BRISBANE, 7-13 JULY 2002

**THEME: THE SOCIAL WORLD IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY:
AMBIVALENT LEGACIES AND RISING CHALLENGES**

KEY PROGRAMME DATES

15 November 2001*	Closing date for application for ISA Financial support
28 February 2002	Submission of Approved Abstracts to Congress Secretariat
28 February 2002	Submission of Registration form to Congress Secretariat
30 April 2002	Presenter Registration fees paid
1 May 2002	Final paper submission to Congress Secretariat

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Abstract (100-250 words. No abbreviations or symbols to be used); **Key Words**.

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PROPOSED SESSIONS AND SUBMITTED ABSTRACTS

	Session Title, Chair & Co-Chair	Abstracts submitted and titles
1	<p>New labour internationalisms: Chair: Rob Lambert: rlambert@ecel.uwa.edu.au This panel is designed to examine the relationship between labour organizations (union and non-union) and international economic institutions. Institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, World Trade Organization and the many regional institutions (NAFTA, EU, APEC,) are having an increasingly important role structuring the political economy in which unions and labour groups operate. It is hoped that the session will consider labour responses to the institutions, as well as case studies of particular institutions' activity. We hope to identify new examples of new labour internationalisms.</p>	<p>Robert O'Brien: Labour's options in engaging with international economic Institutions Maria Lorena Cook: International Labor Standards & Domestic Labor Advocates: The Role of Unions in promoting Labor Rights in Developing Countries</p>
2	<p>Unions and the organising of young workers Chair: Carla Lipsig-Mummé: carlalm@yorku.ca This session hopes to bring together papers that analyse the changing nature of employment for the young; the ways in which unions are recruiting, organising and representing young workers; the ways in which youth-based social movements are interacting with and challenging unions; and the ways in which young people in school and/or at work, perceive unions. We are seeking papers from a wide range of countries and experiences. Both comparative and single-country studies are of interest. We are also interested in papers that address the intersection between union representation of the young and the issue of union renewal and transformation.</p>	<p>Kate Laxer Francois Purseigle: Unionisation of agricultural youth Carla Lipsig-Mummé & Judith Bessant: Trade unions and young workers in Australia</p>
3	<p>Globalisation, Manufacturing and the Labour Movement Chair: Andries Bezuidenhout: 029ajb@muse.wits.ac.za Co-chair-: Lee Pegler: SSOLP3@forest.cf.ac.uk The reconfiguration of the manufacturing industry globally impacts in different ways on localities of manufacturing. Using the 'white goods' (household appliance) manufacturing industry as a case study, this session brings together research conducted in Australia, Brazil, Southern Africa, Taiwan and Turkey in order to study the impact of global changes in production on local industries. The aim is to draw out the implications of the research for the labour movement. The session will consist of five papers, one presenting an overview of the industry globally, and four focussing on country-specific case studies.</p>	<p>Lee Pegler: The Global Re-organisation of Production: Implications of Recent Developments in the White Goods Industry Nadir Sugur: Globalised Management and Local Trade Unions in the Turkish White Goods Industry Wen-Chi Grace Choulabchou: Management and labour in the global economy: Case Studies of Taiwan's white goods industry Rob Lambert: Global developments in white goods sector in Australia Andries Bezuidenhout: Global developments in white goods sector in SA.</p>
4	<p>New strategic directions and rank-and-file democracy: Complementary or Contradictory? Chair: Richard Hyman: r.hyman@lse.ac.uk In responding to the intense social, political and economic challenges which confront them in all countries of the world, labour movements have to unlearn many of the lessons of the past, escape restricting traditional routines, and develop new strategic visions. This seems to require the generalisation of sectional and localised experience, effective overall coordination (both within and between countries), informed and innovative leadership. Yet, strategic blueprints are worthless unless workers themselves, union members and activists, identify with the objectives, feel that they have helped shape organisational policies and priorities, and are committed to act on behalf of these. There are however obvious tensions between strategic leadership and participative democracy: how can these be reconciled? The aim of the session is to exchange experience in different parts of the world as the basis for some general conclusions.</p>	<p>Franco Barchiesi: The Impact of Deindustrialization on Trade Unions' Membership Trends and Grassroots Strategies: A Case Study of the East Rand (SA) Jean Faniel: The unemployed: actors or instruments of the Belgian trade unions? Lee Pegler: Factory modernisation and union identity: New challenges for unions in developing and 'transitional' economies Lucio Baccaro: Union Democracy & the "General Interest" V.Chandrasekhar: Membership, Participation & Decision making process in Indian Unions Gordon Lafer: New Strategies for the Service Economy: the Hawaii Hotel Workers Union Confronts the Global Tourism Industry</p>
5	<p>The Dilemmas of Political Exchange: How, and how far can unions support 'progressive' governments without compromising their independence? Sakhela Buhlungu Q29sak@muse.wits.ac.za 4 papers will be presented in the panel for 15 minutes each. Criteria for paper selection: Innovative case studies and/or new analytical insights, which promise to resolve the dilemmas of political exchange. Other papers will be circulated and tabled. Abstracts of all papers accepted for the panel will be compiled and circulated to facilitate discussion. Discussants: Not in the usual normal sense, but two people will comment on all the papers and draw out issues for a research agenda leading to the next ISA Congress.</p>	<p>Miles Larmer: The trade union movement in post-colonial Zambia Simon Stratton: Marcos Santana: Labour movement and State in Brazil: is there any new relation? Kwang-Yeong Shin: Civilian Government and Labor Movement in the Post-Authoritarian Regime: the Case of South Korea and Taiwan."</p>

<p>6 Woman and trade unions: Suzanne Franzway: Suzanne.Franzway@unisa.edu.au The suggested focus for the panel on women and trade unions is to reflect on what we can learn from positive experiences and strategies of those who already engage in progressive politics, in particular in labour movements. It is very important in these times that the achievements made by progressive activists in unions in whatever form be recognised, encouraged and supported. This will contribute to providing more creative definitions of the political. Papers that build on empirical research and participant observation are very welcome. (The current environment gives renewed urgency to this approach)</p>	<p>Sue Ledwith and Fiona Colgan: Turning the world upside down: gender and diversity challenges to labour movements Malehoko Tshoedi Suzanne Franzway: Union women making progressive politics: what possibilities? Nandita Shah and Nandita Gandhi: Women's strategies and Industrial restructuring</p>
<p>7 Trade unions and casualisation: Bridget Kenny 029bkenn@muse.wits.ac.za In the past decades, the use of contingent forms of employment has increased across sectors. This session will focus on exploring how trade unions organizing in different sectors and countries have responded to the proliferation of vulnerable jobs. The session should address both innovative and multiple initiatives at representing contingent workers, for instance, trade union and community linked campaigns, as well as assess unsuccessful efforts. This could include how unions represent a changing working class. The session should provide a discussion toward rebuilding and revitalizing trade unions.</p>	<p>Iain Campbell: Casual Employees and Trade Union Representation in Australia Bridget Kenny: Organising for a 'new day': Reclaiming casual shop workers' pasts to rebuild a union Sonia Larangeira: Unions at the crossroads: Challenges from restructuring/ deregulation and privatization in telecommunications</p>
<p>8 State restructuring and the implications for labour: Peter Fairbrother: FairbrotherPD@Cardiff.ac.uk Co-convenor: Charlotte Yates yatesch@mcmill.cis.McMaster.CA The aim of the session is to address debates about state restructuring and questions this raises for organised and unorganised labour. Over the last two decades states have reorganised and refocused their concerns in a variety of ways, reflected in institutional changes within the state, the redrawing of state boundaries and a repositioning within the international community. These developments involve changes at the international and sub-national levels. Such changes have varied implications for labour and raise difficult questions for trade unions and other forms of collective organisation. These various issues will be addressed in the session.</p>	<p>Karl Von Holdt: State sector restructuring & union contestation: 2 case-studies from SA Bob Carter: State Restructuring and Union Renewal: Some Evidence from Teaching Donella Caspersz: Global Governance, State power and Worker Status Kim Voss: New Capital Meets New Labour: America's Peculiar, Private Welfare State and the Origins of Union Renewal Pat Walsh & Robin May: And Still creatures of the State? The state, the central organisation and union strategy and the fall and rise of New Zealand unions</p>
<p>9 Unions and labour law reforms in a comparative perspective: Regina Morel: MorelRLM@aol.com In the last decade, labour law reforms have had profound repercussions on the labor market, and these advocating deregulation and flexibilization of labor norms are gaining ground. However, their consequences are not uniform: in each country the character and scope of these changes depend as much in its institutional arrangements and traditional practices as on its economic processes. In most cases, this new context has had an important impact in unionism, redefining its influence, its demands as well as its strategies and practices. The purpose of the session is to discuss, in a comparative perspective, the main tendencies of changes in labor legislation and unions' responses; we will focus especially on the consequences of this new context for developing countries' labour relations and the implications of the implementation of international labour standards.</p>	<p>Elina G Pessanha: Changes in Labour Relations System: Brazil In Comparative Perspective Marta Novick, Carlos A. Tomada: Labor reforms & crisis of the union's identity in Argentina John D. French: The Powerful, the Weak, and the Law: The Strategic Implications of Contemporary Labor Law Reform for Latin American Workers' Movements Tayo Fashoyin (ILO) Trade Unions & Social Dialogue: Public Policy & Union Organizing Strategies in Developing Countries Young-Jin Choi: Relative autonomy on the Institutionalization of Labor Relations: East Asian-Invested Firms in China</p>
<p>10 Joint session with RC5 (Ethnic, Race and Minority Relations), RC 18 (Political Sociology), RC48 (Social movements, Collective Action and Social Change) – Relationships among parties, movements, labour and ethnic organisations in pursuit of social change. RC44 Rep: Carla Lipsig-Mummé: carlalm@yorku.ca</p>	<p>Kim Scipes: Mona-Josée Gagnon: Karl von Holdt: The rise and decline of social movement unionism in South Africa: socio-political dimensions of union formation</p>
<p>11 Unions at the Crossroads: Ambivalent Legacies and Rising Challenges AV Jose jose@ilo.org The preceding decade has seen a variety of trade union responses to liberalization and social change in different parts of the world. Unions have adapted themselves to a changing environment by organizing new constituents; adjusting their structures and finances; addressing new concerns; forming new alliances; and formulating new agenda for collective action. The range and variety of these responses point to the inherent potential of unions to stay as powerful social actors influencing social policy. The special session will attempt a review of the union responses in different countries and environments with a view to identifying promising approaches for labour in civil society and the global economy in future.</p>	<p>Daisy Rooks: At Your Doorstep, In Your Face and On Your Conscience: Union Organizers and the Transformation of the Contemporary American Labor Movement" Beyond Militancy Hagen Koo: The South Korean Labor Movement at the Crossroads Peter Fairbrother, Gerry Griffin, Charlotte Yates Hollowing Out Central Labour Federations: Convergence and Divergence in the Role of Central Labour federations in Australia, Canada & Great Britain' Andy Danford, Mike Richardson, Paul Stewart, Stephanie Tailby and Martin Upchurch The Patterns and Processes of Partnership at Work in the UK</p>
<p>12 Joint session with RC30 (Sociology of Work) Crossing frontiers and redefining boundaries: The Sociology of Work and Labour Movements in the New Millennium Edward Webster: 029edw@muse.wits.ac.za</p>	