

## Labour Movements Research Committee (RC 44)

<http://www.socsci.mcmaster.ca/globalabour/>

### RC 44 in Sweden, 2010 and Labor and Public Sociology: Reflections

Edited by: Robyn Magalit Rodriguez,  
Rutgers University

**Vol 3, No 7; September 2009**

Content	Page
<b>Message from RC-44 President</b> Rob Lambert	<b>1</b>
<b>Sweden 2010 Announcements</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PUBLIC SOCIOLOGIES OF LABOR: A REVIEW OF RECENT DEBATES</b> Jeff Sallaz	<b>4</b>
<b>CAPITALISM IN CRISIS: THREAT AND/OR OPPORTUNITY FOR TRADE UNIONS?</b> Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick and Richard Hyman	<b>5</b>
<b>THE REVERBERATING SUCCESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL IN TURKEY</b> Ercüment Çelik,	<b>8</b>
<b>BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	<b>9</b>

#### International Sociological Association (ISA),

Faculty of Political Sciences and  
Sociology

University Complutense 28223,  
Madrid, Spain

Phone: +34 91 352 7650;

Fax: +34 91 352 4945

E-mail: [isa@cps.ucm.es](mailto:isa@cps.ucm.es);

<http://www.ucm.es/info/isa>

#### Count Down to Sweden

Rob Lambert  
RC-44 President

Now is the time to think seriously about your choice of panel to present your work at the next ISA Congress in Gothenburg, Sweden, 11-17<sup>th</sup> July, 2010. Dan Clawson and his team have organized relevant and potentially stimulating panel themes, which reflect the continuing global restructuring of work, its multiple impacts on labour and the labour's responses to these changes. *You need to submit your abstract to the panel organizer no later than the 1<sup>st</sup> of October.*

We expect to repeat the experience of the Barcelona Conference in September 2008, where a rich array of original research papers were presented, creating interesting and lively debate.

Our team is in the process of searching for a reasonably priced hotel close to the Conference venue, so we can again build on the community of scholars which has emerged in RC44. We will keep you briefed on this.

Over the past six months I have participated in several trade union forums on the global financial crisis. The

first organized by the Graphical division of Unions Network International (UNI) in Berlin in April, the second organized by the Korean Council of Trade Unions (KCTU) in Seoul in May and finally, a week long International Solidarity Conference Organized by COSATU in late June.

I wrote a paper for the UNI Conference analysing the impacts of the crisis on packaging sector. The analysis of the leading global corporations in the sector revealed a common trend. During the period of cheap credit from 2001, these companies borrowed heavily (for example, the Swedish company Tetra Pak borrowed on average \$1.6 billion between 2004 and 2007) to buy their own shares, boosting their value at a time when their rate of profit was in decline. When the bubble burst, they were deeply in debt, as were the other majors. This then lead to major attacks on employment and conditions within the sector because of a 'cash flow problem'.

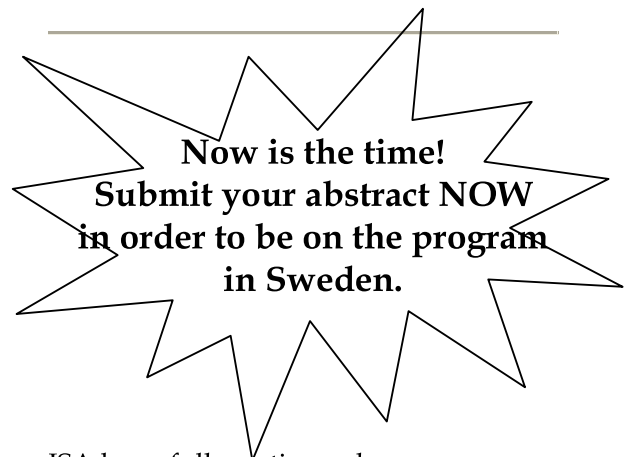
This led to considerable debate about the need to push back the frontier of control to include the financial management of corporations. Of course, this is off limits and is unlikely to occur unless there is a concerted campaign to pressure these companies. Whilst there have been notable local actions protesting the price workers are paying for financial manipulation, the international trade union movement appears incapable of moving beyond lobbying at the G8 and G 20 meetings.

The KCTU workshop on the crisis was highly informative but also revealed that at present there is little coordinated resistance from unions in the global south. The COSATU Conference was fascinating in that a coherent critique of ITUC and the Global Unions was articulated, which centred on the politics of social partnership and the shutting out of leadership from the global south from

positions of power within these structures. Many questioned whether there was a racial dimension to this process. No leader from the global south has ever been elected to a General Secretary position.

I am sure the crisis has impinged on the work of members of our network in various ways, including impacts on the University. Here in Australia many Universities witnessed their investments wither before the crashes of uncontrolled speculation. Doubtlessly, this will impact on the conditions of our labour.

There will be much to share beyond the sessions in the sunshine of the beautiful city of Gothenburg for it is in our concrete experience of friendship and community that we build the inner strength to weather the many storms that whirl around us as we live through an era where what we research we also experience in our own lives, for no wage earner is immune from the crisis of our times.



ISA has a full meeting only once every four years. The next one is 11-17 July 2010 in Gothenburg Sweden. To be on the program you need to submit an abstract (or complete paper) by October 1, less than a month away.

A full list of sessions, session organizers, contact information, and session descriptions can be found at <http://people.umass.edu/clawson>

For questions, or for a paper that doesn't seem to fit any of the sessions, write Dan Clawson: [clawson@sadri.umass.edu](mailto:clawson@sadri.umass.edu)

And three more things:

1. **Membership:** Join ISA and RC-44, or renew your membership; in fact, try to recruit other members. The number of sessions we actually get will depend on the number of members we have. If we don't increase our membership slightly the ISA might cancel a couple of sessions; if we can add members we might be able to add sessions.

2. **Labor action:** In addition to our official sessions, within the conventional ISA framework, we hope-intend to have some session that builds our connections to and involvement with activists and working trade unionists. Rob Lambert has volunteered to coordinate that. If you have suggestions, and better yet if you are willing and able to be involved, please be in touch with Rob: [rlambert@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:rlambert@biz.uwa.edu.au)

3. **One presentation only:** In Sweden, the officers and board have agreed, no person may present more than one paper. You could be the co-author of a second (but not a third) paper, if the co-author attends the conference and presents the paper.

As a separate article from the above, not on the same page in the newsletter:

**Conference contradiction:**

1. The best sessions do not have more than 3 or 4 papers in a two-hour block, and leave lots of time for audience participation.
2. To get at least partial support for their conference participation, most people need to be listed on the conference program as presenting a paper.

To meet the demands of #2 each session would probably need to have 7-8 papers, but that crowds sessions, makes it hard to make an effective presentation, and reduces audience participation.

**Contradictions are real and can't be wished away by an act of will.**

Conference and session organizers, board members and officers, have discussed the situation but not agreed on a clear answer, except that there MUST be significant time for discussion and audience participation. We will undoubtedly re-visit this issue when we have a clearer sense of how many quality submissions we have. If you have thoughts on this, send them to Dan Clawson, [clawson@sadri.umass.edu](mailto:clawson@sadri.umass.edu) (and I'll pass them on to others).

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT  
FOR  
ISA SWEDEN 2010**

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ISA SWEDEN 2010 IS AVAILABLE  
Guidelines for submitting application for a grant

1. Who is eligible?

Individual members of the ISA in good standing (i.e. having paid their individual membership fees) coming from developing countries (listed in economies B and C on the congress registration form) and who play an active role in the Congress programme either as a session chair or a paper giver.

2. What will the grants be?

The grants can be allocated for one or more of the following items:

- \* Congress registration fee (available also for economy A).
- \* Airfare (in full or in part).
- \* Accommodation (in full or in part).

3. How to apply?



One can apply for a grant only to one RC/WG/TG. Multiple applications will not be considered.

A letter of application shall be sent before January 31, 2010 Robyn Rodriguez, RC44 Treasurer,  
robyn.m.rodriguez@rutgers.edu.

#### 4. Decisions

The RC44 Board will review all applications and recommend the allocation of available funds. A list of the selected individuals will be posted at the ISA website by mid- March 2010, so that all successful applicants can register to the Congress before May 4, 2010, the deadline for early registration.

---

**PUBLIC SOCIOLOGIES OF LABOR:  
A REVIEW OF RECENT DEBATES**  
By Jeff Sallaz,  
University of Arizona

Over the past several years a vibrant debate has sprung up around the promise of a “public sociology of labor.” This conversation originated when Michael Burawoy made public sociology the theme of his 2004 presidency of the American Sociological Association. Many applauded the call to engage with various publics, while others protested what they saw as a threat to the discipline’s scientific authority. More generally, the debate has forced sociologists based in the US to reflect upon, articulate, and defend many of their basic assumptions. Several recent conferences symposia have in turn allowed labor sociologists from difference societies to discuss their engagements and experiences with public sociology .

But first the controversy! Public sociology, both its supporters and detractors agree, differs fundamentally from professional sociology. The latter

studies the social world from a distance and valorizes objectivity. Its practitioners write technical reports for their academic peers. This is a “one-way street” in which knowledge flows from subject to scientist. Public sociology, in contrast, seeks to establish dialogue between subject and researcher. It entails “putting down roots” in communities and movements. The public sociologist is *organic* in that she learns from those she studies, but she also shares with them her expertise and can even, if asked by them, serve as their representative in the political domain (as when a sociologist testifies before Congress or Parliament on behalf of unemployed workers ). As this example illustrates, public and professional sociologies need not be antagonistic. In an ideal world, the public sociologist benefits from the legitimacy accorded sociology as a science, while the professional sociologist broadens her worldview through dialogue with colleagues “in the field.” Scholars too likely find themselves spending different phase of their careers in professional versus public modes. In short, the organic sociologist of labor (in the Gramscian sense) thrives when part of an organic division of labor (in the Durkheimian sense) in the academic field.

Solidarity, respect, and coordination are important *within* national sociologies. But so too *across* them! As the tendrils of neoliberalism—what Burawoy calls “third wave marketization” —have crept across the globe, the response of labor movements has been by no means uniform. Nor should we expect to find homogeneity across sociological engagements with these counter-movements. This is the message conveyed by contributors to the May 2009 issue of the journal *Work and Occupations*. Soon-Kyoung Cho argues that labor sociologists in South Korea have long “gone public” by participating with workers and communities in anti-privatization struggles. Now though

they fight on the professional home-front as well, against the movement to remake their universities along corporate lines. Marco Aurélio Santana and Ruy Braga describe how labor sociology in Brazil has “flowed outward” from professionalism to public engagement, but now risks co-optation by the ruling Workers Party. Sakhela Buhlungu reports from South Africa, where labor sociologists fought arm-in-arm with workers and activists against apartheid, but now struggle to remain independent and relevant.

But not all countries have long traditions of labor studies from which to draw material for a public sociology of labor. Ching Kwan Lee and Yuan Shen tell the story of recent attempts to create *de novo* an independent labor sociology in China, where both the university and union systems are controlled by the party-state. India, like China, lacks a strong history of labor sociology, though there the danger, as sketched out by Sharit K. Bhowmik, is that intellectual models imported from the West will be inadequate for interpreting the experiences of the country’s huge informal workforce. As all of these case studies illustrate, there is no single public sociology, but a multitude of public sociologies of labor. Nonetheless, certain fundamental issues, such as the delicate balance between professional autonomy and civic engagement, transcend national boundaries. They call for ongoing dialogue not only between sociologists and their publics, but among public sociologists.

(Note: full text of all articles from the public sociology of labor symposia are available online at <http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/PS.Webpage/ps.sym.W&O.htm>)

---

**CAPITALISM IN CRISIS:  
THREAT AND/OR  
OPPORTUNITY FOR TRADE  
UNIONS?**

**Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick  
(Birkbeck, University of London)  
and Richard Hyman (LSE)**

The unfolding crisis of global capitalism has major implications for industrial relations and for trade unions. The immediate impact is to accelerate job losses and to intensify employers' cost-cutting initiatives. For trade unions which - in most countries - have suffered declining membership, reduced bargaining capacity and diminishing social and political legitimacy, the threats are obvious. Yet the crisis has also undermined the 'commonsense' of neoliberalism, rehabilitating some of the prescriptions of Keynesianism and creating opportunities for labour movements to articulate a new vision of a fairer, socially regulated economic system. We report some preliminary findings from a study of unions in ten West European countries, examining how far unions are adopting purely reactive (and almost certainly futile) attempts to restore 'business as usual', and how far they are able to frame innovative and proactive responses.

**IMPLICATIONS OF THE CURRENT  
CRISIS**

First point: there are no road maps. While the nature of the crisis has parallels with that of the interwar era - and indeed, trade union spokespeople commonly speak of the need for a return to Keynesianism - the current crisis is distinct in at least two key respects:

1. the intensity of the economic and political integration of nation-states in transnational structures, putting in question the possibility of national solutions

2. the degree of trade union embeddedness in established institutional frameworks of industrial relations and (in most European countries) state welfare regimes

Second point: it is too early to judge. One IG Metall strategist recently wrote: nobody can claim to know all the answers to the challenges of the crisis, we are learning to respond from day to day. Other officials would say: we have an analysis which suggests what the policy response should be at macro level, but the implications for day-to-day trade union practice are harder to assess.

Three scenarios seem possible:

1. trade union engagement in new types of social conflict
2. a reinforcement of processes of dialogue and partnership at company and national level
3. a complex combination of both

#### NEW SOCIAL CONFLICTS?

There is a high degree of public anger across Europe: the 'fat cats' whose greed and recklessness caused the crisis are still protected, ordinary workers are suffering

*Noi la crisi non la paghiamo!* – The Italian slogan has appeared in translation at demonstrations across Europe

Unions have taken the lead in organising demonstrations, often attracting record participation, and have issued radical declarations denouncing casino capitalism and demanding a new economic order. In Germany the DGB organised a 'Capitalism Congress' – using language which until recently would have been taboo – and has warned of unrest on the streets

There have certainly been militant episodes which we can expect to continue: for example, the wave of 'bossnapping' in France, the strikes against 'social dumping' in the engineering construction sector in

Britain, conflicts over attacks on public sector workers in many countries

But popular responses often seem to express varieties of protectionism and xenophobia (though despite the slogan 'British jobs for British workers' this was not true of the most prominent recent British conflicts); and ironically (as the EP elections have demonstrated) parties associated with neoliberalism seem to be enjoying a resurgence despite, or perhaps because of, the crisis.

#### REINFORCEMENT OF PARTNERSHIP?

Responses to past crises have often involved:

1. at national level, 'competitive corporatism' and social pacts
2. at company level, concession bargaining and the co-management of restructuring

There are clear signs of a similar pattern in the current crisis

In Ireland, there was record union support for the November 2008 'Transitional Agreement'. The subsequent government crisis package resulted in a breakdown, particularly over the 'pension levy' which involved in effect a cut in public sector pay. But the head of the ICTU has insisted that a tripartite pact is still the 'only show in town'. The head of the main union told us that if a compromise emerged he would feel obliged to endorse it, though it could well cost him his job. In several countries, unions have agreed a relaxation on the rules governing short-time working, sometimes linked to increased state subsidies. In Belgium, the unions have agreed to 'soft' pay increases which have little impact on employers' labour costs.

At company level, a dominant response cross-nationally has involved short-time working (or in some cases, temporary lay-offs), often with partial pay compensation from public funds. At times this has involved company



negotiations to enhance compensation above statutory levels. In some cases this has involved inter-union conflicts, notably in countries where white-collar workers enjoy stronger statutory protections than manual workers; though there are also episodes (as in France) of solidaristic agreements involving pain-sharing. Another demand pursued successfully in some countries, primarily at company level, is for temporary periods of slack demand to be used for vocational (re)training rather than resorting to lay-offs. Again, this may be facilitated in some countries by state subsidies.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Several remarks can be made in conclusion.

Conflicts and partnership commonly interact, often associated with inter-union disputes. For example, in the Netherlands there was a fudged agreement on a crisis package, with unions divided on whether to accept a higher retirement age. In Italy there have been more serious divisions: CISL and UIL agreed to bargaining restructuring and wage moderation in the public sector, CGIL refused to sign and has organised strikes and sit-ins against public sector job cuts. In France, unity and disunity have both been evident.

Unions everywhere insist that there can be no return to 'business as usual'. Yet the actual bargaining seems to be predicated on such a return. Rearranging the deckchairs: on the Titanic?

At national and at company level, unions cooperate in sustaining or enhancing competitiveness. Yet can everyone win the competitiveness game? Or does social partnership SP mean the Trichet solution? Against all suggestions of the need to return to Keynesianism, the head of the ECB continues to insist on the priority of price stability and the need to reduce labour costs – despite the growing acceptance that demand deficiency is one

of the roots of the crisis. Note that 'competitive solidarity' has for years resulted in a declining wage share of GDP, particularly in the eurozone, despite the formal commitment of European unions to an inflation+productivity wage policy.

This reflects an evident gap between rhetoric and practice. Many thoughtful union officials appreciate this, without proposing an answer.

According to an official of the socialist Belgian union FGTB, 'the situation really is not simple for trade union organisations. The analysis of the crisis is not complicated: neoliberalism cannot deliver. The difficulty is that today, discourse is not enough. It is easy to say: we need to change the balance of forces. But that does not tell us how to proceed. There are contradictions. For example, in Belgian banks we have 25,000 members whose jobs are at risk. Do we just say: let Fortis go bankrupt? Our members expect us to look after their immediate interests'

In similar vein, in France a CGT official concluded: 'people's priority is survival'.

Even holding on to traditional trade union bargaining priorities can be hard: a representative of FO insisted that the union struggles to save jobs, but the workers would rather take the money and go – they don't believe their jobs will really be safe again, it is safest to have money in their pockets now.

Léon Blum once said: 'we are caught between a society we cannot yet construct and one we cannot yet destroy'. In many respects, this captures the current trade union predicament; but also reflects one of the persistent contradictions of trade unionism, torn between the immediate defence of their members' interests and a vision of an alternative future.

---

**THE REVERBERATING SUCCESS  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL  
LABOR FILM AND VIDEO  
FESTIVAL IN TURKEY**

**Ercüment Çelik, University of  
Freiburg, Germany,**

The Fourth International Labor Film and Video Festival titled "We Want Another World", was held in Turkey in the first week of May 2009. Screening 50 films from 25 countries this year, the festival became a success story with its particular engagement with the working class struggles in the world and its alternative way of organizing a "labor" film festival.

Over 1500 participants crowded the opening night, which was free of charge. Apart from the honoring of the leading directors of films about working people, singing international and national resistance songs, a highlight of the night was a documentation of the struggle for celebrating the May Day at Taksim Square, which has a historical and symbolic meaning for the working class struggle in Istanbul and was opened again for celebrations this year after long years of outlawing. It was followed by the screening of a short film on dock-workers in Istanbul, who have been experiencing many deaths at workplace in the past years. The opening night gave also voice to striking textile, leather and media workers in Istanbul, which received long lasting applause and slogans in the theatre. The night ended with the premier screening of "They Were 100 Thousand", the documentary of the great mine-workers' strike in 1990-1991 in Turkey.

The festival aims at covering not only the issues of inequality, poverty, unemployment and waged-slavery in every corner of the globe, but also the growing struggles and resistances that are presented in these films. On one side, the reality of working people facing once

again the historical consequences of capitalism and on the other side, searching ways to generate hope through the struggles of today, the festival successfully brought together various worldwide experiences of workers on the screen. The showing of Ken Loach's "It's a Free World" brought the difficulties of immigrant workers on the stage with the main characters' contrasting ways of dealing with them. Remembering Herbert J. Biberman, who was blacklisted by the American Film Industry for a quarter-of-century, the festival brought attention to miner's life at workplace and at home by showing his "Salt of the Earth" produced in 1954, at the height of the McCarty era in the US. Robert Guedigian's "The Town is Quiet" ("La Ville Est Tranquille") provided a sharp visualization of the impact of globalization on working class cities in the case of Marseilles, a once-bustling port now primarily used by fishing vessels. The heartbreaking tale of the struggle of the poor to survive at the border of Turkey, Iran and Iraq was presented by Bahman Ghobadi's "Zamani Barayé Masti Asbha". Some other films presented the everyday life of unionized and casual workers in South Korea, the stories of women workers occupying factories in Argentina, coca producers and their leader Evo Morales in Bolivia, and labor imperialism in Porto Rico etc. Ercüment Çelik's (a member of the RC-44) documentary film "World Class Cities For All" raised awareness on the current situation of street traders and other marginalized groups in the preparations for the FIFA 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

The particularity of this film festival is that it does not accept any support or sponsorship from the capital groups and international funders, but it organizes itself with the contributions of trade unions, civic organisations, artists, and volunteers. Contrary to the commodification of arts, it is an entrance-



free, competition and prize-free festival. The organizing activities are announced by "sendika.org", the first labor news and information portal in Turkey. Halkevleri (People's Houses) and some affiliates of the DISK (Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Turkey) are co-organizers of the festival. Volunteers take part in the whole process from printing to translation tasks. The films are shown in three big cities, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir simultaneously and then take tour to other cities in Turkey throughout the year. Festival films are also sent to other labor film festivals in the US, South Korea and Latin America. Within the country these films reach further to workers in various industries through the activities of their trade unions. The festival encourages international solidarity as the festival delegation joins the May Day march, visits striking workers, and participates in workshops and panels where international labor communication gains strength. In the case of the workers and trade unions in Turkey, it is an indispensable opportunity to rethink their own struggles together with the international experiences provided by the festival films. The festival also facilitates the development of relationships between trade unions, civic and community organisations in Turkey.

To witness the resounding success of the international labor film and video festival in Turkey, please visit <http://festival.sendika.org>.

---

## BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mark Thomas (2009)**  
*Regulating Flexibility: The Political Economy of Employment Standards.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

In a contemporary labour market that includes growing levels of precarious employment, the regulation of minimum employment standards is intricately connected to conditions of economic security. With a focus on the role of neoliberal labour market policies in promoting "flexible" employment standards legislation - particularly in the areas of minimum wages and working time - Mark Thomas argues that shifts toward "flexible" legislation have played a central role in producing patterns of labour market inequality.

Using an analytic framework that situates employment standards within the context of the broader social relations that shape processes of labour market regulation, Thomas constructs a case study of employment standards legislation in Ontario from 1884 to 2004. Drawing from political economy scholarship, and using a qualitative research methodology, he analyses class, race, and gender dimensions of legislative developments, highlighting the ways in which shifts towards "flexible" employment standards have exacerbated longstanding racialized and gendered inequities.

*Regulating Flexibility* argues that in order to counter current trends towards increased insecurity, employment standards should not be treated as a secondary form of labour protection but as a cornerstone in a progressive project of labour market re-regulation.

Mark Thomas is assistant professor of sociology, York University.  
[mphomas@yorku.ca](mailto:mphomas@yorku.ca)

---

**Lucien van der Walt and Michael Schmidt (2009)**  
*Black Flame: the revolutionary class politics of anarchism and syndicalism* (AK Press, Edinburgh, San Francisco)

Black Flame (Counter-Power, Volume 1) is the first of a two-volume set examining the democratic class politics of the international anarchist and syndicalist movement, its vision of a decentralized planned economy, and its impact on working class struggles on five continents over the course of the past 150 years. From its emergence in the First International, via the great syndicalist upsurge from the early twentieth century, to colonial struggles, to today's anticapitalist movement, Black Flame traces the movement's lineage and contemporary relevance, outlining its insights into questions of race, gender, class, and imperialism.

With Black Flame, the authors have begun what promises to be the definitive synthetic account of the international anarchist and syndicalist tradition. Nearly exhaustive in scope, and rigorous in its scholarly detail, this first volume significantly reframes the work of previous historians and, especially, critically assesses Marxist approaches to revolutionary theory and practice. Particular attention is paid to the history of anarcho-syndicalist and revolutionary syndicalist unionism in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Europe.

Lucien van der Walt, Sociology, School of Social Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa  
Michael Schmidt, Training Director, frayintermedia, Johannesburg, South Africa

Review copies available.  
Lucien.VanDerWalt@wits.ac.za

---

**Michele Ford (2009)**  
*Workers and Intellectuals: NGOs, Trade Unions and the Indonesian Labour Movement*

After decades of repression, Indonesia's independent labour movement re-emerged in the 1990s led by the NGO

activists and students who organized industrial workers and spoke on their behalf. Worker-led trade unions returned to centre stage in 1998 when Suharto's authoritarian regime crumbled and labour NGO activists and their organizations continued to play an influential - and often controversial - part in the reconstruction of the labour movement. *Workers and Intellectuals* explores how middle-class activists struggled to define their place in a movement shaped by more than a century of fierce debate about the role of non-worker intellectuals. Drawing on extensive interviews, this book documents the resurgence of labour activism and explains how activists and workers perceived the position of NGOs in relation to workers and trade unions. This fine-grained study of labour organizing in a developing country speaks simultaneously to local and global questions and is important for scholars of labour history, politics and sociology as well as specialists working on Indonesia.

*Workers and Intellectuals* is published in the US by Hawaii UP and is available on Amazon. In Asia and Australia, it is published by NUS Press (available direct from NUS Press and in Australia through Asia Bookroom) and in Europe, by KITLV.

Dr Michele Ford is Chair of the Department of Indonesian Studies  
The University of Sydney, Australia  
michele.ford@usyd.edu.au

---

**Jennifer Jihye Chun (2009)**

*Organizing at the Margins: The Symbolic Politics of Labor in South Korea and the Untied States.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

The realities of globalization have produced a surprising reversal in the focus and strategies of labor movements around the world. After years of neglect

and exclusion, labor organizers are recognizing both the needs and the importance of immigrants and women employed in the growing ranks of low-paid and insecure service jobs. In *Organizing at the Margins*, Jennifer Jihye Chun focuses on this shift as it takes place in two countries: South Korea and the United States. Using comparative historical inquiry and in-depth case studies, she shows how labor movements in countries with different histories and structures of economic development, class formation, and cultural politics embark on similar trajectories of change.

Chun shows that as the base of worker power shifts from those who hold high-paying, industrial jobs to the formerly "unorganizable," labor movements in both countries are employing new strategies and vocabularies to challenge the assault of neoliberal globalization on workers' rights and livelihoods. Deftly combining theory and ethnography, she argues that by cultivating alternative sources of "symbolic leverage" that root

workers' demands in the collective morality of broad-based communities, as opposed to the narrow confines of workplace disputes, workers in the lowest tiers are transforming the power relations that sustain downgraded forms of work. Her case studies of janitors and personal service workers in the United States and South Korea offer a surprising comparison between converging labor movements in two very different countries as they refashion their relation to historically disadvantaged sectors of the workforce and expand the moral and material boundaries of union membership in a globalizing world.

For more information from the publisher:  
[http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/cup\\_detail.taf?ti\\_id=5384](http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/cup_detail.taf?ti_id=5384)

Jennifer Jihye Chun is assistant professor of Sociology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.  
[jjchun@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:jjchun@interchange.ubc.ca)

---

## RC44 BOARD MEMBERS 2006-2010

**President:** Rob Lambert, Organisational and Labour Studies, School of Business, University of Western Australia.  
E mail: [rlambert@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:rlambert@biz.uwa.edu.au)

**Vice President:** Dan Clawson, Department of Sociology and SADRI, University of Massachusetts.  
E mail: [clawson@sadri.umass.edu](mailto:clawson@sadri.umass.edu)

**Vice President:** Jennifer Chun Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia.  
E mail: [jjchun@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:jjchun@interchange.ubc.ca)

**Secretary:** Sakhela Buhlungu, Department of Sociology and Sociology of Work Unit, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg,  
E mail: [buhlungu@social.wits.ac.za](mailto:buhlungu@social.wits.ac.za)

**Treasurer:** Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations, Rutgers University  
E mail: [robynmr@rutgers.edu](mailto:robynmr@rutgers.edu)

### Board members

Angela Araújo, [aranjo@unicamp.br](mailto:aranjo@unicamp.br)  
John-Jean Barya, [jbarya@law.mak.ac.ug](mailto:jbarya@law.mak.ac.ug)  
Bjorn Beckman, [bjorn.beckman@statevet.as.se](mailto:bjorn.beckman@statevet.as.se)  
Donella Caspersz, [dcasperz@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:dcasperz@biz.uwa.edu.au)  
Pauline Dibben, [p.dibben@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.dibben@sheffield.ac.uk)  
Richard Hyman, [r.hyman@lse.ac.uk](mailto:r.hyman@lse.ac.uk)  
Carla Lipsig-Mumme,  
[carla.lipsigmumme@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:carla.lipsigmumme@arts.monash.edu.au)  
Robert O'Brien, [obrienr@univmail.cis.mcmaster.ca](mailto:obrienr@univmail.cis.mcmaster.ca)  
Verena Schmidt, [Schmidt@ilo.org](mailto:Schmidt@ilo.org)  
Kim Scipes, [kscipes@pnc.edu](mailto:kscipes@pnc.edu)  
Amanda Tattersall, [amandatattersall@gmail.com](mailto:amandatattersall@gmail.com)  
Kim Voss, [Kimvoss@berkeley.edu](mailto:Kimvoss@berkeley.edu)  
Edward Webster, [webstere@social.wits.ac.za](mailto:webstere@social.wits.ac.za)

### Newsletter Editors:

Janaka Biyanwila, [janaka@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:janaka@biz.uwa.edu.au)  
Jennifer Chun, [jjchun@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:jjchun@interchange.ubc.ca)  
Dan Clawson, [clawson@sadri.umass.edu](mailto:clawson@sadri.umass.edu)  
Robyn Magalit Rodriguez, [robynmr@rutgers.edu](mailto:robynmr@rutgers.edu)

**Association Internationale de Sociologie (AIS)**  
**Comité de Recherche N<sup>o</sup>44: Mouvements Ouvrières**

Nous vous invitons de participer dans notre réseau mondial. Nous sommes chercheurs/militants qui recherchent les actions, organisations et enjeux des travailleurs/euses et leurs mouvements collectifs – syndicats, mouvements sociaux, structures représentatives d'établissement, ONGs, et partis politiques – face aux défis mondiaux.

Vous pouvez vous inscrire à la fois à l'AIS et à notre Comité de Recherche; pour paiement en ligne visitez  
<https://secured.com/~f3641/formisa.htm>  
Vous pouvez également vous inscrire uniquement à notre Comité de Recherche pour seulement \$20 pour quatre ans.

J'espère que vous voulez nous joindre et nous informer de vos recherches.

Rob Lambert, Président

**Formulaire d'inscription**

Nom:                      Prénom:

Adresse:

Institution:

Adresse électronique:

Numéro de téléphone:

Téléfax:

Domaine(s) de recherche:

Publications récentes:

Versement bancaire à:

SVP envoyer preuve de paiement à:

Vous pouvez également payer \$20 en espèces à un membre de notre comité exécutif, après avoir rempli ce formulaire.



**International Sociological Association (ISA)**  
**Labour Movements Research Committee (RC 44)**  
**Membership Application Form**

We invite any person engaged in research into labour movements or in labour movement activities to join our growing global network. We are 'genuinely' global in that we have active contributing members in both the North and South. We share a scholarly interest in the actions and organizational forms that working people are developing in response to the new work order whether they be trade unions, labour service organizations, new social movements, as well as conventional institutions in the workplace namely bargaining councils, mediation services, labour courts and of course political parties/grouping that have links with labour.

In response to demands from potential members who want to join the network but not the International Sociological Association, we have designed a special category of membership at \$20 for a four-year period. I hope you will join and I look forward to hearing more about your research activities.

Rob Lambert, President RC44

**Last name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Other Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Institution/Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Research Interests:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Most Recent Publications:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Options:**

1. Pay US\$20 directly to a RC44 executive member on completion of the application form.
2. International Postal Money order from post office.
3. Electronic payment/Bank Transfer to

**Name of Bank:** Unicredit

**Branch:** University of Western Australia

**Address:** UWA, 1<sup>st</sup> floor Guild Building, Crawley WA 6009

**Account name:** ISA Labour Movement

**Account type:** Savings

**Account Number:** 37695

**Routing/Branch Code:** 806-036

**Please sent proof of payment to :** Janaka Biyanwila  
Email: [janaka@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:janaka@biz.uwa.edu.au)  
Fax: 61-8-6488-1055

## Join the ISA Research Committee on Labour

### Movements (RC44)

**What is RC 44?** It is the Research Committee on Labour Movements of the International Sociological Association (ISA), the largest academic forum for those engaged with sociologically related issues of enquiry.

**Mission of RC44:** 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.

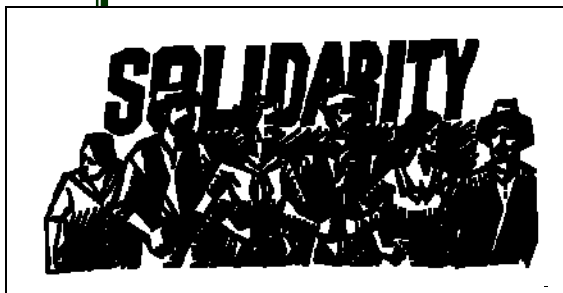
**Benefits of joining RC44:**

- An opportunity to engage with interdisciplinary academics/researchers with similar interests. Current membership includes international academics/researchers from Africa, Asia, North and South America, Europe, Oceania and Asia.
- Regular newsletter featuring international articles on labour, reviews of new books, profiles of research units, conference proceedings, comments on recent publications on cutting edge research, conference and doctoral programme announcements, call for papers and more...
- Opportunity to participate in the RC44 session programme at the next ISA World Congress in Goteborg, Sweden, in 11-17 July 2010.
- Cost: 20 US Dollars for four years

For more information on RC44 visit:

<http://www.socsci.mcmaster.ca/globallabour/>

OR E-mail: Janaka Biyanwila [janaka@biz.uwa.edu.au](mailto:janaka@biz.uwa.edu.au)



**RC 44 in Sweden, 2010**

**ISA World Congress,**

**Goteborg, Sweden,**

**in 11-17 July 2010.**

**Now is the time!**

**Submit your abstract NOW in order to be on the  
program in Sweden**