

## Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

**YILDIZ ATASOY and WILLIAM K. CARROLL (eds.), *Global Shaping and its Alternatives*. Aurora, ON: Garamond Press. 2003, 213p.**

*Global Shaping and its Alternatives* represents an addition to the growing literature on globalization and anti-globalization. It is international in scope, as its subject matter requires, and while it deals primarily with economic issues, it is also strong on analysis of how women, particularly women of the global South, are impacted by the ongoing globalization of capital.

In the introductory chapter Yildiz Atasoy presents the book's "basic argument," namely that "globalization is not an inevitable process but a deliberately designed political project" (10). Because interests, forces, and agencies are at work in furthering the neoliberal project, the editors argue, counter-interests, agencies, and forces can be effective in creating alternatives to it.

While the introduction seems to suggest that all of the writers in the collection accept this contention, some do bring aspects of it into question. In my opinion, this lack of consensus adds to, rather than subtracts from, the value of the book, since it increases the complexity of its argument and provides opportunities for encounters with debates and positions that otherwise would have been excluded.

This relatively successful attempt to present a common argument, or at least to argue about a common argument, avoids one problem with edited collections -- they all too often appear to be united only to the extent that they share a front and back cover. But even arguing about a common premise leads to a different problem, which is a certain sort of repetitiveness. By the time I had reached the sixth chapter, I was wondering whether I needed to be told, one more time, that globalization exists and that certain people have written books about it. I believe that the collection could have benefited from a slightly more interventionist editorial style, not in policing the positions of the contributors, but in saving the reader from what feels like an endless parade of introductions to the basic issues.

In terms of their specific content, the articles are uneven in quality, as one would legitimately expect, and of course different readers will prefer

different approaches. In my opinion the chapter by William Carroll stands out in its theoretical complexity and its breadth of engagement with the relevant literature. It is generally Marxist in tone, but also manages to show how the politics of recognition plays into the hands of neoliberalism. Yildiz Atasoy's article on Muslim politics in Turkey was another highlight, providing a detailed account of how capitalism, and capitalists, must adapt to local conditions and historical constraints in their pursuit of global domination. To give an example of a less successful chapter, the article on "Women and Globalization in the Economic North and South" begins promisingly by asserting the value of materialist feminism and intersectional analysis, and by reminding us that women are not a homogeneous category. A few pages later, however, "taking on a second or third job" (150) and "the establishment of small businesses" (154) are described as forms of resistance to globalization. Whatever one's own political commitments might be, it is hard to understand how this kind of argument is consistent with a materialist feminist position.

Because of the wide range in the level of theoretical argumentation, degree of engagement with current debates, and awareness of current activist practices, I am not sure how to characterize the target audience for this collection. I think it would serve as a fine introduction for scholars who are relatively new to the areas of globalization and anti-globalization, and several of the articles would be good to have on an upper-level undergraduate syllabus. My own sense was that not much new ground is being broken here, empirically, theoretically, or politically. But then again, if our goal is to impede the advance of neoliberal hegemony, then every attempt to counter its "common sense revolution" is of value.

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