
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

In our premiere issue of the *Globalization Monitor* (October 2002), we aimed to define what globalization is through various voices. Renowned African scholar Professor Ali Mazrui characterized globalization this way “Although the word ‘globalization’ is new, the process of globalization has been going on for centuries”, (*TransAfrica Forum Globalization Monitor*, October 2002, p. 1). The year 2007 reminded us of the historical negative effects that globalization and neoliberal policies have had on the entire world, in particular the African World. This was underscored early in the year with the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the passage in Parliament in the United Kingdom of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, on March 25, 1807. As commendable as it was to pass the 1807 Abolition Act, Marika Sherwood points out in her latest book *After Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade Since 1807* that “Yes, Britain passed the 1807 Act. But, unless I am wrong, it made more money out of slavery and the slave trade after 1807 than before. Where are the analyses, the investigations, the books on this?” (*Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade Since 1807*, p. 175)

The effects of uncontrolled industrialization on the environment captured our attention in 2007 with the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to former U.S. Vice-President Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The United Nations Development Programme’s *Human Development Report 2007/2008—Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World* underscores the urgency of dealing with climate change and its effects on poor countries: “Climate change is the defining human development challenge of the 21st Century. Failure to respond to that challenge will stall and then reverse international efforts to reduce poverty. The poorest countries and most vulnerable citizens will suffer the earliest and most damaging setbacks, even though they have contributed least to the problem. Looking to the future, no country—

however wealthy or powerful—will be immune to the impact of global warming.” (*Human Development Report 2007/2008—Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World* <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008>/<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/>) Further amplifying the negative consequences of neoliberal policies on the livelihood of people and the environment in Africa, Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai noted in the *Globalization Monitor* of August 2006, that “people are pushed farther into poverty, because they are not able to compete; and if they go back into poverty of course they resort to natural resources, and the biggest resources that they depend on are land for production of their food; and firewood obtained by cutting down of trees. Those who are poorest, they resort to those forests and cut them down in order to generate the income that they need. The poorer they become the more they are forced to exploit their natural resources, especially forests.” (*TransAfrica Forum Globalization Monitor*, August 2006, p. 1-2)



Resistance movements to neoliberal prescriptions for economic development were also taking center stage in 2007—testaments to the fact that “another world is possible.” Two important gatherings which TransAfrica Forum took part in illustrated that—the Seventh World Social Forum (WSF) was held for the first time in Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya in January and Atlanta, Georgia

hosted the first United States Social Forum (USSF) from June 27-July 1.

The Nairobi WSF brought together 60,000 participants, from more than 100 countries. But as powerful an experience as that forum proved to be, massive contradictions erupted: corporate sponsorship, massive commercialism, high costs and price hikes, domination by large Western NGOs, and the exclusion of grassroots and poor voices and organizations. But African groups responded. They pushed their way in, they protested, they held alternative forums. Kenyan slum dwellers, women's groups, youth activists, and many more demanded economic and political equality from global financial institutions and their governments, as well as from the world wide Left.

The USSF convened with more than 1,100 workshops and more than 12,000 attendees from 1,000 organizations from every state including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands (as well as 400 international delegates). Learning from the experience at the WSF, the USSF was dominated by community based and grassroots groups and activists.

Governments of the Global South are also uniting with alternatives to neoliberal policies. TransAfrica Forum had a chance to attend the 2007 meetings of one such alternative—the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA). ALBA is an alternative financial institution proposed by President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela whose principles seek to move away from multinational competition and neoliberal free trade and encourage sovereignty, economic sustainability, and solidarity.

This issue of the *TransAfrica Forum Globalization Monitor* consists of a selection of recent literature on globalization related to the topics I have just discussed above, such as: *Dispatches from Latin America: On the Frontlines Against Neoliberalism*; *The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World?*; *From the Slave Trade to 'Free' Trade: How Trade Undermines Democracy and Justice in Africa*; *Human Development Report 2007/2008—Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*; *The State of Resistance: Popular Struggles in the Global South* and more. I hope you enjoy reading the material. Let me take this opportunity to wish you all the best in the coming year.

The *Globalization Monitor* is a TransAfrica Forum publication that focuses on how the African World is affected by the phenomenon of “globalization.” We

would like your feedback. Please contact us at info@transafricaforum.org or 202.223.1960 ext. 137 or 1629 K Street, NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20006. Issues are available on the web at www.transafricaforum.org/globalmonitor.html.

Nicole Lee
Executive Director, TransAfrica Forum

*DISPATCHES FROM LATIN AMERICA:
ON THE FRONTLINES AGAINST
NEOLIBERALISM*

*Edited by Vijay Prashad and
Teo Ballvé, published by South End Press, Cambridge,
MA, 2006.*



From the publisher: “From the laboratory of neoliberalism—popularly known as “globalization”—Latin America has transformed itself into a launching pad for resistance. As globalization began to spread its devastation, robust and thoughtful opposition emerged in response—in the recovered factory movement of Argentina, in the presidential elections of indigenous leaders and radicals like Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales, against the privatization of water in Bolivia. Across Latin America, people are building social movements to take back control of their countries and their lives.

“In *Dispatches from Latin America*, 28 authors report on countries from Mexico to Argentina to map the contemporary political and social territory. Drawn from the pages of the well-respected *NACLA Report*, this

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Volume IV, Issue 3, December 2007

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collection offers a riveting series of accounts that bring new insight into the region's struggles and victories.

"With shrewd analysis rendered in accessible language, *Dispatches* lays plain the complex and vitally important conditions unfolding in 21st-century Latin America."

<http://www.southendpress.org/2006/items/87689>

ABOUT THE EDITORS

"**Vijay Prashad** is associate professor and director of International Studies at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut. He is the author of the widely acclaimed *Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity* (Beacon, 2001) and *Karma of Brown Folk* (Minnesota, 2000) both chosen as one of the 25 best books of the year (2001 and 2000 respectively) by the *Village Voice*. Other books by Prashad include *Fat Cats and Running Dogs: The Enron Stage of Capitalism* (Common Courage, 2002); *War Against the Planet: The Fifth Afghan War, US Imperialism, and Other Assorted Fundamentalisms* (Leftword, 2002); and *Untouchable Freedom: A Social History of a Dalit Community* (Oxford, 1999)."

<http://www.southendpress.org/2006/items/87689>

"**Teo Ballvé** is an editor of *NACLA Report on the Americas*, a contributing news editor for Resource Center of the Americas, and a contributor to *NarcoNews*."

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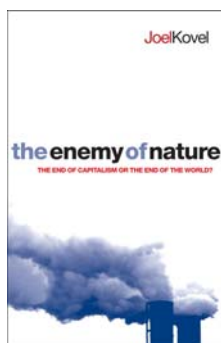
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*THE ENEMY OF NATURE:
THE END OF CAPITALISM OR THE END OF
THE WORLD?*

By Joel Kovel, published by Zed Books, London, 2007.



From the publisher: “We live in and from nature, but the way we have evolved of doing this is about to destroy us. Capitalism and its by-products - imperialism, war, neoliberal globalization, racism, poverty and the

destruction of community - are all playing a part in the destruction of our ecosystem.

“Only now are we beginning to realise the depth of the crisis and the kind of transformation which will have to occur to ensure our survival. This second, thoroughly updated, edition of *The Enemy of Nature* speaks to this new environmental awareness. Joel Kovel argues against claims that we can achieve a better environment through the current Western ‘way of being’. By suggesting a radical new way forward, a new kind of ‘ecosocialism’, Joel Kovel offers real hope and vision for a more sustainable future.”

<http://www.zedbooks.co.uk/book.asp?bookdetail=3822>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“Joel Kovel has been Alger Hiss Professor of Social Studies at Bard College, in Annandale, New York since 1988. He was awarded a Fellowship at the John Guggenheim Foundation in 1987. He lectures widely and has appeared on radio and television broadcasts in the USA, Canada, the UK, South Africa and Australia.”

<http://www.zedbooks.co.uk/book.asp?bookdetail=3822>

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unprecedented flows of migrant workers are a direct result of economic liberalization. The appalling conditions and legal abuses which confront these workers are not a premodern aberration, but an integral part of the global economy. Shelley argues that even governments, keen to protect big business, are complicit in this exploitation; their 'law and order' approach on immigration being part of this complicity.

"Based on interviews and investigations with workers, unionists and activists, *Exploited* is a powerful and shocking read."

<http://www.zedbooks.co.uk/book.asp?bookdetail=4193>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

"*Toby Shelley* is a journalist with the *Financial Times*. His previous books for Zed include *Nanotechnology* (2006, 9781842776872), *Oil* (2005, 9781842775219) and *Endgame in the Western Sahara* (2004, 9781842773413). He is a member of the Council of Management of the development charity War on Want."

<http://www.zedbooks.co.uk/book.asp?bookdetail=4193>

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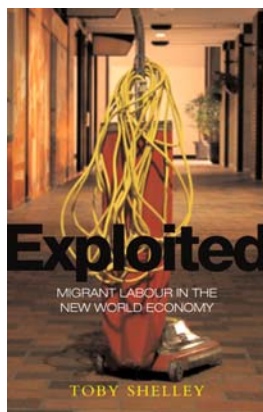
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EXPLOITED: MIGRANT LABOUR IN THE NEW GLOBAL ECONOMY

By Toby Shelley, published by Zed Books, London, 2007.



From the publisher: "From cleaning to construction, from agriculture to domestic work, every day migrant labourers are exploited and enslaved. Extra hours are squeezed out of Polish food packers, and trafficked African children are used for forced labour. Low wages are used to drive down prices from the oil industry to airport services.

"In this book, Toby Shelley shows that current

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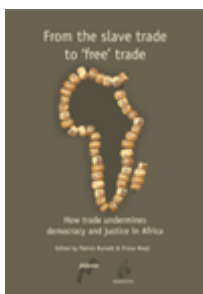
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*FROM THE SLAVE TRADE TO 'FREE' TRADE:
HOW TRADE UNDERMINES DEMOCRACY
AND JUSTICE IN AFRICA*

*Edited by Patrick Burnett and Firoze Manji, published
by Fahamu, Oxford, 2007.*



From the publisher: “Can trade in the era of globalization be ‘fair’ or ‘just’?”

“Drawing on lessons from the slave trade and studies of the international finance institutions, these essays provide insights into how free trade policies have a profoundly negative impact on the rights of communities, environmental sustainability and the development of democracy in Africa.

“The contributors include Charles Abugre, Tope Akinwande, Soren Ambrose, Nnimmo Bassey, Patrick Bond, Jennifer Chiriga, Cheikh Tidiane Dièye, M.P. Giyose, Manu Herbstein, Mouhamadou Tidiane Kasse, Salma Maoulidi, Stephen Marks, Mariam Mayet, Henning Melber, Winnie Mitullah, Patrick Ochieng, Oduor Ongwen, Robtel Neajai Pailey, Liepollo Lebohang Pheko and Jagjit Plahe.”

http://fahamu.org/pzbook.php#tj_book

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“**Patrick Burnett**, from South Africa, has a background in journalism. He is a contributing editor of *Pambazuka News*, and runs Fahamu’s Cape Town office.”

http://fahamu.org/pzbook.php#tj_book

“**Firoze Manji** is the director of Fahamu and editor of *Pambazuka News*. Originally from Kenya, he has more than 30 years of experience in international development, health and human rights. He is a member of the editorial board of *Development in Practice*.”

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2007/2008—FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE: HUMAN SOLIDARITY IN A DIVIDED WORLD

By the United Nations Development Programme
(UNDP), published by Palgrave Macmillan, NY, 2007.



Publisher's description: "Climate change is the defining human development challenge of the 21st Century. Failure to respond to that challenge will stall and then reverse international efforts to reduce poverty. The poorest countries and most vulnerable citizens will suffer the earliest and most damaging setbacks, even though they have contributed least to the problem. Looking to

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the future, no country—however wealthy or powerful—will be immune to the impact of global warming.

“The *Human Development Report 2007/2008* shows that climate change is not just a future scenario. Increased exposure to droughts, floods and storms is already destroying opportunity and reinforcing inequality. Meanwhile, there is now overwhelming scientific evidence that the world is moving towards the point at which irreversible ecological catastrophe becomes unavoidable. Business-as-usual climate change points in a clear direction: unprecedented reversal in human development in our lifetime, and acute risks for our children and their grandchildren.

“There is a window of opportunity for avoiding the most damaging climate change impacts, but that window is closing: the world has less than a decade to change course. Actions taken—or not taken—in the years ahead will have a profound bearing on the future course of human development. The world lacks neither the financial resources nor the technological capabilities to act. What is missing is a sense of urgency, human solidarity and collective interest.

“As the *Human Development Report 2007/2008* argues, climate change poses challenges at many levels. In a divided but ecologically interdependent world, it challenges all people to reflect upon how we manage the environment of the one thing that we share in common: planet Earth. It challenges us to reflect on social justice and human rights across countries and generations. It challenges political leaders and people in rich nations to acknowledge their historic responsibility for the problem, and to initiate deep and early cuts in greenhouse gas emissions. Above all, it challenges the entire human community to undertake prompt and strong collective action based on shared values and a shared vision.”

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** is the UN’s global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.”

<http://www.undp.org/about/>

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THE STATE OF RESISTANCE: POPULAR STRUGGLES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Edited by François Polet, published by Zed Books, London, 2007.



From the publisher: “This indispensable book offers a panorama of social resistances to neoliberal globalization in the South. Writers and activists from forty different countries or regions offer snapshots of the latest mobilizations, from the anti-privatization groups in South Africa and the anti-WTO campaign of peasants in India, to the indigenous movement behind Evo Morales in Bolivia. The book focuses on a range of diverse popular struggles that impact on democratic and development process, yet receive little public attention or are caricatured by mainstream media. It is an essential guide to the latest developments in social movements.

“Edited by François Polet of the Centre Tricontinental, it includes contributions from key activists and scholars such as Vinod Raina, Michel Warschawski, Maristella Svampa and Mahaman Tidjani.”

<http://www.zedbooks.co.uk/book.asp?bookdetail=4198>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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