



ALTER-GLOBALIZATION

Becoming Actors in the Global Age

Foreword by Alain Touraine

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Polity Press, 2011

Hardback : 0-7456-4675-1 Paperback : 978-0-7456-4675-6

In today's global society, the possibility for activists and citizens to take action is not necessarily lessened, but the modalities for effective action have shifted profoundly. Reformulating the possibilities for action in this global world constitutes a major challenge for our time and the central issue of the alter-globalization movement. This book proposes to discuss it starting from concrete experimentations by social actors who have contested globalization in its neoliberal form, proposed alternative policies, implemented participatory organization models and promoted a nascent global public space.

These 'Alter-globalization activists' or (also called the 'global justice movement') have built a truly global movement that has gathered citizens, committed intellectuals, indigenous, farmers, dalits and NGOs against neoliberal policies in street demonstrations and Social Forums all over the world, from Bangalore and Seattle to Copenhagen and Dakar. This book analyzes this worldwide movement on the bases of extensive field research conducted since 1999 and until the aftermath of the global crisis.

Alter-Globalization provides a comprehensive account of these critical global forces and their attempts to answer one of the major challenges of our time: How can citizens and civil society contribute to the building of a fairer, sustainable and more democratic co-existence of human beings in a global world?

"Pleyers has traveled the world to offer readers the most sweeping look yet at this crucial global movement, including how it has changed in the face of the recent crisis of the very capitalism it criticizes. By showing us a movement grappling continuously with the Pyramid Dilemma over top-down versus bottom-up approaches, this book helps us think about the most basic issues of democracy and social change."

James M. Jasper, City University of New York.

"This important book is the first scholarly account of the alter-globalization movement. This highly original analysis of the way the movement is constructed around the tension between its two logics - subjective experience and expertise based on reason - helps us to understand not only the movement itself but also the role that the movement plays in inventing global citizenship."

Mary Kaldor, Director, LSE Global Governance.

"Well-documented and relying on the most in-depth analyses. This book presents a movement both truly global and adapted to the economic context of each country and region. The main contribution of Geoffrey Pleyers, and what makes this book an indispensable tool, is that he clearly exposes the mixed strengths and weaknesses of a movement which was, and remains, a grassroots movement in which activists from poor countries occupy a place observed in no other movement."

Alain Touraine, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.

"An outstanding example of contemporary sociological research that rises to the immense demands of a truly global ethnography. Pleyers' book is bound to become the definitive account by a contemporary of the alter-globalization movement."

Martin Albrow, London School of Economics.

"The book of Geoffrey Pleyers is an important contribution to a sociology of Alter-globalization. It brings a great number of primary information and analyzes the various trends existing inside this major social actor of the 21st Century."

François Houtart, International Council of the World Social Forum.

"This masterpiece will be the main reference for those who want to understand how the alter-globalization movement shapes today's world, how it modifies our perception of action, but also of democracy, and how this new actor articulates local and personal meanings with general concerns for the future of humanity. This study enables us to discover with precision the short, but real history, the aims, the functioning, the internal tensions, the hopes and the difficulties of the first real global movement."

Michel Wieviorka, President of the International Sociological Association (2006-2010).