COUNTER-HEGEMONIC GLOBALIZATION AND "LABOR'S NEW INTERNATIONALISM"

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Abstract: The advent of globalization provided fresh impetus to the idea that labor and trade movement are in a real insurmountable crisis. On the other side, critical researchers defy this vision by emphasizing opportunities offered by globalization to workers international activism and postulate the emergence of "labor's new internationalism". Inspired by works of the Hungarian economist Karl Polanyi and also by what these researchers considered indicatives of emergence of "unionism based in a social movement", they produced what became known as "New Studies on Global Work". Nevertheless this trend was accused of being exaggeratedly optimistic. Even without definitive answers, questions addressed during this debate must motivate a research on the Brazilian union movement, which is assuming a main global role.

Key words: Trade unionism, work, globalization.

In last years, we have seen an increasing volume of papers concerned with workers responses about globalization effects. Most particularly with a controversial proposition that would be arising regarding "labor's new internationalism". While some people see its emergency as a main union movement renovation item and also from contemporaneous labor movement, some critics state that much of what is introduced as new internationalism is only a "speech maneuver". There is nothing new in the discussion on importance of international activism for worker's organization, a division between "optimists" and "skeptics" or "pessimists". Ramsay (1999), whose studies are frequently mentioned since introduce one of short available syntheses of intellectual history of this debate, shows this is the tone of the discussion over the decades. However, it is undeniable that globalization provides new elements and brings back the issue for researchers and in its practical implementation, by multiplying workers international activism examples. The inescapable question is: considering that companies got globalized, is it already time for workers organizations doing the same? Even among those having a pessimistic opinion regarding role to be performed by workers' organized movement within current economic and political context, the idea that organization in a global level should have to occur nowadays is tempting:

"If workers could conquer collective rights in this new global order, they will

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> have to develop new strategies of international capital levels. This because (a) rights emerge from organized struggle and (b) the current struggle still pit labor against capital, only collective action at a an international scale has much prospect of providing gains for labor, or even of stemming labor losses." (TILLY, 1995, p. 21)

Nevertheless, intellectual debate on this issue is hampered by scarcity of empiric material. Although works on this subject is increasing, leading to more sophisticated appreciations and least likely to polarizations making unfeasible clash of ideas, many experiences are under development and not always fit with available theoretical schemes. A recurring criticism to the "optimistic" literature "on this issue states it tends to generalize conclusions from few well succeeded examples, or in other words to assume as "embryonic" what might be an exception based in unusual conditions. On the other side, people considering workers international activism as the necessary response to globalization state that studying experience which perform well, is essential to understand current labor movement open possibilities. Therefore it is not easy to make general observations and deliver definitive conclusions. The objectives of present text are discussing current state of this debate from recent classic works on the issue, and at the end make one quick comment on the importance of Brazil in this scenario, since Brazilian contribution to labor internationalism within the context of globalization still is little explored area.

Work and globalization

According to Claus Offe (1989), classical traditions of sociology have in common the idea than work is a main sociologic fact. For them, work in modern societies has a capital importance, and it may be seen as the organizing principle of its dynamics and structure. Therefore, it is no surprise than for a long period many researchers have seen workers organized movement as main expression of forces responsible for social transformation.

However, towards end of the 20th century, a series of changes put that role under threat. In the wake of industrial proletariat decline and transformation within advanced capitalism countries, end of "employment paradigm" was announced. This will condemn labor movement to a secondary role or even to its disappearance. André Gorz (1987) was a pioneer in this trend when he decreed "death" of the working class, causing a crisis of the thought based in their experiences. Even if this thesis was not stated without contestation, it kept its influence since then and globalization phenomenon brought renewed impetus to this type of diagnosis.

The world of work was directly affected by globalization. When China was incorporated to global economy, number of people working in non-agricultural activities doubled, and this associated with use of new technologies and

global strategies by huge transnational corporations, modified relationship between capital and work, in favor of capital. In general, there was a reduction of workers capacity to limit competition that capital establishes between them. (CHESNAIS, 2009). Besides, there were significant changes in companies' organizations. The manufacturing structure became more and more complex and production union lost control of production. The traditional union movement, oriented to answer in a reactive manner to immediate problems in a productive unit, lost space. (DURAND, 2003). This led to think than union movement and workers organized movement were lagging regarding the organization of the economy and transnational corporations. There was a resurrection of idea of a historical workers movement overcoming, since incapacity of adapting to internationalization of production made the movement lose momentum:

> "Divided by internationalization of finances and production, unable to adapt itself to network corporations and employment individualization, [...] the workers movement is weakened as an important source of social cohesion social and representation of the workers." (CASTELLS, 2010, p. 354)

This "crisis in the world of work" was first announced in advanced capitalist countries, but effects of globalization were not only restricted to some nations or regions, and also their consequences were not only limited to the transnational corporations. The globalized capital and large corporations established their own global system, meaning challenges in the world of work became more transnational, although workers actions remain being mainly national (ANTUNES, 2005).

The first reaction regarding organized workers perspectives in such context was pessimistic. Tilly, for example, despite showing international activism way as a plausible response, assesses that chances of having success are not big. Besides difficulties arising from changes in the economic organization, there is a reduction of political space in which workers traditionally act. Historically, the State was main guarantor of social and labor rights. The globalization drove the State to lose its capacity of regulating economic flows and international institutions are not enough strong to substitute it, then reducing possibilities of labor movement. Hobsbawm (1995) shares this assessment and although he thinks the perception than globalization weakens the State might be exaggerated, he concludes stating that "organized groups and aware of themselves as 'work' will inevitably play a minor and less central role in the political process". (p. 44) Indeed, this type of analysis seemed to be confirmed by weakening of union movement in countries of strong proletarian tradition, particularly in Europe. This situation led to a parallel decline of studies on work:

> "for many people, this double crisis (of studies of work and workers movements) is one in the long run and structural – closely linked to monumental

transformations which characterized last decades of the 20th century under the general heading of globalization." (SILVER, 2003, p.19)

Despite these tendencies, workers organized in unions did not disappear and little by little the "pessimistic" vision began being challenged. Wills (1998) criticizes the fact that facing globalization as noxious to workers organization became a sort of orthodoxy and states there are other possible endings. In this line, Evans (2010) argues than concluding that globalization is an Achilles heel of workers organizations, is hasty and founded on partial truths. Globalization, although implying in obstacles, also opens possibilities to workers movement's actions. Regarding economic argument stating than higher international mobility of capital prejudices workers bargaining power, Evans states that in many cases its importance is exaggerated. Nevertheless being truth than phenomenon happens in some cases and economic activities, not all jobs may be relocated. This is largely evident, for example, in services sector, which is having an increasing importance in many countries. Besides, new working classes are coming into the market and they organize when production is transferred to other countries. This is Silver (2003) conclusion, which based in a long term analysis shows the way weakening of traditional strongholds of the working class are compensated by emergence of powerful movements in global economic periphery. This suggests workers and union movement generalized fragility diagnoses may be damaged because of being based in a unilateral approach, focused in a European context, without considering strong movements appeared in Africa, Latin America and Asia. It is also questionable the conclusion that failure of the State to regulate global economy global could deprive workers from a space of political action. Evans acknowledges that working movement must count with some level of governance to implement their rights, however states that historic moments when States were reliable allies of workers are more an exception than a rule. He considers these occasions were consequence and nor the cause of mobilization. In this sense, we may conclude that struggles are not out of question to put pressure for greater regulation and democracy in the international scale. He also remembers than discussion about weakening of the State is far from over and probably this process is not as linear and certain as some of first analysts of globalization imagined.

Counter-hegemonic Globalization

The end of cold war caused dispersion of large divisions in the international movement. If, for instance, in previous times it was not possible thinking about cooperation between the US union movement and European and Latin American left-unions, currently the dialogue flows in other terms and there no more mutual accusations between "communists" and "imperialists". What was

before a world of rigid divisions now is a more homogeneous political space to be conquered, and besides this, with common objectives: the international organizations and the transnational corporations. Therefore, in the practice of international union movement and for researchers of this issue, globalization begins to appear no longer as an insurmountable obstacle, but as a possible window of opportunity to go in search of strategies which previously were not feasible. Profiting from widespread access to new information technologies and free from political ties which since a long time ago constrained them, workers now may have the ambition of forging a new international movement. Once refused the option of a fatalistic view regarding globalization and seeing chances of a new interpretation, we must examine which theoretical perspective could assess in a more adequate way possibilities and limits of workers organization in this new moment. We have recently been influenced by recovery of Karl Polanyi works, a Hungarian economist whose analysis of answers to society related to advance of markets after the Industrial Revolution might be useful to understand current context. Polanyi developed "double movement" theory, postulating that advance of markets generates a response of people affected by their negative effects to control it. In Evans (2008) words, "neo-Polanyi optimism" could be a useful tool to overcome the "structural pessimism in vogue and understand how workers could face globalization effects. He mentions a "counter-hegemonic globalization", which considers the fact that globalization "changed the world in a way to allow contemporaneous movements of social protection to be organized in such a global way they could not have one hundred years ago" (p. 274).

The Michael Burawoy (2003) study is useful to understand dynamics between hegemony and counter-hegemony we can extract from integration of Polanyi's ideas and sociology. He proposes a convergence between "civil society" Gramsci's concept and the "active society" notion of Polanyi, allowing to develop a theoretical picture regarding globalization, able to assess difficulties and possibilities of answers from workers and other groups. Burawoy chooses Gramsci as theorist of hegemony. He states that Gramsci strives to develop a scheme allowing understanding of formation of classes and class struggle, which without aligning to a mechanical transposition of relations of production to the political sphere does not give up idea than exploitation is the basis of capitalist society. Burawoy formulation on hegemony is capital, he states that classes introduce their interests as universal and keep domination based in a combination of power and consensus. Although he recognizes Gramsci as key to explain capitalist domination, Burawoy argues has less to say about the possibility of workers giving responses. For him, Gramsci's theory makes too difficult supposing working class could introduce their interests as universal, since they don't have enough resources to make concessions and establish agreements. It would only remain vague pledges of convergence of interests in the future. And it is in this search to overcome Gramsci's "weakness", which Burawoy turns toward an innovation regarding the most known Marxist analy-

sis. He finds in Polanyi's work the basis for a counter-hegemony theory. Polanyi transports the analysis from the terrain of production to the terrain of market. He describes what he called the "Great Transformation": the expansion of capitalist markets after Industrial Revolution. He sees the project of a self-regulated market as a utopia (or a dystopia) which cannot be implemented without large displacements, degrading environment and human life. In conclusion, this is due to the fact that despite capitalist economy may transform land, work and money in goods; they are not originally produced for the market. They are "fictitious goods" and its transformation into commodities will have serious consequences. As regarding appropriation terms mentioned by Marx, Burawoy states that its value in use is affected by its submission to the logic of exchange. Main Polanyi's proposition is that when this happens, the society takes steps to protect it, thus allowing surge an "active society". Workers are a crucial element in this process, because submitted to precarious conditions since are treated as goods. Thus they fight for a social, labor and union legislation to "domesticate" labor market and limit exploitation of their activities.

For all this, we can establish in which way Gramsci and Polanyi analysis are complementary. Burawoy states that Polanyi considers displacements caused by advance of the market are so big, than generate an answer of the society as a whole. Polanyi does not take into account class divisions, imperatives of accumulation and concern of capitalists to keep market expansion. Many times he reduces society to the State, which would be responsible for regulation. Gramsci, while seeing emergence of a general social interest, perceives a coordination of contradictory interests with a dominant center and a dynamic tension. But Burawoy thinks it is important retaining a Polanyi's fundamental idea: it is not the experience of production but the experience of market which leads to social struggle and contestation. Burawoy raises the question if someday experience of production was so important for working class struggle than the one first Marxists imagined, but on the other side he states that due to fragmentation of workers in contemporaneous economy only the market is a plausible place to develop common interests. In short, if it is truth that production keeps being main issue to explain hegemony in capitalist society, foundations of a possible counter-hegemony will only be found in the terrain of market. This conclusion has important consequences, particularly one establishing than unionized workers, however significant they might be, must be part of a more general response including all these suffering negative effects of the market. This conclusion leads to a more open policy of alliances. Then it becomes capital the association with other struggles, such as for land, housing and better living conditions.

Labor's new internationalism

Gramsci's influence is well known among scholars of his work, but re-

covery of Polanyi's works inspired those who found in his theory a lens to see contemporaneous resistance movements. Recently gained influence what is known as the "New global labor studies" (WATERMAN, 2012). It is not quite a school of thinking, but a group of authors sharing some common notions. In general, researchers propose studying labor from a global point of view and see the emergence of "labor's new internationalism". In this case, Polanyi's influence is notorious. As Webster states,

> "the (re)discovery of Karl Polanyi at the end of the 90's as a way of understanding the anti-globalization movement was an important step to develop new global labor studies ". (WEBSTER, 2010, p. 384)

Munck (2002), for example, states that with wake of globalization a "new huge transformation" is on course, a process analog to the one theorized by Polanyi, characterized by a new impulse of capitalism development, carrying with it a "equally deep displacement of lives of ordinary people around the world" (p. 2). The conclusion is that like before, most affected by this process will try to organize a stop to this advance. The news is that now this can only be done in an effective way in global scale, therefore announcing the possibility of working movement becoming an international organization. The image of a union movement "open to the outside" (COSTA, 2005a, p. 7), not only regarding workers from other countries but also other social movements, captures well the essence of what would be this new union movement adapted to globalization.

From the 90's, researchers converge in proposing and observing practices to reach this target. The first formulation of these ideas comes from Moody (1997), which noticed the arising of a new generation of union leaders in tune with challenges of globalization and ready to overcome, locally and globally, old paradigms of traditional union movements. He baptized this trend as "social movement unionism", a still used concept, which would be defined by a major concern with the international sphere, active engagement in alliances with different social sectors, democratization of organizational structures and harmonization of collective bargaining with general interests of classes, going beyond immediate gains for the workers they represent, from a large social agenda. A capital element regards combination of local and international struggles:

> "Fusion of struggles at workplace with broader political struggles through international links offers a unique opportunity to revitalize unions and draw on the strengths and numbers of members of other working organizations and labor communities." (MOODY, 1997, p. 68)

Even more, social movement unionism strategy would be using stron-

gest pole among exploited workers organized in trade unions, to mobilize those having more difficulties of organization, such as the poor in general, the unemployed, casual workers etc. For the author, "the appropriate view in age of globalization is social movement unionism. It has already been born in South Africa, Brazil, South Korea and other places in most industrialized areas of the Third World". This type de analysis has been used to propose arising of a labor's new internationalism. Munck (2000, p. 92-93) states than international workers movement has explored innovative ways of action, in order to dismantle old paradigms of structure and organization and develop new ways. Waterman (2001) mentions a "trade union internationalism in the age of Seattle", because of outbursts in Seattle in 1999, which led to the creation of the World Social Forum. Waterman thinks that networking is the great qualitative shift in relation to previous organizations. However he states that influence of this type of innovation is general, not only restricted to the global south and is noticeable even in workers organizations previously constituted. Boaventura de Souza Santos and Hermes Costa (2005) mention a union movement focusing in a series of new trans-class and cross-border strategies, such as creation of international networks with local links, campaigns and transnational alliances with not only unionist organizations, besides their concern with human and environmental rights issues. In this way, relationship with large social sectors is enhanced beyond workers represented by unions.

The culmination of this trend in literature can be associated to the book *Grounding Globalization*, published in 2008, and to *Global Labour Journal*, whose directors share this point of view (Waterman, 2012). The book, with title inspired in Burawoy, was published by Webster, Lambert and Bezuidenhout and analyzes displacements due to globalization affecting workers from three countries: South Korea, Australia and South Africa. The starting point is Polanyi's theory of double movement and different responses from workers are explained as reactions regarding their "transformation in goods" for work. Despite it, the authors recognize limitations of the original theoretical picture and rely on other contributions to fulfill what they call areas of Polanyi's "sub-theorization". Burawoy, for example, is quoted to rectify the concept of society and Tarrow, related to the theory of social movements, to overcome the "spontaneous" character that movements seem to have in the economist's work. The authors mobilize notions of "social movement unionism" and "labor's new internationalism" and link local studied experiences with an international movement, particularly the Southern Initiative on Globalization and Trade Union Rights, a network gathering trade unions from different parts of the world to face globalization, with mainly relevant presence of representatives of global south. Besides, the authors introduce a useful synthesis of general features of new o "labor's new internationalism":

Labor's old internationalism	Labor's new internationalism
Career Bureaucrats	Activists involved in politics generation
Hierarchy and heavy bureaucracy	Networking
Centralization	Decentralization
Restricted debate	Open debate
Diplomatic guidance	Orientation for mobilization and campaign
Focus only on workplace and trade unions	Focus on building alliances with new social movements and NGOs
Mainly established workers, from the North, white and male	Mainly precarious workers, from the South, African, Asian and Latin

(WEBSTER, LAMBERT e BEZUIDENHOUT, 2004)

Although Burawoy (2010) inspired many of the works in this sense, he strongly criticized the way Polanyi was quoted in recent studies on labor. He states that Polanyi's scheme undergoes a series of "false optimisms" misrepresenting research which tried to find in these texts inspiration to explain resistances to globalization. Burawoy thinks these authors go from "Polanyi to Pollyanna", an expression he uses to refer ironically to what he considers an exaggerate optimism. Burawoy argues that increasing hostility of Polanyi to classic Marxism and any other historical laws makes him miss the point of imperatives of capitalist accumulation, which allowed comeback of liberal policies he considered permanently defeated and led to restructuring hegemony represented by globalization. Besides, he argues that Polanyi has a nebulous vision for society, based in the idea of an automatic protection, without describing how this would in fact happen. Burawoy says then that starting point of authors bound by the idea of a labor's new internationalism, is going in search of progressive social movements, particularly those bound to labor world, with potential to transcend national borders and start a "counter-hegemonic globalization". However, they would not have shown the way these movements represent counter-hegemony. Since State is rejected, as he puts the brakes on struggle to a national level, Burawoy does not see any signal of developing mechanisms necessary to offer an alternative to global capitalist hegemony. He thinks these movements are strictly organized within the limits of constituted hegemony. Even if they could achieve small steps,

> "There is no sign these small transformations, or better saying, small perturbations are more than an adaptation to capitalism. However significant they may be in itself, they are not cumulative in time neither politically (nor geographically) connected." (p. 303)

Even works Burawoy assesses in a more positive way, such as Silver (2003),

which he congratulates for reporting long term mechanisms leading to a permanent restructuring of production and capitalist hegemony, have deficiencies since they do not discuss properly existing tensions between Marx and Polanyi's points of view. It is truth that Silver recognizes that Marx and Polanyi are different "lenses" to understand the issue. Nevertheless both treat, in some way, labor as a fictitious commodity and declare than attempts to transform it in a commodity results in resistance, their theories differ. Silver then says that, as a matter of fact, both processes happen. Therefore we must have our eyes open for these two phenomena. Marx suggests working class is in permanent transformation such as conflicts between capital and labor. While some elements and sectors of the working class disappear, new conflicts arise, with new demands and ways of struggle. On the other side, Polanyi helps to understand in which way dismantling of already consolidated working classes generates resistances from those having their lives affected. The working classes look for combining both types of struggle: the "Polanyi style" and the "Marx style". The first one is residual, characteristic of working classes resistance because of being shattered by globalization and those which had benefits from social policies being threatened. The "Marx style" is characteristic from new working classes, constituted by expansion of production into other countries. However, Burawoy considers this point tells little about future of a basically counter-hegemonic movement. Then Silver asks: if movements around transforming labor into a commodity are just residuals, how could they be used as a basis to an alternative option to globalization?

He addresses same critic to the authors of *Grounding Globalization*. Burawoy, considers they are successful in finding resistances to globalization effects within a national context, but unconvincing when going to next step. An "embryonic global counter-movement" is arising; however there is not a real evidence of its existence. According to him,

> "We have a Polanyi's teleology: a malignant past is first homogenized, and then, inverted into a radiant future. This false homogenization of history, but also of geography (the dichotomy between North and South) becomes a fantasy flight towards labor internationalism and a utopic society – the first one a Marxist dream and the other a Polanyi dream." (p. 305)

Burawoy questions the fundamentals of the supposed new internationalism and states that it is mainly reduced to "speech manoeuvers": real workers and studied struggles do not have much to do with internationalist dreams of the authors. He draws the attention, then, to theoretical consequences of using a scheme he originally proposed. Adopting Polanyi's ideas originated the "theory of the experience", very much different from classic Marxism since it defends that central experience of capitalism is through market and not production, implying in a different conception regarding how classes and their

collective consciences are formed. Burawoy thinks you have to choose one side: or emphasizing experience of exploitation through production, or the experience of transforming labor into a commodity through the market. This is a central point, since if it is truth production was internationalized, market effects will be locally felt:

> "The position people will assume regarding this issue - exploitation or transformation of labor into a commodity – will set the strategy to be used to advance: building workers alliances across national borders or local alliances among those suffering transformation of labor into a commodity." (p.307)

Therefore Burawoy states there is not a switch from "social movement unionism" to a "labor's new internationalism". The opening to "overseas or the exterior" can be local, regarding other social actors, but internationalist dreams would be nothing more than an ill-founded recovery of an old Marxist project. He recognizes than ultimately, liberal hegemony established from globalization can be combated only globally. However he does not see evidences that this is really happening. Therefore, he defends an "intransigent pessimism" when discussing this issue.

Burawoy critics generated an avalanche of responses. He was accused of being based in binary constructions which should not be seen as absolute, particularly the theoretical distinction between exploitation and transforming labor into a commodity. This is what Webster (2010) states, when arguing it is a false dichotomy and claims than experiences of exploitation and transforming labor into a commodity are complementary. In this line, Clawson (2010) says that

> "in this study (and in other works), Burawoy seems determined to create a dichotomy between exploitation and transforming labor into a commodity, when he would do much better in studying already existing struggles, and could prove than most promising of them are precisely these regarding transcending the dichotomy" (p. 399)

Therefore, there would not necessarily be a contradiction between establishing alliances with other social groups and international bounds. Lambert (2010) concludes saying

> "It is a false dichotomy introducing chances of deciding between building alliances with workers from other countries and creating a broadest solidarity with informal workers within its own nation as a contradiction. One thing does not exclude the other. As the SIGTUR experience reveals, horizontal solidarity within the civil society civil is a breeding ground for the creation of global networking." (p. 389)

Webster (2010) also criticizes pessimist position of Burawoy. He argues that increasing highlight in possibilities of resistance is given by option of emphasizing human agency and seeing workers as active producers and not passive victims. Lambert (2010) concludes that debate brings to light main questions of sociology, such as power of human agency against determinism or inaction in front of supposed "laws of history". He accuses Burawoy of not discussing in depth research on this issue and that the automatic rejection of strategies adopted by workers whose experiences are detailed in these works means the idea than power structured by large transnational corporations is untouchable.

It is truth that Burawoy seems not to take into account that authors whom he criticizes do not apply immediately the Polanyi's scheme, and are aware of the difficulties they face. Therefore, his option for an intransigent pessimism and a rigid division between local and global has perhaps been rushed. Even in first formulations of a counter-hegemonic globalization theory, main focus is precisely to investigate how international activism may strengthen local struggles and then establishes a virtuous relationship between global and local. It is possible that disposition of Burawoy in outlining rigid divisions may be explained by emphasis in treating theoretically this matter, without deeply analyzing cases studied by literature**.** In its extended and influent study on international activism, Sidney Tarrow (2005) states that most successful cases are precisely those which can bind the international action with local issues. And this is the reason why he calls the attention to what he defines as "rooted cosmopolitans", activists which although getting involved in global disputes, keep their ties with their countries and communities where they come from. He also states that it is exactly the fusion of local and global which develops a political arena viable for contemporaneous social movement, including union movement. But if it is truth that strategies combining internationalism and local actions have to be studied, there is no doubt it is necessary exploiting theoretical and practical tensions involving explicative models and possible strategies. The conceptual eclecticism and the exaggerate optimism are present risks in the study of cases classified as "embryonic", even more when the intention is to establish the characteristics of a general movement. The main argument of Burawoy is valid, even if softened by further critics, and researchers must be aware to its weight.

What really counts, even if choice is emphasizing limits which globalization imposes to workers actions, is an open investigation of the experiences being developed. The research comparing responses of workers to globalization shows that in fact there is a range of possibilities and that if structural (economic or political) factors exist influencing strategies which probably will be adopted, there is also space for choices and innovations. Workers and trade unions are not just one actor, different political traditions exercise an important role. This is the premise of Frege and Kelly (2003) which compare union responses in European countries and United States, with a large variety of

unions, institutional and political structures. They identify six main responses to globalization: reorganization of structures (bureaucratization, mergers etc.), alliances with other social movements, partnerships with employers, political action and international links. All these strategies may be combined in different ways. To them, explaining adopted strategies only by the context where are trade unions is simplistic and deterministic, underestimating mutual dependency between actors and institutions. When studying union responses in Latin America, Anner (2011) reaches similar conclusions. He argues that

> "there is no dominant or previously determined way for labor in the age of neoliberal globalization. On the contrary there is a range of responses developed by working organizations with different levels of success and failures. These answers are constituted by identities, threatens and political opportunities and economic structures" (p. 17)

In its research, internationalism is also many times combined with local actions. The challenge then is to develop an analysis able to integrate political and economic transformations to the institutional national frameworks and associate them to union identities and possible political choices, which very often combine more than one element. Evans (2010) reminds difficulties to elaborate such a framework, since used forms are more and more complex and combine among them. Nevertheless the innovations, labor responses to globalization begin from a long genealogy of working organizations with older traditions than other social movements. So, he sponsors understanding of these responses as a "connected diversity", where old and new mix in creative ways.

The importance of Brazil

Therefore, challenges for research are too many. In last years, international solidarity experiences have multiplied and it is difficult knowing without a deeper study which of them in fact impact workers. Together with International Trade Union Confederation, the highest international trade union entity, there are the *Global Union Federations*, which globally organize workers from different economic areas. Currently there are many organizations of this type, representing from traditional industrial sectors, including chemical and metallurgical, up to more recent categories, such as domestic employees. Besides, there are a series of new initiatives not adopting traditionally guaranteed models by union movements, such as networks trying to connect not only workers, but also communities affected by actions of transnational corporations. In Brazil, Francisco de Oliveira (2005) identifies three main labor internationalism stages. First one was related to anarchy-unionists influenced by European immigrants. Second one, from the Communist Party, connected

with Second International. Third one, an internationalist impulse came with the CUT, a new union movement, and this is the relevant period for current context. There is not much literature on this issue and today's scenario is quite different from what Armando Boito Jr. (1999) saw when he stated Brazilian union movement international policy is a subject "waiting for the researchers". The only one systematic study on policy in international relations from CUT was made by Hermes Costa (2005b), when he compared it with Portuguese union movements. He identifies five stages in CUT international relations, which little by little is gaining importance, although still small when compared with concerns of the national central. The first phase is concerned with the crystallizing of CUT international, the second with establishment of first international action guidelines, and third is defined by decision of joining officially to international union organizations. The fourth phase is characterized by struggle against Free Trade Area of the Americas (ALCA) and the alignment with Mercosur countries. The last phase, the one which interests for current analysis, requires a particular attention because of its articulation with other civil society organizations. We are referring to "unionism based in a social movement" as a general paradigm, which translated into own CUT terms as "citizen unionism" is what in the opinion of the author goes to a " trade-union internationalism and solidarity", whose characteristics are almost similar with those of "labor's new internationalism" previously defined.

Recently, the central union also increased its international acting efforts, with the creation of an institute of cooperation. Since the organization got international help in its foundation and during its consolidation period, currently wants to adopt a more incisive international solidarity policy. Not by surprise, a Brazilian unionist, who began at CUT, currently heads the International Trade Union Confederation. Also in Global Trade Unions Federations we can see an important presence of Brazilian chiefs. However, what currently makes our research richer is that international policy no longer is an exclusive prerogative of major countries. If literature on international policy of trade unions is scarce, research on international performance of lower courts and sectorial instances (such as local unions and confederations) is even rarer. This is why international networking unions are particularly interesting. These networks put together workers and trade unions acting in different parts of the world, but related to a same transnational corporation, and may connect directly among them even with local trade unions. Brazil, due to having along its territory a large number of transnational corporations, is an important actor in this process. More than that, the increasing participation of Brazilian companies in other countries makes Brazilian union movement assume a strategic position in any future trade union internationalism. According to the president of CUT Social Observatory, the oil worker Roni Anderson, "every each time more Brazilian companies are becoming international and Brazilian workers now are becoming protagonists in the construction of these networks." (CUT, 2014) Therefore, big opportunities of research are opening for Brazilian social scientists interested in roles

of union movements and workers movements in the contemporaneous world. Nevertheless theoretical basis for this type of research being uncertain and vulnerable to debates and transformations, or perhaps precisely because of it, it is a challenging and instigating issue to face.

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