

BOOK-REVIEW by Hermann Dworczak

**Geoffrey Pleyers *Alterglobalization- Becoming Actors in the Global Age***

Who is interested in the alterglobalization-movements and specially in the development of the World Social Forum should read this interesting book. It gives in spite of some limitations a good summary of the history, structure and problems of these movements.

Since the nineties of the past century we can see the emergence of movements against the "Washington consensus": the Zapatistas in Mexico, the big mobilizations against the WTO meeting in Seattle 1999(with a strong participation of the trade unions)and finally the first World Social Forum 2001 in Porto Alegre (Brazil). Movements who challenge neoliberal globalization and have a clear internationalist spirit.

The author is analyzing the development of the World Social Forum with two fundamental "idealtypical" (Max Weber) categories: the "way of subjectivity" and the "way of reason". The two categories reflect the two poles within the WSF-movement: participants who want to express and realize alternatives hic and nunc and activists with a high theoretical approach who want to go beyond the present-capitalist- society.

Geoffrey shows the development of the activity of these two poles. And he is stressing the fact that the WSF was extraordinary successful when these two strings came together and fertilized each other.

Though Geoffrey mentions the stagnation of the WSF-process in some regions (e.g. in Europe) he is far away from positions that the WSF is "coming to an end". In contrary: he stresses that the WSF can have an even greater importance than in the past when it corrects failures and makes "refigurations".

Some limitations of the book should not be ignored: it has sometimes an "academic" character, is coming "from outside"- without sufficient inside-knowledge. So the development of the WSF-process is not analyzed deep enough: it started "very theoretical" but today it has often a practical outlook too (international mobilisations; international "action days";...). And there has also be a development of the contents: at the beginning for above all "neoliberalism" was criticized. Today capitalism itself is attacked- see the final texts of the WSF in Belem 1999 and Dakar 2011 or in Copenhagen at the "altersummit" 2010 when the central slogan was "Change the system- Not the climate".

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