Socio-Economic Insecurity in Emerging Economies

Building New Spaces

Edited by
Khayaat Fakier and Ellen Ehmke

Routledge

Socio-Economic Insecurity in Emerging Economies

Taking a unique comparative approach to the respective development paths of India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA), this book shows that people and governments in the three emerging economies are faced with similar challenges of heightened insecurity, caused by liberalization and structural adjustment. The ways in which governments, as well as individuals and worker organizations in IBSA have responded to these challenges are at the core of this book.

It explores the nature of insecurity in the Global South; the nature of the responses to this insecurity on public and small-scale collective as well as on an individual level; and the potential of these responses to be more than neo-liberal mechanisms to govern and contain the poor and lessons to be learnt from these three countries. The first section covers livelihood strategies in urban and rural areas as individual and small-scale collective responses to the condition of insecurity. Insecurity in these emerging economies of the South is characterized by a high degree of uncertainty of the availability of income opportunities. The second section looks at state responses to insecurity and contributions on social protection measures taken by the respective IBSA governments. The third section discusses whether alternative development paths can be identified. The aim is to move beyond 'denunciatory analysis'. Livelihood strategies as well as public policies in some of the cases allow for the building of new spaces for agency and contestation of a neo-liberal mainstream which provide emerging and experimental examples.

Socio-Economic Insecurity in Emerging Economies: Building new spaces develops new thinking on Northern welfare states and their declining trade unions. It argues that these concepts, knowledge and policy innovations are now travelling in three directions, from North to South, from South to North, and between Southern countries. This book provides unique insights for researchers and postgraduate students in development studies, social policy and industrial sociology.

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Acknowledgements

In 2009 Edward Webster and Sharit Bhowmik were integral to launching an international research network titled 'Work, Livelihood Strategies and Insecurity in the Twenty-first Century: Comparing India, Brazil and South Africa'. The network was funded by and supported through the newly established International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) at the University of Kassel, Germany. The intellectual support of Christoph Scherrer and Birgit Felmeden's organizational skill were invaluable to the research and, eventually, this volume. The network drew together researchers from the ICDD, the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP) in Johannesburg, South Africa, the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) in Mumbai, India, the University of Campinas, Brazil, and selected others. The aim was to research how the governments of the emerging economics of India, Brazil and South Africa were responding to social and economic insecurity through social assistance and public work programmes. At the same time we looked at the role of civil society and trade unions in formulating and implementing such policies, as well as their own strategies to counter insecurity.

The network met four times: at Kassel University in April 2010, in Mumbai in December 2010, in Johannesburg in April 2011, and in Campinas in November 2011. In all, 46 papers were presented. It was a collaborative approach to research and the circulation of knowledge that guided the network and led to the production of this volume. We are grateful to all the participants at these workshops as they were all part of the development of our argument about how insecurity affects people in the South and the building of new spaces through which insecurity could be countered.

Fourteen articles were selected from these workshops and substantially rewritten under the guidance of the editors and section editors. Three themes were identified:

- Urban and rural livelihood strategies: informal clothing, recycling, street vendors and the production of charcoal in rural areas
- State responses to insecurity: employment guarantee schemes and cash transfers

Acronyms and abbreviations

ABCD	Cities of Santo André, São Bernardo, São Caetano and Diadema [the industrial belt of São Paulo, Brazil]
ABT	Brazilian Association of Telemarketing
AFSUN	African Food Security Urban Network
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress [South Africa]
APSEZ	Adani Port and Special Economic Zone [India]
ARV	Anti-retroviral
BEE	Black economic empowerment
BF	Bolsa Familia [Brazil]
BHU	Bombay Hawkers Union
BIG	Basic Income Grant
BMC	Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation [Mumbai, India]
BNDES	National Bank for Economic and Social Development [Brazil]
BPC	Benefício de Prestação Continuada [social pension scheme, Brazil]
BSM	Brasil Sem Miséria
CAAP	Centro Andino de Acción Popular [Ecuador]
CAIB	Cámara Argentina de Indumentaria de Bebés y Niños
CBD	Central business district
CCT	Conditional cash transfer
CICOPA	Comité International des Coopératives de Production et Artisanales (International Organisation of Industrial, Artisanal and Service Producers' Cooperatives)
CLAES	Centro Latino Americano de Ecología Social [Ecuador]
CMT	Cut, make and trim
COPAC	Cooperative and Policy Alternative Centre [South Africa]
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPGL	Coastal Power Gujarat Limited
CPRC	Chronic Poverty Research Centre [University of Manchester, UK]
CSG	Child Support Grant
CSO	Civil society organization

CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores (Central Workers' Union) [Brazil]
CWP	Community Work Programme [South Africa]
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DCoG	Department of Co-operative Governance [South Africa]
DG	Disability Grant
DoSD	Department of Social Development [South Africa]
ECHA	European Chemicals Agency
ECLAC	[United Nations] Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [also known as CEPAL, Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe]
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
EPWP	Extended Public Works Programme [South Africa]
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAT	Fundo de Amparo ao Trabalhador (Workers' Support Fund) [Brazil]
FBO	Faith-based organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FPM	Full-package manufacturer
GAPL	Gujarat Adani Port Limited
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HBW	Home-based worker
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council [South Africa]
ICDD	International Centre for Development and Decent Work [University of Kassel, Germany]
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme [India]
ICO	Inner City Office [renamed the JDA]
ICT	Information and communication technology
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGBE	Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics)
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INBAR	International Network for Bamboo and Rattan
ISSE	Information System on Solidarity Economy [Brazil]
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
JDA	Johannesburg Development Agency [formerly the ICO]
KMVS	Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan [India]

KVSS	Kachra Vahatuk Shramik Sangh (Waste Transportation Workers' Union) [Mumbai, India]
LEARN	Labour Education and Research Network [India]
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bi- and Transgender Intersex (individuals)
LMKS	LEARN Mahila Kamgar Sangathana [LEARN Women Workers' Union]
LSE	London School of Economics
MADER	Ministério da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural [Mozambique]
MASS	Machimar Adhikar Sangharsh Sangathan [a local fishing union, India]
MCGM	Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
MDS	Ministry for Social Development and the Fight Against Hunger [Brazil]
MEGA	Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act [India]
MFNS	Ministry for Food and Nutritional Security [Brazil]
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act [India, also known as NREGA]
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme [India, also known as NREGS]
MHUPA	Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation [India]
MICOA	Ministério para Coordenação da Acção Ambiental [Mozambique]
MIDUVI	Ministerio de Desarrollo Urbano y Vivienda (Ministry for Urban Development and Housing) [Ecuador]
MMU	Mumbai Municipal Union
MSF	Médecins sans Frontières
MSW	Ministry of Social Welfare [Brazil]
MW	Megawatt
MZN	Mozambican metical (plural meticais) [unit of currency]
NCEUS	National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector [India]
NFF	National Fishworkers Forum [India]
NFFW	National Food For Work [programme; India]
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPC	National Planning Commission [South Africa]
NRI	Natural Resources Institute [UK]
NTAE	Non-traditional agricultural export
NTFP	Non-timber forest products
NTUI	New Trade Union Initiative [India]
NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
OAP	Old age pension
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OWS	Occupy Wall Street

PAA	Programa de Aquisição Alimentos (Feeding Programme) [Brazil]
PAB	Piso da Atenção Básica (Primary Health Care Limit) [Brazil]
PAC	Accelerated Growth Programme [Brazil]
PBF	Bolsa Família Programme [Brazil]
PEA	População economicamente ativa (economically active population) [Brazil]
PETI	Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil (Programme for the Eradication of Child Labour) [Brazil]
PIL	Public Interest Litigation
PT	Workers Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores) [Brazil]
PPP	Purchasing parity power
Pronatec	Programa Nacional de Acesso ao Ensino Técnico e Emprego (National Programme of Access to Technical Training and Employment) [Brazil]
Prouni	Programa Universidade para Todos (University for All Programme) [Brazil]
PSDB	Party of Brazilian Social Democracy (Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira)
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party) [Brazil]
PUCL	Peoples Union for Civil Liberties [India]
RB&P	Retirement Benefits and Pensions
Rio+20	Conference on Sustainable Development, July 2012
RMSP	Metropolitan Region of São Paulo
R$	Real (pl. reais) [modern Brazilian unit of currency; old Real = Rs$]
Rs	Rupees [Indian unit of currency]
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RVA	Rabula Volunteers Association [South Africa]
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTWU	South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union
SALDRU	Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers' Union
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SEECC	Solidarity Economy Education and Communication Cooperative [South Africa]
SENAES	National Secretariat of Solidarity Economy [Brazil]
Senarc	Secretaria Nacional de Renda de Cidadania (National Secretary for Citizens' Income) [Brazil]
SENPLADES	Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo (National Secretariat of Planning and Development) [Ecuador]
SER	Standard employment relationship
SEWA	Self-employed Women's Association [India]
SEZ	Special economic zone [India]
SOIVA	Sindicato Obrero de la Industria del Vestido y Afines [Argentina]

SSR	Standard Schedule of Rates [India]
SWM	Solid waste management
TB	Tuberculosis
TVC	Town Vending Committee
UAC	Utilities, agencies and corporatized entities
UI	Unemployment Insurance
UK	United Kingdom
UMS	Ujjas Mahila Sangathan [India]
UN	United Nations
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development [Rio+20]
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UP	Uttar Pradesh [state in India]
UPA	United Progressive Alliance [India]
US(A)	United States (of America)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VAT	Value-added tax
WEF	World Economic Forum
WFDP	Waterfront Development Project [Adani Group, India]
WFP	World Food Programme
YMC	Yusuf Meharally Centre [India]
YUVA	Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action [India]
ZAR	South African Rand [unit of currency]

1 Work, livelihoods and insecurity in the South

A conceptual introduction

Edward Webster and Sharit Bhowmik

It is often argued that knowledge flows unilaterally from the Global North to the Global South.[1] Indeed, Jimi Adesina (2012) argues that even progressive Northern scholars seek to induce 'epistemic dependence' by expropriating the voice and experiences of the South. While the North clearly continues to dominate the production of knowledge, we believe a more interactive approach is emerging, in the form of an exchange model where knowledge is co-constructed (Kiem 2012).

We would argue that this volume is an example of the co-construction of knowledge production. It is the result of a three-year research project of scholars from the International Centre for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) network, titled 'Work, Livelihood Strategies and Insecurity in the Twenty-first Century: Comparing India, Brazil and South Africa'. The aim was to research how the governments of the three countries were responding to social and economic insecurity through social protection and public work programmes, and the role of civil society and trade unions in formulating and implementing these policies. The project was initiated by the ICDD host university in the North in Kassel, Germany, and driven by two Southern scholars, one from India and the other from South Africa. It has given voice to Southern scholars and built the capacity of emerging Southern scholars through its PhD programme. It has contributed to new thinking on social policy that not only circulates between Southern countries, but also contributes to new thinking on Northern welfare states and their declining trade unions. These concepts, knowledge and policy innovations are now travelling in three directions – from North to South, from South to North, and between Southern countries.

This introduction is divided into three parts. In the first part we introduce the concept of insecurity through a theoretical reconstruction of Karl Polanyi (2001 [1944]), challenging the hegemonic Northern interpretations of his theory by contrasting the Great Transformation in the South with that of the North. In the second part, we ground the network in a historical and cross-national comparison, identifying similarity among and difference between the three countries. In the third part, we introduce the three themes of the book, which may be summarized as:

- urban and rural livelihood strategies: informal clothing, recycling, street vendors and the charcoal producers in rural areas;
- state responses to insecurity: employment guarantee schemes and conditional cash transfers;
- alternative paths to development: green jobs, Lulism, the solidarity economy and cooperatives.

Armando Barrientos and David Hulme (2009) suggest that a 'quiet revolution' is taking place in social policy in the South. They argue:

> Social protection is now better grounded in development theory, and especially in an understanding of the factors preventing access to economic opportunity and leading to persistent poverty and vulnerability. The initially dominant conceptualization of social protection as social risk management is being extended by approaches grounded in basic human need and capabilities.
>
> (Barrientos and Hulme 2009: 439)

In practice this has involved the 'rapid up-scaling' of 'programmes and policies that combine income transfers with basic services, employment guarantees or asset building' (Barrientos and Hulme 2009: 451).

Many of these programmes and policies have been dismissed by the left as neo-liberal (Barchiesi 2011; Satgar 2012). The question raised by our research is whether, as Ferguson (2009: 173) provocatively puts it:

> Can we on the left do what the right has, in recent decades, done so successfully, that is, to develop new modes and mechanisms of government? And (perhaps more provocatively) are the neoliberal 'arts of government' that have transformed the way that states work in so many places around the world inherently and necessarily conservative, or can they be put to different uses? To ask such questions requires us to be willing at least to imagine the possibility of a truly progressive politics that would also draw on governmental mechanisms that we have become used to terming 'neoliberal'.

That is the challenge posed in this volume. It is a challenge to government, civil society, policy makers and all those concerned with overcoming economic and social insecurity in the Global South.

Part I: economic and social insecurity: a Southern perspective

We live in an age of insecurity. As the late Tony Judt (2010: 33) wrote,

> we have entered the age of insecurity – economic insecurity, physical insecurity, political insecurity. The fact that we are largely unaware of this

is small comfort: few in 1914 predicted the utter collapse of their world and the economic and political catastrophes that followed. Insecurity breeds fear and fear of change, fear of decline, fear of strangers and an unfamiliar world – corroding the trust and interdependence on which civil society rests. The choice will no longer be between the state and the market, but between two sorts of state. It is thus incumbent upon us to reconceive the role of government. If we do not others will.

An aspect of insecurity ignored by Judt is the rapid deterioration of the environment and the challenges posed by climate change. This is dramatically illustrated in Claudia Levy and Brigitte Kaufmann's case study of southern Mozambique where agro-pastoralists have turned to charcoal production as a livelihood strategy resulting in deforestation and further destruction of their livelihoods. This commodification of nature is a growing phenomenon in Brazil, India, South Africa and other Southern countries. A sustainable developmental path will require livelihood strategies that do not further exacerbate insecurity.

Above all, the North, as Comaroff and Comaroff (2012: 14) argue,

> is now experiencing those practical workings ever more palpably as labor markets contract and employment is casualized, as manufacture moves away without warning, as big business seeks to coerce states to unmake ecolaws, to drop minimum wages, to subsidize its infrastructure from public funds, and to protect it from loss, liability, and taxation. … Which is why so many citizens of the West – of both labouring and middle classes – are having to face the insecurities, even the forced mobility and disposability, characteristic of life in much of the non-West.

Insecurity is the theme of Guy Standing's *Work after Globalization: Building Occupational Citizenship.* He argues that the restructuring of the global market economy has created a new class, which he calls the 'precariat':

> They flit between jobs, unsure of their occupational title, with little labour security, few enterprise benefits and tenuous access to state benefits. They include the most fortunate of the vast informal economy. … the precariat is the group that has grown the most. … [It] comprises a disparate group in non-regular statuses, including casual workers, outworkers and agency workers.
>
> (Standing 2009: 109–10)

But, argues Standing (2009: 239),

> the political consequences of a globalizing labour market based on insecurity and inequality are frightening. Much of the remnants of the industrial working class in rich countries have drifted into the precariat, some have

> fallen into the detached albumenized stratum. As they have done so, they
> have turned politically to the right … [deserting] traditional parties of the left.

Faced with insecurity, persons tend to retreat into the familiar – their country, their neighbourhood, their homes, their family and their religion – and sometimes their 'race'. Indeed, at times when the world faced similar levels of insecurity in the past, we saw the rise of some of the worst atrocities of human history. One author who reflected on such times was Karl Polanyi, who wrote his major work at the end of World War Two. At the forefront of his mind was the rise of fascism. Why do people turn to fascist leaders, and under what conditions does fascism become salient as a political ideology? It is no wonder that people are returning to Polanyi in order to make sense of the response to current insecurity.

In his classic study of the industrial revolution, or what he called the Great Transformation, Polanyi (2001 [1944]) showed how society took measures to protect itself against the disruptive impact of unregulated commodification. He conceptualized this as the 'double movement' whereby ever-wider extensions of free-market principles generated countermovements to protect society. Against an economic system that dislocates the very fabric of society, 'the social countermovement', he argued, 'is based on the varying support of those most immediately affected by the deleterious action of the market – primarily but not exclusively, the working and the landed classes – and using protective legislation, restrictive associations, and other instruments as its methods' (Polanyi 2001 [1944]: 138–9).

During the Great Transformation, early capitalism in the industrialized countries essentially constructed regimes of control around *market despotism*. The whip of the market was used to discipline workers. If they did not perform, they were dismissed. Since workers were treated like commodities – as objects – they lacked voice in the workplace and hence there was no regulation of conditions at work. However, as Polanyi showed, society took measures to protect itself against the disruptive impact of unregulated commodification. Society responded by making certain demands on employers and the state. The fear of communism and the strength of labour after World War Two encouraged the countries of the North to strike a historical compromise between capital and labour. New regimes of control were established based on the regulation of working hours, the setting of minimum wages, putting in place health and safety standards, and mechanisms for trade unions to organize and bargain collectively over wages – in short, various ways in which labour is decommodified and made less insecure. Central to this shift is the emergence of a form of counter-power to the power of management.

As the historical compromise of the North came under pressure in the 1970s and 1980s – the Second Great Transformation – so did these regimes of control. Burawoy (1985) argues that these made way for what he calls *hegemonic despotism*. This implies that the institutions of collective bargaining are now utilized to enter into a process of concession bargaining, where workers

agree to the recommodification of their labour under the threat of factory closures or lay-offs. The ideology of globalization legitimizes this.

However, the Northern class compromise did not involve the colonies. There, the possibility of establishing hegemonic forms of control was constrained by coercive labour practices. The workplace regime was often based on what Burawoy (1985) calls *colonial despotism*. Because colonialism only partially penetrates society and only partially proletarianizes its subjects, options outside wage labour are still available to disgruntled workers. Hence in South Africa, coercive measures, including compounds and restrictive contracts of employment, are used as a form of control. The importance of 'race' in the occupational hierarchy and supervision should not be underestimated in the construction of this regime, as vividly illustrated in the South African case (Von Holdt 2003).

Similarly, partial proletarianization characterizes countries that have undergone prolonged colonization (Wolpe 1972). It could be argued that Lenin's propositions on multistructural socio-economic formations are more relevant to India, Brazil and South Africa than Polanyi's formulation of the European transition. In colonial situations, as Lenin argued, a number of socio-economic formations co-exist (Lenin 1920, cited in Lowy 1981: 65). In other words, capitalism is only one such formation. In India, for example, primitive accumulation exists alongside capitalism. In addition the caste system has excluded the lower castes (especially the scheduled castes, formerly called the untouchables) from the Great Transformation.

In the South there has been a transition to capitalism, but it has been uneven. This is not merely because of the coexistence of different socio-economic formations but also because this transformation happens within a capitalist structure. The existence of urban informal employment may be an innovative response to insecurity, but it also emphasizes the widespread use of manual, unskilled labour in the production process. Instead of contributing to a Northern-type transformation, it leads to the reproduction of traditional occupations within the urban informal sector. For example, the home-based workers in India are all from the lower castes who used to perform similar manual work in the rural sector (Breman 2010). Another example comprises conservancy workers (or waste-removal workers), who are from the same scheduled castes that used to perform similar activities in the villages (Vyas 2013).

In effect, informal employment reproduces traditional inequalities. A classic example is the textile industry. When it comprised large textile mills, it had workers from different castes and regions. Since 1983 the mills have closed and production has moved to the power-loom sector. These looms are similar to hand looms, but run on electricity. They represent a much lower level of technology than the mills. As a consequence, the textile industry is being increasingly informalized, returning to traditional caste-based weaving communities among Hindus and Muslims. When their products were replaced by mill-made goods, the traditional weavers became agricultural labourers; now

they are returning to their traditional weaving occupations, and constitute a large proportion of the power-loom workers.

As a result of this incomplete transformation, countermovements in the South often dovetailed with struggles for national liberation. Once this was achieved, post-colonies were faced with the dual problems of demands for changes both in the workplace regime and in society. Possibilities for establishing hegemonic regimes of control are thus constrained. In Africa and Asia, postcolonial states often accord workers certain rights and guarantees, but the majority of the population are excluded from this as a rule, since they work in the informal sector or are unemployed. Labour movements are often integrated into the postcolonial state, in what could be called a form of state corporatism. When this is challenged by neo-liberal globalization, usually in the form of a 'structural adjustment programme' imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the labour movement is one of the first to come under attack, and often ends up in opposition to their former 'comrades' from the liberation struggle. State corporatism comes under pressure in the name of 'labour market flexibility' and the assumption is now that those in formal employment are part of a labour elite.

Polanyi (2001 [1944]) uses a pendulum as a metaphor to describe the drive to marketization and society's attempt to protect itself against the disruptive impact of liberalization. The Polanyian pendulum is illustrated in Figure 1.1, and the differences between the North and South are highlighted. Indeed, in the 'pointedly provocative' subtitle to their book, *Theory from the South: How Euro-America is Evolving toward Africa*, Comaroff and Comaroff (2012: 12) suggest that 'it is the south that often is first to feel the effects of world-historical forces, the south in which radically new assemblages of capital and labor are taking shape, thus to prefigure the future of the global north'.

Part II: India, Brazil and South Africa: a contextual comparison

In South Africa, Brazil and India,[2] as with many other developing countries, the first Great Transformation took a colonial form, and was accompanied by a contradictory process of destruction and reconstruction of many aspects of indigenous society, including land dispossession and racial oppression. Likewise, the Second Great Transformation takes place under specific conditions in the postcolonial world. While Polanyi (2001 [1944]) argued that the countermovement entailed the 'protection' of society, this presupposes the social cohesion, historically established, of the global North. However, in societies that are still ravaged by the uneven and dislocating effects of colonialism, the challenge is to construct a new democratic social order in the face of neo-liberal globalization.

India and South Africa

In spite of historic similarities between India and South Africa, there has been, until recently, little comparative scholarship. Fortunately this is

The Polanyian Pendulum

Insecurity ←————————————→ Security

First Great Transformation

19th century

North
Rapid marketization
and commoditization

South
Colonial despotism
in the workplace
Uneven development
of the South

Counter Movement

2/3 of the 20th century

South
National liberation
movements.
Leads to political
independence and
state corporatism

North
Emergence of
workplace hegemony
and construction of a
welfare state

Second Great Transformation

1970s onwards

South
Structural adjustment
market despotism

North
Rapid liberalization
and erosion of the
welfare state

Rapid commoditization of labour,
money and nature

Counter Movement?

1990s onwards

South
Challenge to build a
counter-movement
without a welfare
state. Emergence of
counter movement
from above and below

North
Incremental
counter-movement
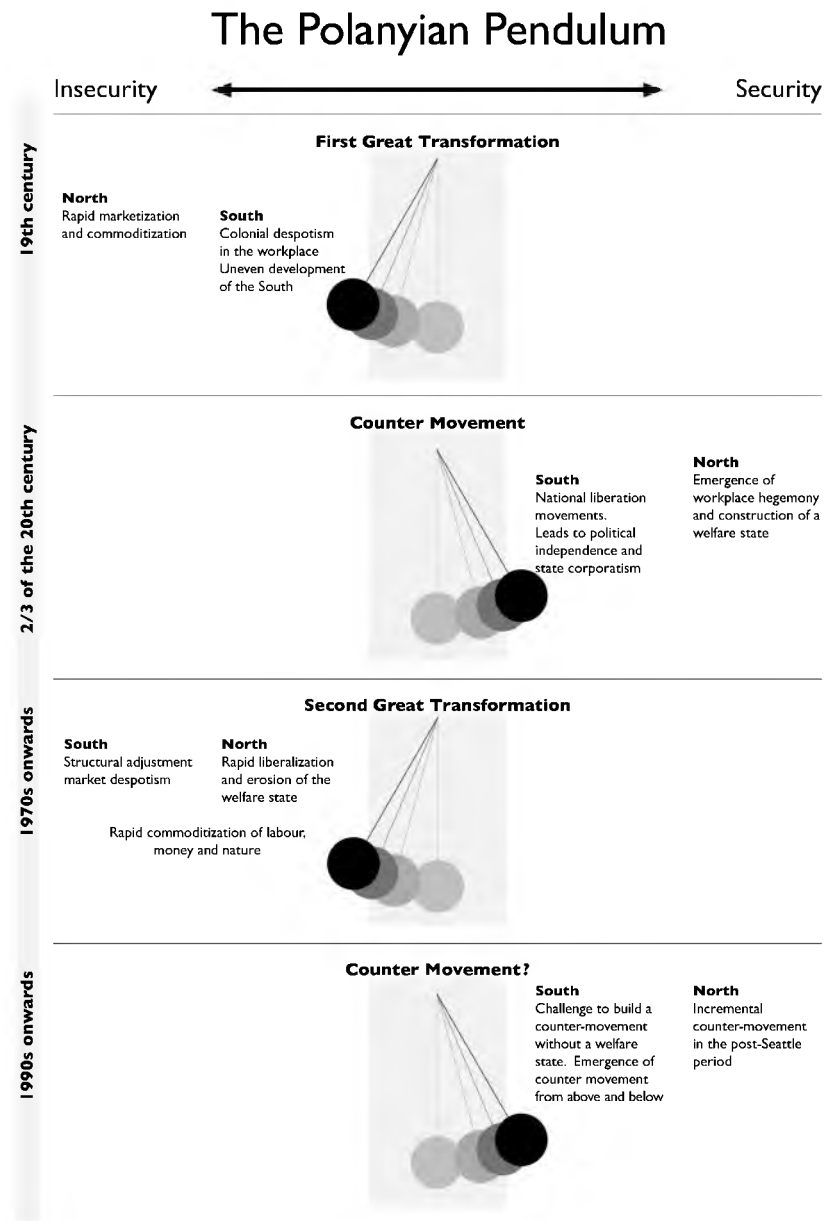in the post-Seattle
period

Figure 1.1 The Polanyian pendulum.
Source: authors with Ellen Ehmke

changing and a number of studies on South Africa and India are providing an alternative body of comparative studies (Williams 2008; Hofmeyr and Williams 2011; Uys and Patel 2012).

> Beyond the obvious similarities that India and South Africa share, such as common histories of British imperialism, iconic liberation movements, successful democratic consolidation in two heterogeneous societies and two of the most remarkable leaders of the 20th century (Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela), scholars are also exploring the less obvious comparisons.
>
> (Hofmeyr and Williams 2011: 11)

A suggestive example is the pattern of labour migrancy and urbanization. In both India and South Africa, the dominant pattern has been migration by single males who leave their families in villages, return there periodically, and generally leave the city when jobs end through dismissal or old age. Bonner (2011: 88) writes:

> Like Bombay, [Johannesburg] was the most ethnically/regionally hetero-geneous urban centre in South Africa. Like Bombay, migrancy and more settled urban life existed side by side. Like Bombay, Calcutta and other Indian cities, a measure of ethnic occupational clustering occurred among its black population.

But here the similarity ends. As Sumit Sakar (2007: 182) argues,

> survival was much more difficult in South Africa, because (unlike India, except to some extent in the European tea plantations in the then under-populated province of Assam) so much of the better land was ruthlessly grabbed by Boer and British farmers. The African rural population was pushed back into over-populated 'homelands'. The bulk of the countryside in India remained firmly indigenous, with only a thin scattering of European officials who would return to England after their Indian careers were over.

Indeed the contrasts become quite striking when one probes further into these two very different experiences of colonialism.

The most obvious difference was the much higher level of both legal and extra-legal coercion deployed to create an African underclass in white-domi-nated cities. This includes the pass laws first introduced on the mines in 1896, the labour tax in the Glen Grey Act, and the Land Act of 1913 which froze African land ownership at a mere 13 per cent of the total land area (Webster 1978: 10). In India, however, Sakar (2007: 182) argues, this blatant use of force and legal coercion was generally absent, with the exception of recruit-ment for plantations on an indentured basis, in Assam and overseas. The result was that Indian migrants were able to sustain a rural base as late as the