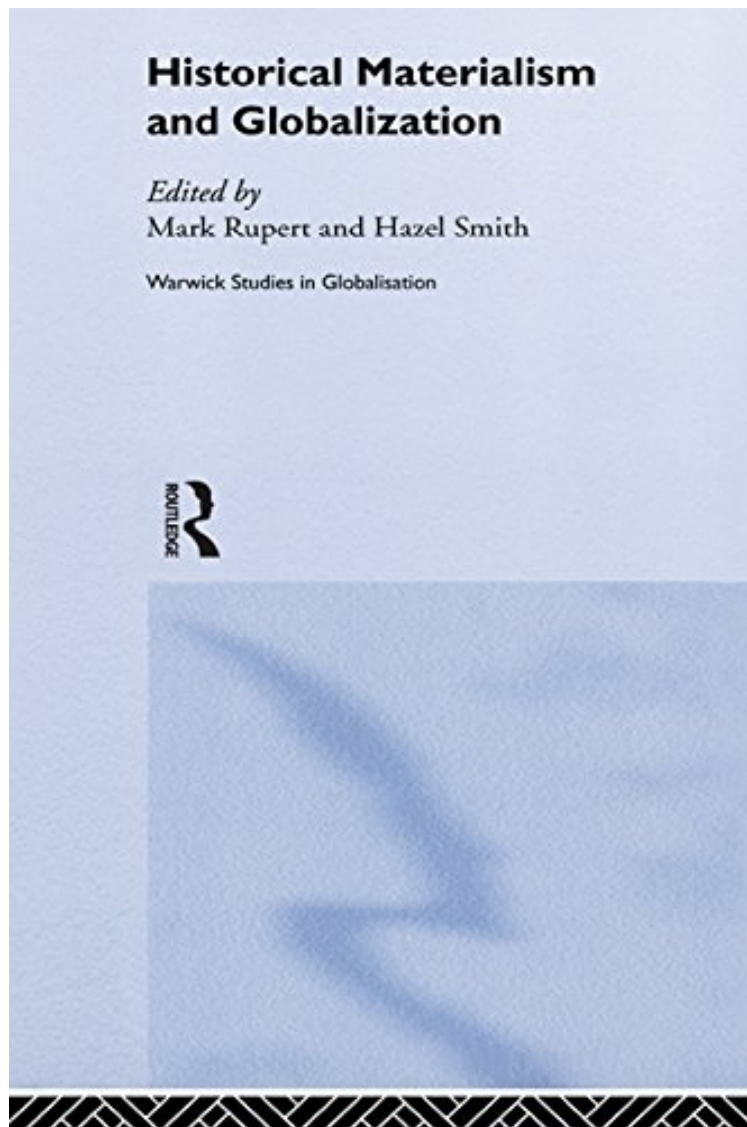


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Historical Materialism and Globalisation: Essays on Continuity and Change (Routledge Studies in Globalisation)

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From Routledge : Historical Materialism and Globalisation: Essays on Continuity and Change (Routledge Studies in Globalisation) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Historical Materialism and Globalisation: Essays on Continuity and Change (Routledge Studies in Globalisation):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Thorough but aridBy M. A. KrulMark Rupert and Hazel Smith's

collection of articles on the subject of historical materialism and globalization is divided into three parts. The first discusses historical materialism itself, and generally defends the approach as a still valid theory of history and as one with explanatory power. In this part, there are quite good articles by Halliday and Sutcliffe on the meaning of "imperialism", both old and neo-, for materialist historians. The second part is about the application of historical materialism to globalization. Many of the articles in this part are quite vague and suffer from a lack of clarity on what exactly "globalization" is meant to mean (many of the article authors start out with giving their own definition, instead of a constant one being adhered to). This is probably because relatively little attention is paid to the economic side of this question: instead the approach is generally sociological or IR-based, such as several discussions about how the continued existence of nation-states is to be explained in Marxist theory. The most useful article in this part is probably the critique of alternative IR theories such as the neo-Weberians by Teschke Heine; though probably still mostly of interest to political scientists. The third part addresses the political side of globalization and what a Marxist stance towards this should or could be. This part is the most fruitful and interesting. Alejandro Colacuta's article on transnational class consciousness in globalized capitalism is quite good, though too short. Cutler's overview of competing views of the nature of private property is also relevant and interesting, and could have serious use in debates against liberals and liberal historians in particular. The nature of this work seems to make the authors often overstate the extent to which "modern capitalism" is a break with the past. Though some authors, such as Rupert Solomon, try to view globalization rather as a process than a new system, in my view the collection still too much makes globalization a phenomenon of its own instead of merely a reflection of capitalist relations. This gives the whole a rather disjointed effect, as the historical approach to the subject clashes with the political approach to Marxist issues in the modern world, which of course tend to focus on the novelties of the here and now. I would recommend this mainly to Marxists interested in matters of historiography.

Now that Soviet style socialism has collapsed upon itself and liberal capitalism offers itself as the natural, necessary and absolute condition of human social life on a worldwide scale, this book insists that the potentially emancipatory resources of a renewed, and perhaps reconstructed, historical materialism are more relevant in today's world than ever before. Rather than viewing global capitalism as an eluctable natural force, these essays seek to show how a dialectic of power and resistance is at work in the contemporary global political economy, producing and contesting new realities and creating conditions in which new forms of collective self determination become thinkable and materially possible. It will be vital, topical reading for anyone interested in international relations, international political economy, sociology and political theory.

'This collection ably reflects the divergent currents within historical materialism and is unified by the author's shared commitment to discerning sites of struggle and to building a globalised politics based on international solidarity and resistance.' - Sam Ashman, Millenium Journal of International Studies
About the Author
Mark Rupert is Associate Professor of Political Science, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University. Hazel Smith is reader in International Relations at the University of Warwick. She has been seconded to the UN World food Programme in DPRK as Programme Adviser since August 2000.