

BOOK REVIEW SECTION

Popov, V. and Dutkiewicz, P. (eds.): Mapping a New World Order: The Rest Beyond the West. Cheltenham–Northampton, Edward Elgar, 2017. 218 p.

Since the late 1940s, when development economics as an academic field was in its infancy, there has been an abundance of action plans, road maps and aid initiatives aimed at achieving development in a given country or region. From the Marshall Plan to the Washington Consensus, the West has proposed no end of remedies for underdeveloped countries and regions.

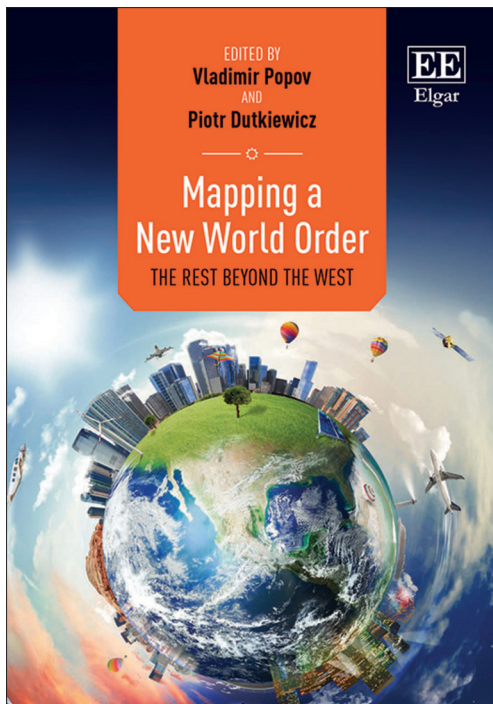
However, only a few countries have actually succeeded in converging over the past 60 years. Moreover, there has been criticism of the West's involvement, much of it drawing attention to the inefficiency of wealthy nations at helping to build the Rest's growth, and decrying them as being a major part of the reason why the Global South continues to struggle to improve its wellbeing. Some have gone so far as to declare that catch-up development is a 'myth' that is anti-democratic in nature (LUMMIS, D.C. 1991, 2000), and to claim that the West's development assistance (estimated to be a staggering

USD 2+ trillion) has "failed to deliver the promise of sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction" (MOYO, D. 2009, p. 28).

It seems that with "Mapping a New World Order: The Rest Beyond the West", the new book published by Edward Elgar and edited by Vladimir Popov and Piotr Dutkiewicz, we are taking a step forward from merely trying to understand why the Rest has not caught-up with the West (GARBICZ, M. 2012) to looking more into the existing growth in certain developing countries and predicting its future global consequences.

The objective of the present volume is to take stock of the world's current economic trends at a very significant moment in the history of its economic development, i.e. when global economic dominance is shifting from North America to Asia, and to set out possible scenarios for the future role of the Rest. This demanding task has been attempted by no fewer than 14 contributors, comprising eight economists, four sociologists, and two political scientists. The authors draw on their detailed understanding of what can be learned from previous development approaches and policies, with examples taken from all over the world. In doing so, they cover a vast range of perspectives. On the one hand, the reader is presented with more general chapters containing historical analyses of growth trends in the Global South, along with presentations of the patterns of globally distributing wealth and power found throughout history (Chapters 1 and 2). On the other hand, there is no shortage of analyses, focusing on specific regions (Chapters 4 and 7), that attempt to answer the central question of how to achieve an economic miracle in a developing country (based on the East Asian success stories) and offer a deeper understanding as to why economic growth cannot be deemed successful when accompanied by economic inequality that threatens social stability (e.g. in India).

The book focuses on three main aspects. The first is convergence, i.e. the idea that developing economies can catch-up with more developed ones in terms of per capita GDP. The countries that make up the Rest are striving to close the per capita income gap with the West, and for the first time in the history of development economics, they are doing so successfully on average, although admittedly not all at the same (satisfactory) rate. The second is internal policies regulating the market. As is widely known, there is no magical 'one size fits all' formula for growth. Similarly, solely relying on a neoliberal approach (with free market playing the key role) or drawing on structuralist theory (with a strong



state) have proven to be dead-end solutions. Hence the ‘dual track reform approach’, which combines the two, is advised. This approach that “calls for maintaining stability during the transition and stimulating dynamic and sustainable economic growth by continuing transitory protection of the nonviable firms in the old priority sectors while removing restrictions to entry and facilitating the development of previously repressed industries that are consistent with the country’s comparative advantages” (p. 63) has proven to be effective in the few stable transitions that have taken place recently. Moreover, in Chapter 5 it is argued that foreign finance has not been helpful to developmental success, and that none of the few countries that have managed to make the transition from developing to developed status since the mid-twentieth century were running current account deficits that would have had to be financed by loans, foreign direct investments, or multinational corporations. This is an important argument in the ongoing debate on development in those economies trapped in a low-income equilibrium. One side of the discussion, with “The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time” (SACHS, J.D. 2005) and one of the founding fathers of both Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals, Jeffrey SACHS, argues that this can be achieved through the ‘big push’ model, where various forms of foreign finance (FDI, development aid, etc.) play the key role in bringing in the necessary capital, which then becomes a catalyst for growth. The other side, presented, *inter alia*, by the author of “Dead Aid”, Dambisa Moyo, rejects this model and advocates a more nationalistic approach where direct foreign investment should only be allowed in order to benefit new technology or to gain access to new markets and not for the purpose of bringing in capital (see Chapters 5 and 6). “The Rest Beyond the West” sides with the latter view. The economic views presented tend to come from the left end of the spectrum, e.g. famous experts such as the late Samir AMIN (who passed away in August 2018), but even the skeptics have to take into account the compelling evidence they bring to bear in support of their views (this is especially the case for the specific region presented by each author).

The third aspect widely discussed in the book are strategies to improve living standards in the developing world. And it is precisely here where the reader might feel that what the book lacks are examples and analyses from Sub-Saharan Africa. There are many excellent references to Asian (notably China and the Asian Tigers), and some to South American, experiences, but Africa is altogether visibly under-represented. This is a curious omission, as this macro-region has arguably been grappling with the greatest developmental challenges on the planet, and the need to improve wellbeing there is dire. Failing to bring its specificity to the picture may well be a major flaw in the book’s attempt to present the ‘new global order’. Clearly, the Sub-Saharan African countries are struggling to converge (DJENASS, M. and FEROUANI,

B. 2014; SY, A. 2014) and their global economic impact is less significant than that of other macro-regions. Despite that, the catch-up effect is in evidence there, even if it is occurring at a much slower pace than elsewhere (CUÑADO, J. and PÉREZ DE GRACIA, F. 2006).

Nor is there a single chapter on development from an ecological perspective, e.g. analysing the trade-offs between environmental protection and economic growth (BINA, O. 2013) or on the question of gradual convergence and planetary boundaries: “If incomes in middle- and low-income countries were to catch up with incomes in high-income countries (roughly USD 41,000 per capita), there would be a roughly 3.4-fold increase in global income from USD 87 trillion to USD 290 trillion, which would increase even further if high-income countries grow further and as the world population grows. And therein lies the problem.” (ROCKSTRÖM, J. *et al.* 2013, p. 2). If the authors’ prognosis that the average per capita GDP gap will continue to close is correct, then environmental concerns are bound to become the global community’s primary concern, whichever individual country takes the lead and wherever the headquarters of the main international institutional actors are located.

The book takes a global view of the issues discussed, while using local examples to illustrate broader trends. One chapter focuses on the relationship between the EU and Russia. It advocates “thinking about new forms of spatiality” and puts forward the idea of an “international regime”, i.e. “institutionalized patterns of cooperation” (p. 177), as a solution to the recent impasse in Russo-EU relations. Otherwise, its relevance to the Central and Eastern European experience lies in its indicating directions towards building truly win-win relationships between countries belonging to the West and the representatives of the Rest (where it seems that the CEE countries that are part of the EU are considered by the authors part of the West, and the EU non-members – part of the Rest), either through bi- or multilateral agreements or development assistance priorities.

Despite the book’s several chapters being written by different authors with many and varied views and perspectives, it is coherent and fascinating to read. Development issues, by their very nature, require an interdisciplinary approach, and a ‘mapping’ that manages to present the big picture of the main point at issue, viz. what the world order is about to morph into.

The intended readers are graduate and PhD students, as well as professionals in development studies and related fields, who should find this book a compelling proposition that answers many questions but raises even more.

MALGORZATA KLEIN¹

¹ Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland. E-mail: gosia.przepiorka@gmail.com.

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