

This is a book that makes a significant contribution to the extant professional literature, particularly the academic literature in political science, although there continue to be far too few serious attempts to link their research issues directly with those of economics, i.e., neoclassical economics or contemporary political economy. Sociology is also not directly a major source of the insights presented in this book. In particular, there is no world-systems theory emphasis, although many themes do overlap with the traditional topics found in many world-systems analyses of the global capitalist system.

The three editors are all from Argentina. All are affiliated with FLASCO, Argentina.[1] The contributors come from Columbia, Australia, India, Spain, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Sweden, Dubai, South Africa, México. Ecuador, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, China, Greece. Hence, they supply a perspective that is truly global. While there are also some chapters by authors in the UK, Canada, the US, and Germany, the book as a whole is quite different in some ways from the predominant North American, British and European viewpoints.[2]

The book is rich with useful information. It is difficult to review it, because there are thirty chapters. Some of the chapters are arguably better than others, but none can be said not to belong in a book on such an important topic.

The book is divided into four parts:

Part I: The Concept and Politics of Development: Paradigmatic Debates. (Five Chapters.)

Part II: Development and Contested Globalization. (Eight Chapters.)

Part III: The Politics of Development Agendas. (Nine Chapters.)

Part IV: Global Actors in the Politics of Development. (Eight Chapters.)

In a short book review I cannot do justice to all of the thirty chapters. So, I have selected the Introduction and will emphasize two chapters from each of the four Parts. The choice of those eight chapters is arbitrary and subjective. But it does provide a kind of sample of the book as a whole.

Let me start with the “Introduction” by the three editors. It is not listed as a separate chapter, but is in a sense a 31st chapter. (Also, there is no “Conclusion” by the editors.) The Introduction is comprehensive. There is mention of the “broader intellectual landscape of the political economy” (p. 2) and IPE (International Political Economy), which is discussed on Pp. 46, 173-176, and 218-228. There is no sustained discussion of Classical Political Economy. The brief mention of Karl Marx (1867) on Pp. 244-245 is a very basic mention of the difference between slavery and “free labor.”[3] (Axel Marx is also mentioned.) Thomas Piketty’s *Capital* is cited on p. 465 to indicate that capital has grown but has not been widely distributed. Then the discussion goes to philanthropy and a sudden rise in the contribution of “private wealth” to “social causes.” Hence, some slight mention of Political Economy, but no real exploration of the “broader landscape.” The emphasis is more closely associated with the “field” of political science and with stimulating and detailed discussions of all kinds of organizations. Acronyms of UN agencies abound, not just UNESCO and UNICEF. The authors are clearly well versed on the day-to-day activities of all kinds of agencies and know a great deal about many international agreements. The World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) are also discussed in several keen ways.

The book has many strengths. But it has taken me a long time to finish this book review in part because I wanted to not let my immediate impression dominate what I write. As a Handbook with a specific slant, it is valuable and would make a useful contribution to any university library. Also, now that it can be downloaded online, there may be individuals who wish to purchase it as well. But I found myself comparing it to Brian Frederking and Paul F. Diel’s (2015) fifth edition of *The Politics of Global Governance: International Organizations in an Interdependent World*. A useful dialogue would happen if that book were critiqued by the editors and authors of the Handbook being reviewed here. Important issues such as poverty, disease, regional conflict and climate change are dealt with quite differently in the Frederking and Diel book.

Similarly, I tried to compare the Handbook to Sylvia Walby (2009) *Globalization & Inequalities*. That book tends to look at “modernity” as a more complex issue and has a somewhat more critical approach, although not Critical Theory of Marxist/Marxian theory *per se*. The issues dealt with when we consider international development, modernization, rural integrated development, the role of international and national organizations such as NGOs, and so forth, are so complex that no one Handbook can cover all the necessary

ground. Moreover, the intellectual problems hinted at in this Handbook could have involved more dialogue and debate. On the other hand, that would have made it a different book. It is always unfair for any reviewer to start to question a book project. The reader will gain a great deal from the separate chapters and from the overall organizational structure. The framework, however, should not necessarily be taken as the final word.

Notes

[1] The Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) was founded in 1957 by UNESCO. FLACSO is an international, intergovernmental, regional and autonomous organization with representations in different Latin American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico.

[2] Bruce Currie-Adler is identified as “Program Leader,” IDRC, the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa-Gatineau, Canada. [I myself have benefited from IDRC grants and an IDRC sponsored seminar for selected students in Indonesia.]. Daniel Kefeli is a Doctoral Researcher, Institute of Political Science, University of Münster, Germany. Karen M. Siegel is Research Group Leader: “Transformation and Sustainability Governance in South American Bioeconomies,” Institute of Political Science, University of Münster, Germany.

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[3] I was surprised to read there are “only” 2.6 million people in North America, Europe and

Oceania who are malnourished. The statement is from Lima and Baca in Chapter 16: The Politics of Food. They are the only authors who cite Karl Marx's 1867 work on the Critique of Classical Political Economy. (They cite a Spanish edition I do not have at hand.) It is true the percentage of severely malnourished people is higher in other parts of the world, but the authors do not seem to be familiar with the extensive literature on food insecurity in the US.