
Introduction

This book represents my engagement with development studies over many years. To guide the reader here is a brief overview of the treatment and arguments in the different chapters.

Chapter 1 is the substantive introduction to the book. It problematizes development knowledge and offers a stock and 12 (Twenty-first-century globalization) taking of major trends in development thinking. Chapter 1 (Trends) and chapter 11 (Futures) tie a ribbon around the book.

Chapters 2–7 mainly consist of critical treatments of different approaches to development. Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the career of development thinking in the mode of discourse analysis. Chapter 2 focuses on the deep legacies of Eurocentrism in developmentalism. Chapter 3 addresses the zigzag character of development thinking and its inconsistencies over time. Its closing argument on critical globalism is both analytic and programmatic. One of the limitations of discourse analysis (taken up in chapters 1 and 7) is that it fails to engage the specifics of political economy. Chapter 4 revisits the political economy approach by way of a critique of Samir Amin's work. His thesis in favour of delinking is contrasted to globalization processes, continuing the argument of critical globalism in the previous chapter. Another theme is Amin's political economy approach to 'culture'. Chapter 5 takes up various ways in which 'culture' has been incorporated into development discourse and policy.

While alternative development is a critique of mainstream development, chapter 6 subjects alternative development claims to a critical treatment, in particular the claim for an alternative development paradigm. Chapter 7 is a critique of post-development arguments and, I plead guilty, a deconstruction of deconstruction. Chapters 4–7 address four critical approaches in development: prioritizing structures (political economy), prioritizing culture (culture and development), prioritizing social forces (alternative development) and prioritizing discourse (post-development).

A book with just criticisms and goodbyes to paradigms would be too easy and not quite satisfactory, although this has long been the common fare in development studies. Lengthy analyses or critiques often conclude with just a brief note on ways forward and I would like to be more constructive and affirmative. Thus, chapters 8–11 consist of programmatic treatments or reconstructions in the sense of affirmative and innovative turns and forward options for development. On balance these treatments argue more 'for' than 'against'. Chapter 8 argues for extending the human development

Table I.1 *Précis of book treatment*

Approaches	Keywords	Chapters
Development thinking	Overview	1
	Deconstructions	
Discourse analysis	Developmentalism	2
	History of development thinking	3
Political economy	Dependency theory and delinking	4
Culture and development	Cultural turn, anthropology	5
Alternative development	Social forces	6
Post-development	Discourse analysis as ideology	7
Human development	Capacitation	8
ICT and development	Disembedding technology from capital	10
International development cooperation	Compartmentalizing macroeconomics and foreign aid	12
	Reconstructions	
Globalization and development	Critical globalism, global development	3, 11, 12
Intercultural development	Cultural difference as catalyst	4
Social development	Supply-side	8
Critical holism	Tao of development	9
Reflexive development	Collective learning, reform platform	11
	Development pluralism	12

approach to social development and for a supply-side approach to social development, including taking on questions such as social capital. Chapter 9 is a philosophical and methodological reflection; it takes the arguments on Eurocentrism in chapter 2 further and argues for critical holism as the Tao of development. Chapter 11 on futures of development takes the opening arguments on trends in development thinking and policy into future tense, redefines development in light of the overall discussion, and concludes with reconstructions in development. A précis of the treatment is as follows (Table 1). Chapter 12, new in the second edition, reflects on twenty-first century developments.

Any of these approaches — discourse analysis, anthropology, cultural studies, alternative development, political economy, etc. — is a vantage point from which to probe the complexities of development. Any approach handled with depth and subtlety can be fruitful if it becomes an instrument and avenue of reflexivity. This is the lesson I arrive at in the closing two chapters. Development is too complex to allow partial approaches to have their way — although these lend themselves to technical finesse and managerial intervention, the managerial fiction of knowledge and mastery itself is part of the problem. Combining different angles and approaches yields a holistic assessment of development. Fallibility and open-endedness are necessary features of development thinking and what matters in relation to any of these approaches is reflexivity; what matters is not merely what but also how. This also applies to holism itself: hence critical holism, lest holism become an all-purpose way out of the perplexities of development. These

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critical treatments are not dogmatic closures but contributions to reflexivity. And it applies to reflexivity lest it become snake oil: reflexivity must be politically enabling and serve an emancipatory interest.

From the combination of terms in the title—deconstructions/reconstructions—it is obvious that this is not an exercise in deconstruction in the classic sense (cf. Willett 1999: 2-3) for then reconstructions would not belong. Reconstructions are ways ahead, forward options, contextual and time bound. In time they will yield other deconstructions and then other reconstructions will emerge, which is the way of things. Chapter 1 argues that development is struggle. To be precise, development is struggle over the shape of futures, a dramatic and complex struggle.