

**Meier, M. Gerald, And Joseph E. Stiglitz (Eds.). *Frontiers Of Development Economics, The Future In Perspective*. Oxford University Press, N.Y. Paper; 2001. Price: Unknown.**

**Elbadawi, A. Ibrahim, And Benno J. Ndulu (Eds.). *Economic Development In Sub-Saharan Africa: Proceedings Of The Eleventh World Congress Of International Economic Association, Tunis* Palgrave. St. Martin's Press. New York. 2001.Cloth: \$85.**

The World Bank and Oxford University Press have joined efforts to publish a timely work on development economics. The book is the result of an intergenerational symposium on "The Future of Development Economics" which was organized by the university of Zagreb and the World Bank in May of 1999 and held in Dubronik, Israel.

As a student of development, this reviewer found this book to be quite intriguing and fascinating because of the breadth and depth of the development issues addressed. The authors of the chapters are well known in the discipline of economics. These authors include renowned Nobel Loureates such as Amartya Sen, Lawrence Klein, Douglas North, Paul Samuelson, and Robert Solow. This timely and important volume emphasizes many aspects of the classic development debates but goes further by discussing matters which are pertinent in the twenty-first century development dialogue and concerns. The "voices" of many specialists loom large in this volume. Economic historians, political economists, economic anthropologists and pure economists lend their voices to the development question. Among dher things, they ponder over the role of institutions and capacity building I development.

The chapters consist of essays which vary with regard to their technical, quantitative and qualitative underpinnings of development economics and as such, this variety is the strength as well as the weakness. For most readers who enjoy eclectic volumes, this book is an excellent reference book.

It is of utmost importance that the modern contemporary society understands the evolution of development thought, and its relation to development policy. Sound development policies drive rational development which transforms the landscape and societies in positive directions. Hence in this volume there are attempts to provide an answer to the question: What is development economics about? The contributors attempt to provide answers in different ways based on their training and research, but a reader of this volume finds that a common thread underlining the chapter is the idea that development is thought of as how economics and societies grow and change. There is no doubt that the contributors to this volume, like the classic economists such as Marx, found it necessary to interrogate issues concerning policy formulation and implementation.

In recent years, many developing areas of the world were advised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to institute market reforms through Structural Adjustment

Programs (SAPs). These reforms did not produce all the necessary results that were expected, especially “expedited growth.” Institutional support and good governance were not achieved and as a result economic “take-off” did not occur. Some of the chapters directly or indirectly stress the importance of specificity on goals and objectives as the cornerstone to sound development.

Although the topics addressed in this volume range from short commentaries about goals of development and a comparison of the old and new generations of development economists to theorizing about fallacies in development theory and their implications for policy, this book is useful for understanding past and current trends in development economics and policy issues relevant to the contemporary world. This reviewer finds the reflection by the Nobel Prize Laureates most interesting and recommends this book to scholars of development.

The second book edited by Elbadawi and Ndulu was put together in order to expand the debate on the strategy of reform and provide a vision for development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The book is basically “the proceedings of a special session which examined the experiences of Sub-Saharan African countries since the adoption of structural adjustment programs in the 1980s. The conference session was organized by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) as part of the Eleventh World Congress of the International Economic Association which was held in Tunis, Tunisia, in 1995.

Many have pondered what the recipe for development in Africa should be. The enormous mineral and natural resources of the continent are rivaled only by South America; yet many of the countries of Africa are among the world’s poorest. There has been a steady decline in economic fortunes. The tragedy of African economic development can be blamed on several factors, among which are misdirected attempts of development. These miscalculations have manifested themselves in all phases of socio-political, cultural and economic development.

Foreign assistance was seen at one time as the key to solving the development problems of the continent. Multilateral and bilateral efforts were prevalent in the 1980s and, economic reforms were embarked upon by many countries of Africa through structural adjustment. It is common knowledge that structural adjustment programs on the continent received mixed reviews. It was no surprise to this reviewer when a volume such as this appears on the book market in 2001. It is an attempt by a group of scholars/practitioners to elaborate the debate on strategies and policies for reforming Africa’s economy and by implication provide a vision for development. A reader of this volume moves away with two basic questions: What derails economic growth? And how can poverty be reduced?

Following an introductory chapter, which deals with the continent’s economic growth and broader development experiences, the book is divided into three parts: (1) Growth and long-term development, (2) Trade, Regional Integration and External Economic Relations, and (3) Macroeconomic Reforms. The ten chapters in the three sections are reviews of literature which are

embellished with key experiences and policy prescriptions to stem the tide of economic decline. There is a great discussion of private savings and investments.

However, little discussion is given in terms of capital flight. Many of the chapters discuss poverty and income distribution, trade, regional integration and external economic relations and macroeconomic adjustment. Overall, this book started out strong but the chapters that follow the introductory chapter have offered little insight into the development debate. Nonetheless, this reviewer would recommend the book for the libraries.

**VALENTINE JAMES**

**Southern University and A&M College**

**Baton Rouge, Louisiana**