

**Chasing Progress in the Irish Republic: Ideology, Democracy and Dependent Development.**



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Western Europe. Perhaps this is because Ireland assumes the primacy of political rights over civil and social rights. But if we go back to T. H. Marshall's original typology of rights (which the author mentions only in his conclusion), membership and citizenship in a liberal society are contingent first and foremost on civil rights, or basic guarantees of protection of the individual from the (police) powers of the state. On the other hand, in a liberal democracy, rights are a function of political struggle, and Ireland's book makes this point exceptionally well. His findings indicate that ultimately the French state, with its Jacobin emphasis on broader "human rights, equality, and *laicite*," is better equipped to handle the challenge of immigration and ethnic diversity, than the Swiss state, which lacks a "defining ideology" and is "out of sync with Europe." His assumption is that the universalistic, French republican model is a better model for Europe, than the particularistic, Swiss model of democratic localism.

Whatever criticisms one may have, this book should be required reading for anyone interested in the politics of immigration and ethnicity, two of the most important issues facing liberal societies in an increasingly interdependent world.

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JAMES F. HOLLIFIELD

**Chasing Progress in the Irish Republic: Ideology, Democracy and Dependent Development.** By John Kurt Jacobsen. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994. 226p. \$59.95 cloth, \$18.95 paper.

In *Chasing Progress*, Jacobsen argues that development policy in the autonomous Irish Free State after 1922 and the independent Republic of Ireland after 1949 provides a test of the importance of ideology in shaping development outcomes. Jacobsen critiques simple dependency theory for arguing that dependent economies respond automatically to shifts in the global economy. Like Peter Evans's *Dependent Development* (1979), *Chasing Progress* argues that state policy matters and that because it matters, ideologies will influence what states perceive as their menu of policy options, their choice from that menu, and their ability to sell policies to the public, particularly (as in the Irish case) a democracy with a broad franchise.

In Ireland, development policy in the 1920s concentrated on an orthodox pursuit of comparative advantage in agricultural exports, under the tutelage of British-educated, free-trade-minded civil servants supported by farmers. Policy shifted to import-substitution industrialization and autarky in the period 1932–58, as a development-minded Fianna Fail party tried to create a class of manufacturers to support itself. As this (inevitably?) gave out, policy turned to an export-led growth policy that paid multinationals to relocate labor-intensive parts of their production process to Ireland. Accession to the European Community in 1972 reinforced this policy, but the emergence of similar and often cheaper sites for outward processing forced the state to borrow heavily abroad to subsidize multinational corporate investment and to press wages downward through quasi-corporatist bargaining. The left parties accepted this in the hope that multinational corporations would create a working class to serve as *their* social base. But in the late 1980s, rising debt-service costs forced cuts in social spending

and destroyed emerging corporatist institutions. Instead, the absence of any institutions to support alternative development strategies reinforced by neoliberal ideologies led Ireland to persist with its old, multinational-corporation-led strategy.

*Chasing Progress* adds four things to the literature on development: (1) it carefully delineates the content of, and shifts in, Irish development policy, adding historical depth to the literature on Ireland, as well as more European data to a development literature that usually centers on "southern" cases; (2) Jacobsen's study also suggests that the proliferation of export-processing zones (which often fail to create any linkages to the rest of the local economy) make them a weak tool for development; and it highlights the importance of ideas and institutions in (3) policy selection and (4) execution. Ireland's failure to create local linkages—in sharp contrast to the Asian newly industrialized countries—stemmed from the predominance of orthodox economics in policy circles and the parallel resistance of landed and mercantile elites to the creation of any *dirigiste* planning agency. In turn, workers' willingness to accept liberal and neoliberal policies occluded the construction of more *dirigiste* agencies that might have created the countervailing ideas, industrial development, and tighter labor markets, which then could have served as the basis for a stronger labor movement.

This said, *Chasing Progress* has four great weaknesses. First, the last third of the book is written in a chronological, almost journalistic style that ignores the analytic framework Jacobsen lays out at the beginning. Jacobsen's failure to do a little in the way of comparison with other similar cases or counterfactual cases exacerbates this flaw. More comparison could have told us more about the realistic policy options for small economies, and how export-processing zones can be used for development. Jacobsen argues that a closed, Keynesian economy was a better policy option for Ireland. Comparison with New Zealand, a very similar agricultural exporter, shows the limits to this policy. New Zealand achieved substantial levels of industrialization in 1935–75 with this policy. But by the 1970s, the policy was bankrupt, and by the 1980s, so was New Zealand (like Ireland). On the other hand, both Hong Kong and Singapore have achieved substantial and enduring industrialization as export-processing platforms, successfully upgrading skills and wages in manufacturing, despite multinational corporations' predominant role in their economies.

Second, the book lacks any systematic analysis of the political economy of Ireland. It lacks a full analysis of what Ireland produces and exports and, in particular, does not show how important multinational corporations were for the economy, in what sectors, and with what consequences for the balance of payments. Most disturbingly, for a Marxist-type account, it does not show where the money went: Who holds the billions of dollars of public debt that subsidized multinational corporate investment? A local rentier class? Foreigners? Pension funds? All this matters for an understanding of class interests and policy preferences.

Third, this in turn makes the discussion of ideological influences on policy virtually unintelligible. Ideas rarely have an independent force of their own; social groups put ideas forward. But without an understanding of social groups' relative position in the economy, their (lack of) access to policymaking institutions, and their

ability to back their positions with cash or collective action, we cannot understand whether a real clash of ideas occurred or whether ideas simply provided a window dressing for decisions taken elsewhere.

Finally, this book is based on Jacobsen's 1982 dissertation and consequently reflects the debates of the 1970s, which investigated whether state policy could overcome or modify dependency. But more recent literature, like Robert Wade's *Governing the Market* (1990) or Stephan Haggard's *Pathways from the Periphery* (1990) has already gone several steps further, looking at the coalitional bases for specific institutions and policies, at the institutional context for policy formation, and at how state policy actually affects firms' behavior. Little of this can be found in Jacobsen's book. In this sense, Jacobsen, like Ireland, is still chasing progress.

University of Virginia

HERMAN M. SCHWARTZ

**Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought.** Naila Kabeer. London: Verso, 1994. 346p. \$64.95 cloth, \$18.95 paper.

Naila Kabeer has collected into one volume a group of her papers that comprise a feminist critique of mainstream social science, especially economic development theory. Since the chapters were written at different times and in response to different demands made upon the author, they do not necessarily have to be read in sequence, except for the first three chapters each of which builds upon the preceding chapter. The author is at pains to explain the format of her book in the preface and the reader is well advised to read it carefully. The first four chapters take up the broad question of the relation of feminism to development theory, or perhaps more bluntly, why women are systematically left out of mainstream development equations. The next three chapters examine concepts in development thought and practice. These include the liberal economic premise of altruism in family economic practice and the question of poverty and poverty measurement as both relate to women. The last three chapters focus on three specific areas of development practice that involve women: population policy, female empowerment, and the political context of gender training frameworks. These chapters investigate the concepts and strategies of the planning agencies themselves, including their subtle bias against women that vitiates the very results these agencies hope to achieve. The book concludes with the need not only for radical change in mainstream economic thinking about development, but also for the transformation of the institutions that determine development policy. The whole book represents a cogent and persuasive argument that unless development policy and practices are changed to include women as a necessary object of development strategy, development will continue to elude those countries seeking to achieve it. At best they will achieve market production at the cost of mass impoverishment and social breakdown.

This is a powerful book. What strikes the reviewer most is that the author attacks development theories and the concept of development at their very roots, laying open the assumptions on which the theories rest. Liberal economic theory, she argues, is based on the operation of individual units. All agents within society are motivated by one and the same goal, to maximize their individual utilities. Maximization requires allocating lim-

ited means to competing ends. Success in allocation is termed rational behavior. Individual behavior is then aggregated into the family and into the state with each different level of analysis being driven by the same principle, the maximization of individual utilities. Modernization and development theory evolved directly from liberal economic theory. Since all individuals are characterized equally by the same behavior, then the process of economic development from traditional society to an industrialized society must trace a similar path in all societies.

Kabeer contests these assumptions. Gender inequities are built into the structure of families and into national or international government hierarchies. Liberal economic theory as well as classic modernization theory are virtually silent about women. Women do not exist. The individual unit is the male, who is assumed to be the benevolent dictator of his family. The male controls what passes for knowledge in society as well as the levers of power. In the 1970s, the Women in Development (WiD) approach attempted to correct the lacunae on women. The focus was on making women and women's problems in development visible to the policy makers. One tangible result of this approach was the inclusion of women as a chapter or a section in development planning, but Kabeer thinks that WiD at its most fundamental level, essentially agrees with the liberal economic model. What is needed, in her view, is an entirely new model based on new modes of thinking. This model must not just relate means to ends, it must posit the end of development in terms of the well-being of all members of society, not simply the maximization of individual (family, state) utilities. In her excellent chapter on population policy, Kabeer argues that maternal health and well-being require attention to "women's status" (*italics mine*), long before a woman becomes pregnant. A population policy that focuses on birth control without attention to the other facets of a woman's life, risks backfiring on the policy planners. Rather than maternal health, the aim of international health agencies should be women's health, in all its dimensions.

This book should be required reading for participants preparing for the forthcoming Women's Conference in Beijing in August 1995. It should read by UN and other international agencies. In making her argument, the author brings together a wide composite of feminist and development literature, as well as her own considerable experience in the field. The book should be read with two caveats in mind. The first is that the author attacks conventional development theory from the standpoint of women's needs and roles in the so-called Third World. Excluded totally from the study are references to women in the post-communist world, many of whose needs are similar or who were specific victims of male-dominated economic development. Second, also absent and most sorely missed from this admirable critique of development thought is the interrelationship of women's nonexistent role in development theory and environmental degradation. While the author refers to and approves the concept of sustainability, she does not address the implications of improving women's status on environmental amelioration. Her book can provide important theoretical background for those of us dedicated to this endeavor.

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