

Chapter 2

Drawing Together Some Regional Perspectives on Poverty

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We can begin with a recognition of different types of political economy within which poverty, as described in this volume, is currently to be found. At least five categories (which are not mutually exclusive) can be identified. These do not include every type of political economy in which serious poverty exists, but they help to identify some significant distinctions.¹

- Political economies where, given the population living there, there are *inadequate internal resources* to sustain life for the vast majority above a basic poverty level. Such places include mountain China and much, it would seem, of rural India. In Africa, Rwanda for example would fall into the same category.
- Political economies where poverty seems to be largely a result of a particular *pattern of growth* or where, to put it another way, a reshaping of the growth path might well enable significant reductions of poverty to take place. Such places include Malaysia (where important reshaping has already occurred), South Africa, and much of Latin America.
- Areas where manifest *failure of the state*, for one reason or another, is forcing a return to the drawing board and a rethink, from scratch, of new strategies. This is true not only of Eastern Europe, including Russia, but also of such countries as Nigeria and a number of others in Africa.
- Countries where there is a rediscovery of poverty combined with serious attempts to *modify*, perhaps to salvage, the *welfare state* in an environment where new categories of people are finding themselves marginalized and in effect excluded from the mainstream of the political economy. Examples are Canada and much of Western Europe.
- Finally there are those countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and, surprisingly, New Zealand where (in

Figure 2.1 Countries with low, medium and high GNP per capita, vs. countries with a hostile, neutral and supportive political environment towards poverty, combined with a rural/urban dimension.

GNP/cap.	Low (1)	Medium (2)	High (3)
Political environment			
Hostile	rural urban	rural urban	rural urban
Neutral	rural urban	rural urban	rural urban
Supportive	rural urban	rural urban	rural urban

the mid-1990s) it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that there is a *new assault on the poor* combined with active steps, ideological as well as practical, to dismantle social measures originally designed to protect citizens from the worst ravages of poverty.

There are, of course, other ways of categorizing poverty in different societies or countries. One distinction might simply be in terms of average income or GNP/capita as listed in the annual *World Development Report*. The analysis of poverty in Mozambique, say, is quite different from what is required in Switzerland. Another breakdown could be in terms of countries where poverty is primarily rural (e.g. in India) compared with those where much of it is urban, as in Western Europe. A third relevant distinction relates to the political environment within which poverty occurs. Not all countries could be deemed as supportive in their public policy of the poor as, say, Israel or the Nordic countries. A particularly clear example of public hostility to the poor was apartheid in South Africa, where many of the policies in the years before 1990 were best analysed as a direct assault on the poor (see, for example, Wilson and Ramphela 1989: ch. 11). Combining these three sets of distinctions it is possible to construct a two-way table to provide for a somewhat more systematic categorization of poverty than the more intuitive preliminary list drawn from the limited number of examples provided in this book.

Using the tables from the *World Development Report*, it is immediately possible to divide countries according to whether average GNP/capita is low, medium, or high and also according to whether the majority of the population live in rural or in urban areas. Categorization in terms of socio-political environment is more controversial and yet it is surely a relevant consideration. It is perhaps best to leave it to research workers in specific countries to make their own assessments in the light of their detailed knowledge of the situation. But once these assessments have been made it would then be possible to categorize poverty in different countries by these three criteria. Other criteria that might be used in creating other illuminating categories include the size of countries (in terms of total population) as well as the degree of inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient, which however is not always available. As comparative studies on poverty in different parts of the world continue to expand so will it become clearer which set of criteria are most useful in creating categories that enable illuminating comparisons and contrasts to be made. For now it is sufficient to note the various possibilities as a starting place for future work.

It is clear from the chapters in Parts II–IV that the focus on poverty provides an important window onto the economic realities of our time. However, it is salutary to note the extent to which researchers into poverty agree that their work has been “long on measurements, but short on explanations and theories”.² Indeed, there are times when one is tempted to see the search for yet more facts to measure an ever more precise definition of poverty as a form of displacement activity by academics, whose concern to reduce the poverty they find is outweighed only by their powerlessness to do anything effective about it.

It is true that poverty research, when one compares the relatively little attention paid to causes and strategies, is characterized by a strong emphasis on facts and definitions. Nevertheless, the advances made in various parts of the world, particularly over the past thirty years, in refining the definitions and measuring the extent of poverty are enormously important, as may be seen when one compares areas where there has been no research with those where a good deal is known. It is interesting to trace the process whereby countries, starting at very different dates, became more conscious of the poverty in their midst as more research was undertaken and published. In some countries poverty research can be traced back as much as two centuries (see, for example, Eden 1797), if not longer, whereas in others the very existence of poverty was being denied as recently as the

1980s. But it is striking to note the resurgence (in some countries the inauguration) of poverty studies in the 1980s. Although it is tempting to dismiss too much fact finding as mere collection of information and lacking in analytical rigour, it is important to recognize that the basic process of mapping the terrain of poverty and of attempting to measure the changes over time is fundamental to any analysis of causes and to any systematic attempt to reduce or eliminate the problem.

Thus, we must pay particular attention to the search by research workers in different parts of the world for definitions of poverty that make possible precise measurement and comparison over both space and time. But it is just here that we run into two major difficulties: the first relates to the arbitrariness of (i.e. the degree of normative judgement required in) even the most absolute of poverty lines; the second is due to the growing consensus that there is no single definition of poverty capable of serving all purposes. Poverty, it is generally agreed, is a "multi-faceted and complex human condition". This conclusion for South-East Asia³ is echoed around the world from Greece, to New Zealand, to South Africa. But the search for greater clarity continues and the Nordic distinction between direct (i.e. outcomes focusing on living conditions) and indirect (i.e. considering household or individual resources) measures of poverty may be helpful.⁴ From the United States comes the observation that, for all its usefulness, the poverty line has two major economic weaknesses: (1) it relies too heavily on annual money income, which is extremely difficult to obtain accurately from the individual households being surveyed, and (2) the monetary income itself is an inadequate indicator of command over resources.⁵

Nevertheless, all countries undertaking serious poverty research find themselves treading the well-worn path of researchers in India, honing a definition of the poverty line that would permit an examination of trends over time and an informed discussion about the impact of government policies designed to alleviate poverty.⁶ But it is important to heed a warning, based on long experience, that a "periodic survey and assessment is good enough; what is important is to *do* something about it" (Rath 1994).

Poverty researchers would all agree that fact-finding is not enough – that beyond the collection of data there must be analysis of causes; and that beyond that there must be strategies for action. Although poverty is a profoundly political issue, perhaps precisely because of this fact, there is a strikingly consistent attempt by researchers to maintain objectivity. Social scientists recognize their obligation to uncover the truth as

accurately as possible in an environment where, as Miller points out for the United States,⁷ the facts themselves can be highly political. The extent to which poverty data are vulnerable to misuse, whether consciously or subconsciously, is itself a powerful reason for the emphasis that researchers have given to its collection. Moreover, researchers from all around the world, from Israel, Scandinavia, Hungary, the United States, Latin America, and elsewhere, report on the sensitivity of results to the tools of measurement or the concepts chosen. Hence the importance of using different means of measuring poverty and of analysing carefully the meaning of differences in the results. One important step towards strengthening this process of verification, suggested by le Roux (1995), is that all researchers should adopt the convention of automatically lodging in some library, or other accessible safe place, copies of their workings and of any computer program used in the analysis of data, thus enabling others to check for any errors in calculation.

It is against this background that, despite legitimate concern about the overemphasis of research on fact-finding rather than on analysis or policy, one can only welcome the recent drive in Western Europe, South Africa, and elsewhere for more comprehensive data on living standards. Indeed, one would go further to take special note of the crippling impact on society of an environment that either denies the existence of poverty, or refuses to allow publication of statistical and other information about it. Fundamental to any democracy must be the collection and placement in the public domain of comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date statistical and other information about living standards, poverty, and the wider political economy. The advances that have been made in this connection in many different parts of the world as recently as the past decade are most encouraging and need to be consolidated and expanded.

There is, however, one important caveat to which those writing about Latin America draw special attention. It relates to the important role that international organizations such as the International Labour Organization or the World Bank have played in recent years in pioneering poverty research in many different countries. It is clear that in many places external intervention has been crucial in providing funding and expertise that otherwise would have been lacking to collect adequate information. But, coming from the outside, and working with the host government as they are bound to do, these organizations have a built-in bias to avoid, or at least to play down, matters deemed by their hosts to be unduly controversial or political. This is particularly evident when it comes to analysis of the *causes*

of poverty, where class conflict and other clashes of interest may be fundamental in understanding the dynamics of a situation in which the government itself may be part of the problem.

As Golbert and Kessler write⁸: "International organizations are focused on the financial-economic cause to explain the poverty increase in the [19]80s . . . they analyse the negative effects of the external debt, the fiscal imbalance, and unequal distribution without mentioning the socio-political factors that generated these circumstances. International agencies do not deny the influence of socio-political variables in poverty's increase, but because their objective is to produce a diagnosis of the situation and to propose lines of action they leave the task of the in depth analysis of the causes of poverty in the hands of local researchers." There is no way of completely eliminating inherent biases of this sort. But it is important to be aware of the hidden constraints, if only to encourage a wider diversity of research workers whose public discussion can help to overcome possible blind spots.

Another major weakness of externally driven, donor-funded research, as experience from South Asia makes clear,⁹ is that it can increase dependency by failing either to build up local knowledge of relevant issues or to ensure adequate training and experience of analytical and policy-orientated researchers within the country or region concerned. It is important to ensure that all such research programmes build in a properly thought-through and adequately funded process of local "learning by doing", which increases the capacity of the country concerned to understand, analyse, and prescribe strategies for itself in an atmosphere of accessible information and open, independent, and critical debate. An international network of social scientists such as that gathered under the umbrella of the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty (CROP), could do much to consolidate the enormous gains made in recent years, to prevent a relapse into the secrecy of information and hostility to open debate that tempt bureaucrats, and to widen these zones of openness until they include every country on earth.

So much then for the search for precision in definition and measurement of poverty. It seems to be now generally agreed, as Room (1990) has pointed out has happened for Western Europe, that, instead of focusing only on the disposable income or expenditure of individuals or households at a moment in time, researchers have to make a three-fold shift in perspective to: (1) the many dimensions of poverty; (2) dynamic analysis; and (3) from the isolated individual or household to the local community within which that household lives. In other words, there is a new

awareness of an old truth: that poverty can be better understood in a wider, more holistic framework in both space and time.

This shift in perspective does not yet take us much further down the road in analysing the causes of poverty. Indeed, one might feel that with the new arguments (coming from the United States by Murray 1984, and others) to the effect that much poverty is now a result of some of the very policies designed to alleviate it, there is less clarity (certainly less consensus) about the causes of poverty than there was, say, thirty years ago. It is illuminating to read analyses of poverty in different parts of the world, but we are far from having reached a stage where we could postulate a general theory. Indeed, as an early newsletter of the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty warned, "The complexity is such that there is no reason to determine *one* encompassing theoretical framework" (Øyen 1994).

Poverty itself is a highly political issue where power and interest groups have had a significant (some would say overwhelming) influence on patterns of distribution and the existence of poverty. In addition, the historical context from which the particular present of a specific country or region has emerged is often interpreted in different ways. Thus the analysis of the causes of poverty is itself contested territory where all who tread, including social scientists themselves, cannot be completely unaffected or neutral. Hence the need for all of us to be open to critical attacks on our most cherished theories and to recognize the corrective value of a diversity of hypotheses in the search for understanding. Moreover, despite the extent to which poverty can be fully comprehended only in the context of a particular place and time, there are nevertheless some important observations and ideas whose relevance is by no means confined to one specific situation. Reading through the wide collection of papers in this book there are a number of striking parallels that provide stimulating starting points for further thinking. Let us consider some of these, one by one.

First is a general recognition of the fact that the debate on poverty is part of the wider debate on development and underdevelopment. Despite the difficulties of definition noted earlier, the concept of "poverty" is less ambiguous than that of "development", which is what some writers have called a "suitcase" word able to contain any meaning one chooses to pack into it.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the dual process of understanding the causes of poverty and of devising strategies to reduce or even uproot it is the central component of the development debate. Recognition of this reality serves partly to reinforce appreciation of the difficulties of the problem, which is as broad and diverse as the

global economy, and partly as a reminder that the search for strategies and understanding of poverty must draw on the wider body of knowledge accumulated in the general field of development. Any attempt at a brief overview cannot expect to do more than scratch the surface here and there in the hope of stimulating deeper thinking about certain aspects of the matter. At the same time, insights from development theory can be useful when considering specific instances of poverty. Thus, in reviewing poverty research in Turkey for example, Petmesidou calls attention to Ozbudun's pessimistic predictions about the possibility of reducing poverty through effective redistributive policy:

In a third world country trying to speed up development, both the populist model of development and the technocratic model generate their own vicious cycle. In the former [model], growing public expenditure limits economic growth and increases social conflicts as more groups become participant in the political game and attempt to share a stagnant or slowly growing pie; the result is social and political instability. In the latter [model], a high rate of economic growth can be achieved, [but] at the expense of social justice and political participation, and this will increase polarization and social unrest.

Thus, concludes Ozbudun, "the complex relationships among development, participation and equality will provide the key to the future of Turkish politics".¹¹ Which is not to say that substantial reduction of poverty is impossible, but it does serve as a salutary reminder of the political context and constraints within which particular policies would unfold.

Against this "development" background let us turn more specifically to note some of the various theories of poverty that have been used in different parts of the world. In South Asia, Silva and Athukorala¹² identify four theoretical frameworks: (i) the neoclassical approach, with market-led development; (ii) the political economy approach, focusing on history and on the creation of poverty through conflict of interests; (iii) the culture of poverty approach, which tends to blame the victim and to reinforce the status quo; (iv) the participatory approach, whereby the energies of the poor themselves are harnessed to alleviate their plight. These four frameworks are not entirely mutually exclusive nor do they cover exactly the same ground. Some analyse the past and others focus on future strategies, but the categorization helps to identify different emphases in the search for understanding.

These four frameworks are by no means absent from Europe, but Jürgen Kohl looks at the matter somewhat differently, drawing on two research traditions.¹³ One (Anglo-Saxon) is

concerned primarily with distributional issues and the lack of resources at the disposal of the household or individual. The other (continental, intellectual) looks at relational issues, including such matters as inadequate social participation and the problem of integrating the poor into the larger society. The nub here is "poverty as social exclusion". This focus on exclusion is reinforced in the Nordic countries where, of the four classes of explanation (namely marginalization, underclass, feminization, and subculture), it is theories of marginalization and of underclass that are most widely used.

In the United States of America, Miller points to a four-part classification of causes: (i) demographic; (ii) neighbourhood effects; (iii) cultural, and (iv) a large bag of labour market causes, including different pockets or aspects such as human capital, mechanization, and other economic changes; macro/Keynesian explanations; immigration ebbs and flows; and (for some such as Charles Murray) welfare disincentives. The high degree of politicization of poverty in the United States implies not only a vigorous, indeed rancorous, debate about causes and strategies but also sometimes bias in the selection of data to prove preconceived conclusions, and misuse of facts to bolster arguments with statements that appear factual but that in reality lack empirical support. Despite such froth which bubbles in the political cauldron it is possible in North America to distinguish, as Mishra has done, between two approaches to the study of poverty, namely social engineering, which focuses on policy and administration, versus social structural, which focuses more on the institutions and processes through which poverty is produced, reproduced, and sustained. Mishra argues that there is need to move beyond these "conservative" and "liberal" approaches to a third, structural, approach that takes due account of power and of conflict.

It is worth noting that the demographic model to which Miller draws attention in the United States is implicit in an important analysis of the causes of continuing poverty, if not impoverishment, in South Asia where Silva and Athukorala pinpoint the impact of steady population growth in rural areas where agrarian reform has failed and land concentration remains high. With little or no extension of cultivated land, more and more people become landless. It is this steady decline in the asset base of the vulnerable rural population that seems to be one of the primary factors leading to increases in the numbers in poverty. This analysis is also true in South Africa for people living in those rural areas that, until recently, were delineated as apartheid's Bantustans. The persistence of poverty in rural India despite

growth in agricultural labour productivity leads Dutta to point to the need for better wage data so as to be able to trace what impact such increases in productivity may have on the real incomes of agricultural labourers.

In Anglophone West Africa, Akeredolu-Ale laments the widespread anti-intellectualism and the non-theoretical orientation of such studies as exist, but suggests that the most appropriate theoretical framework in that context might be one that, while rooted in historical analysis, combines insights from social stratification and from marginalization theories of poverty.

What is one to make of this welter of theory? Social scientists long for the simplicity of $E = mc^2$ or a Grand Unified Theory, but must settle instead for that other vital lesson of twentieth-century natural science: namely that, with limited understanding, two ways of looking at a problem may be contradictory yet both true. Physicists have learnt to live, if not happily at least creatively, with the duality of light conceived of both as a particle and as a wave. Human beings and their social structures are far more complicated than light, so social scientists have to learn to live, no less creatively than the physicists, with the inclusive diversity and tension of apparently contradictory truths.

From analysis and the search for more powerful theoretical understanding I turn now to consider briefly some of the comparative evidence that certain policies have actually worked more effectively than others in achieving their goal of reducing poverty. In South Asia, anti-poverty programmes have been divided into two main types: (i) those that stimulate production and income-generating processes amongst the poor, and (ii) those that guide the flow of income or consumption through such devices as food stamp programmes or employment guarantee schemes. Silva and Athukorala conclude that the first set of policies, which aim to stimulate income generation (and which are further subdivided into policies focused on land redistribution and tenancy reforms; on increasing the asset base and productivity of the rural poor; and on specific areas), are more effective than the second set. Thus, for example, the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and the Janasaviya programme in Sri Lanka are widely believed to have been remarkably successful. But this conclusion is not without its critics. Raymond Apthorpe (1994), for one, questions whether either Grameen or the Amul Dairy in India have in fact achieved all that is claimed.

One of the most successful of more recent strategies against poverty has been in Malaysia, where comprehensive affirmative action programmes in a context of rapid economic growth led to a reduction of the proportion of households in poverty from 60

per cent in 1957 to 12 per cent in 1993. Similarly in Korea, rapid economic growth combined with other policies led to a rapid reduction in relative and absolute poverty in the seven years from 1979 to 1986, although the extent of urban poverty is still a matter for considerable dispute. Malaysia and Korea are two of a number of countries in Asia (including Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia) that demonstrate that significant advances in poverty reduction are possible where growth-promoting policies are pursued along with targeted programmes for the poor. These are the ones that have attempted to make the maximum possible use of the poor's only known asset – their labour power.¹⁴

Growth alone is not enough. In South Asia as a whole average GNP growth of 3.1 per cent during the 1980s failed to trickle down,¹⁵ and there are many countries in Asia (including Bangladesh, India, China, Pakistan, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam) where significant poverty reduction has not really taken place. In Latin America during the thirty years 1950–80 the average annual growth of employment in formal sector activities reached 3.7 per cent. But this was not enough to absorb all those seeking work, and poverty, together with inequality, remained acute. Much the same can be said about South Africa over the four decades of almost unchecked growth that began with the rise in the price of gold as a result of Roosevelt's devaluation of the dollar in 1934, and continued through the industrial expansion of the Second World War. The subsequent growth was not decisively halted until the Soweto uprising of 1976. Similarly in the United States it is argued that growth needs rethinking, for two reasons: first, because growth of GNP does not necessarily imply a concomitant increase in jobs—the phenomenon of jobless growth is becoming increasingly apparent; second, because of greater awareness of the environmental consequences of growth.¹⁶

Policies do indeed make a difference. The evidence from North America is that social insurance type programmes have done far more to lift people out of poverty than means-tested programmes. The paradox, argues Mishra, is that targeted programmes (in the USA and Australia) do much less to lift people out of poverty than those that emphasize universal and comprehensive programmes (such as in the Nordic countries). In the United States, reduction of poverty among the elderly has been the great success story of social programmes there.¹⁷ In Australia, by contrast, the worst problem of poverty is to be found amongst those over the age of 64. Differences between Sweden on the one hand, where poverty is mainly a problem for young people, and Australia, on the other, are primarily due to

differences in old-age pension schemes.¹⁸ Similarly, urban poverty studies in Greece emphasize the absence of substantial social benefits compared, for example, with Israel, where maintenance of a stable pattern of income distribution and relative poverty requires large investments and well-planned social policy.

It is obvious yet relevant to point out that the socio-political environment within which poverty occurs will itself be a major factor in determining whether steps will be taken to try and deal with the problem. Contrast, for example, increasing political pressure in the United States to reduce government expenditure on social welfare programmes with the situation in Israel, where evidence that the proportion of the population in poverty was increasing led to a huge public outcry and immediate passage of a law for "the reduction of the extent of poverty and income disparity", which provides for increased universal transfer payments (for children, maternity, unemployment, old age, etc.) plus selective (means-tested) guaranteed income maintenance.¹⁹ Social scientists (who have their own political biases) are still a long way from consensus on how best to tread the fine line between using a safety net to help those who have fallen on hard times and seeing this safety net as a factor encouraging indolence, along the lines of the argument that giving money to beggars simply increases the demand for beggars. However, one of the most exciting products of the new network of poverty studies is the possibility of comparing and contrasting the very different practices pursued at both the macro and the micro level in so many countries around the world and learning from them. There is still a vast amount of basic research work to be done in this area.

Although it is obviously worthwhile, as well as encouraging, to focus on those policies and programmes that have succeeded, one should also examine those policies that fail, because it is often possible to learn as much, if not more, from well-documented failure than from many success stories. In this context it is salutary to note that, in Asia, particular attention has been drawn to the failure, or perhaps the limitations, of state-sponsored poverty alleviation programmes. It is worth quoting Samad's careful conclusion at some length.

The restructurings in the concepts of poverty alleviation programmes and the mechanisms of their implementation thus would centre around a) restructurings of the designs, b) the delivery system and c) the antenna of the recipients. This would be possible only in a milieu of genuine democracy and decentralised administrative arrangements. Too much centralisation in the past did not allow otherwise

viable . . . [poverty alleviation programmes delivery systems] to deliver. This is the lesson of the past. We have to remember that the more remote a decision-making entity from the subjects of those decisions, the lower the probability of those decisions having their intended impacts. People must participate in as close a proximity as possible in decisions that affect their lives, living, workplace and interactions with the exterior world. Any worthwhile programme restructurings at the conceptual and implementation levels must acknowledge this simple but often ignored truth. (Samad 1994)

Another salutary warning, this time from the United States, is Miller's caveat:

Be suspicious of the siren call of education and training as the preferred remedy for poverty. Certainly they are good things of themselves, especially when they aim to do more than slot people into narrow work situations and also provide some civic education. . . . [but] a crucial, often-neglected question is whether the jobs will be there when the poor complete their training. Many poor people are shifted from one training programme to another – they are being trained to be trained. . . . Training does not solve basic problems of low employment growth, especially for low-trained persons. (Miller 1994)

Where they have not already done so, other countries may yet have to learn these lessons. It is to be hoped that the growth of comparative studies in this field will enable them to glean wisdom from the experience of those who have had to learn the hard way. Thus South Africa, for example, which has embarked, with high hopes, on a highly centralized Reconstruction and Development Programme may find that the Asian experience is not without relevance in order to achieve the goals to which the government of national unity is committed.

One final point emerging from the essays in this volume remains to be commented upon. It relates to the surprising lack of attention paid to the impact of the political boundaries of the modern nation state in so many situations of poverty. Mishra draws attention to the fact that most studies work, as they were commissioned to do, within the boundaries of the nation state. As he points out: "Relatively little has been done by way of cross-national poverty research . . . [yet] it is a particularly promising area of research. . . . It should help to put the national problems and issues in a broader international perspective, bringing a fresh, new look at domestic issues."²⁰ All this is true, and more. We would want to go even a step further to argue that the assumptions implicit in many national studies make it possible to miss, or simply to ignore, important forces that should be considered in any analysis of causes or of strategies of alleviation.

The experience of southern Africa has been particularly helpful in this regard because it is here, perhaps more than anywhere else, that the economic consequences of political boundaries that have acted as a one-way filter or membrane affecting flows of labour, of investment, or of tax revenue have been most visible. Lesotho, for example, or Mozambique have contributed, by way of migrant labour supplies, as much as any other area in the region (including rural South Africa) to the development of the mining industry during the past century. But little of the wealth accumulated during that process trickled through in the form either of income or of capital investment (whether private or public) to these “peripheral” areas. Indeed, it seems likely that, for many of these reasons the consequence of being organically part of the “development” of South or southern Africa was to reduce rather than to increase per capita income. The geography of distribution, whether within countries, as in China with its impoverished mountain areas,²¹ or between countries, as in southern Africa and elsewhere, is a matter requiring further work.

To conclude, I return to where I began: to reiterate that this overview can do no more than reflect upon some of the insights and contradictions that emerge from reading the chapters that make up the core of this book. If this essay has done no more than whet the appetite of readers to work through the fascinating detail of the individual case studies it will have done its job. They are offered to readers in the hope that they will provide a good starting point for a deepening understanding of, and effective action against, the scandal of mass poverty that permeates the world as it enters the twenty-first century.

NOTES

1. This chapter draws directly and heavily on the other chapters in this book. In an attempt to keep notes to a minimum, specific facts and ideas from these different chapters are not always directly acknowledged.
2. S. A. Samad, “Regional State-of-the-Art Reviews on Poverty Research/Asian Chapter”, Crop conference paper, Paris, December 1994, p. 35.
3. Valencia, Chapter 8.
4. Halleröd et al., Chapter 16.
5. Miller, Chapter 25.
6. Dutta, Chapter 7.
7. Miller, Chapter 25.
8. L. Golbert and G. Kessler, “Regional State-of-the-Art Reviews on Poverty Research/Latin America”, Crop conference paper, Paris, December 1994, p. 19.

9. Evidence from South Asia about the danger of externally funded research increasing dependency by not ensuring adequate training.
10. I am indebted to Marie-Dominique Perrot for an introduction to the important Francophone debate on development, which includes reflection on "*le mot valise*".
11. M. Petmesidou, "Review of Poverty Research in Greece, Turkey and Cyprus", Crop conference paper, Paris, December 1994, p. 20.
12. Silva and Athukorala, Chapter 5.
13. Kohl, Chapter 14.
14. Samad, op. cit., p. 63.
15. Silva and Athukorala, Chapter 5.
16. Miller, Chapter 25.
17. Mishra, Chapter 21.
18. Halleröd et al., Chapter 16.
19. Bar-Yosef, Chapter 20.
20. Mishra, Chapter 21.
21. Ruizhen and Wang, Chapter 9.

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