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Human Rights and Third World Development

*Reviewed by Marc Salzberg**

SHEPHERD, George W., Jr. and NANDA, Ved P., HUMAN RIGHTS AND THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT, Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn., (1985); \$45.00, SBN 0-313-24276-3, 331 pp.; bibliog., index, introduction by the editors.

I initially approached this book with a mixture of respect and uneasiness. First, I have great respect for the editors of this anthology. They are distinguished academicians whose scholarly credentials are impeccable and whose knowledge in the field of human rights is unsurpassed. George Shepherd is a Professor in the Graduate School of International Studies of the University of Denver. Ved Nanda is a Professor in the College of Law of the University of Denver and Director of its International Legal Studies Program. Second, I was uneasy because though my training is both in political science and law, my most recent education and my professional activities are both in law. Lawyers are too often uncomfortable with a non-legal approach. My uneasiness resulted from my initial concern at finding the book insufficiently devoted to law.

This is not an international law book. It cites no World Court cases. Treaties rarely appear among the footnotes. Only Ved Nanda's chapter at the very end ties in international law.

This is a political book. Its essential theme is the politics and policy of human rights in the Third World. Fortunately, a review of this book is still appropriate in this journal, the "Denver Journal of International Law and Policy". Once I changed hats and turned from attorney back to political scientist, most of my uneasiness vanished. I could appreciate the book as the fine political analysis that it is. . . .insightful, well-researched, guilty of some wishful thinking, but on the whole, a valuable study of "Human Rights and Third World Development".

The book is admirably organized. It is divided into three parts. The first part raises the theoretical questions that are meant to permeate the rest of the book. The second part (by far the major part) consists of case studies from various countries and regions. The third part is meant to serve as a conclusion and to tie the chapters together by discussing implementation of human rights.

The issue addressed by the book and set forth at its beginning is a sizable and worthy question, incapable of a ready response. The question

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raised is: Are human rights and third world development complementary or competing? Nearly all the authors attack the commonly-held belief that economic development cannot take place in Third World countries without the sacrifice in the short term of political liberty and human rights. The bulk of the evidence presented in this book supports the idea that economic development and human rights can flourish side-by-side. A consensus exists among the authors that economic development can take place without jeopardizing human rights.

I agree whole-heartedly, of course, that economic development can or may take place without trampling on human rights. But I could not help remembering that in almost every instance, as a practical matter, it does not take place in the Third World without serious threats to human rights. Economic development is inevitably accompanied by change in the power structure; such change has rarely been known to occur gently or respectfully in conservative, non-democratic Third World societies. I am unconvinced by the authors; I remained convinced instead that czarist Russia could not have been industrialized and electrified without Stalinist prison camps. Recent economic development in South Korea, Taiwan or Brazil was not created in an atmosphere of participatory democracy and flourishing human rights. Economic development may surely foster human rights, to the extent that economic development typically does widen sources of power to more strata of the society. Economic development and human rights rarely march forward hand-in-hand in the Third World, however.

I was a little disappointed by the third part of the book, the part which held itself out as a conclusion. It was really more of a miscellany to collect otherwise unclassifiable articles. Matthew Lippman's article on multinational corporations and Arthur Blaser's article on nongovernmental organizations did not serve to tie the book together or to focus on future implementation of human rights conventions or otherwise to conclude the book. Instead, they were simply additional "case studies" belonging more properly in the second and principal part of the book, alongside other "case studies" like that of El Salvador by Ted Lewellen and of China by Stephen Thomas. Only Ved Nanda's final article served as a sort of synthesis, to refocus attention to the human dimension of the entire issue, and on the role that international law can play in helping individual people to reach their goals.

I felt, too, that the selection of articles showed a bias. There were lengthy articles on state terror in El Salvador and Guatemala, where U.S. Government intervention is apparent and undeniable. A more balanced survey, however, would have included entirely homegrown human rights repression in such countries as Uganda and the Central African Republic. I was disappointed that so little was said of Haiti, a country where human rights have been so ignored, and where economic development is so compellingly necessary.

Some of the political analysis reflects blithely wishful thinking. I think in particular of Shawky Zeidan's article on the West Bank and

Gaza and of the starry-eyed solution he proposes to enable both human rights and economic development to prosper among Palestinians. Some authors are more realistic, however, and recognize, if grudgingly, that much of the problem lies in native political cultures that spontaneously repress human rights as part of a centuries-old way of life and will continue to do so, regardless of economic development and regardless of the sins, real and imagined, of the U.S., of South Africa, and of Israel.

One subject was noticeably absent, though it ties in to economic development in the Third World. That subject is terrorism. One instantly thinks of the number of European and North American industrialists kidnapped by terrorists in Uruguay and Argentina. Is it necessary for governments, in their justifiable efforts to stamp out extremist terrorist groups, to jeopardize human rights in so doing?

Although I did not leave the book with an exhilarating optimism for parallel growth of human rights and economic development in most Third World countries, the book was nevertheless a "good read" with splendid case studies. Ved Nanda's final chapter on the role of international law in this arena did lead me to try to imagine how international institutions might effectively help enforce respect for human rights in those Third World countries presently sacrificing human rights on the altar of economic development. My thoughts turned to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, which enforces the European Convention of Human Rights with some efficacy among member-states of the Council of Europe. Unfortunately, however, the Strasbourg Court acts not among Third World countries but rather among increasingly unified and politically developed Western Europe, and even so is not always extremely effective. Realistically, how much hope can there be that the O.A.S. or the O.A.U. or that any U.N. body might provide meaningful assistance in implementing the international law of human rights in those Third World countries hell-bent on economic development at any price?

