

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND AN INVITATION

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Writing a conclusion to our edited collection seems premature – one gets the sense this collection is only getting started. The authors within these pages have shown through rich analysis and theoretical reflections how postdevelopment in practice is already underway in both the Global South and North. In their contributions, authors have also traced areas of postdevelopment practice requiring further reflection and analysis, of which there are many. Throughout these pages, we see how postdevelopment is a continual struggle to shake off development. At the same time, postdevelopment names the provincialisation of development by embracing the world of the third, the realities of hybrid economies, the pluriversal and the multiple ways peoples, places and ecologies have made and retained other worlds. Just getting started also means that there is still much to think through.

Postdevelopment in practice confronts the difficulty of overcoming development's hold amid a series of (postdevelopment) practices. A poignant example of this is offered in Tello's powerful study of postdevelopment art – not the usual place scholars go searching for a critique of development or postdevelopment practice. But Tello presents a careful study of the difficulties and limitations encountered by art projects and interventions seeking to value Southern knowledges and to highlight the struggles of refugees in Europe. Tello's critique, advanced through the suggestive formula of 'art as NGO', makes a compelling case. The entangled relations sustaining these interventions are simultaneously reproducing certain forms of exclusion and modernist frames. That this is so reveals the need to further reflect upon and to have postdevelopment art practice link up with other social movements and political organisations. Within postdevelopment practice, the decolonial art intervention seeking to value Southern knowledges now needs to engage with the study of its diverse economy, both allowing for the intervention, while blocking its decolonial thrust. Postdevelopment names this complexity and the careful commitment to working it through.

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This means that whilst we are moving towards the end of development, we are also amidst transition. And in transition searching out these horizons of difference, care, critique and hope. As Katherine McKinnon, Stephen Healy and Kelly Dombroski put it in their chapter: ‘what postdevelopment scholars are exploring is how to move ahead uneasily – without confidence that any particular approach is the “right” one, and with the knowledge that any development work is always already embedded in politics’. For us, a commitment to staying with the trouble does not mean giving up on ‘doing something’, but committing to a path that questions and transforms not only development but the project of postdevelopment as we knew it. As Donna Haraway has put it, ‘staying with the trouble’ is something important for scholars and activists to do; it allows us to sketch out the messy and uncomfortable areas of being complicit, whilst trying to deconstruct amid practice. The difficulty is itself part of working within the transition. Still, it should be of comfort for the many within the development machine that your concerns and critiques of the defuturing of development should not be confined any longer to corridor whispers – it’s time for futuring, as Tony Fry might put it.

Similarly, there are chapters within the collection that map out the ‘world of the third’, as Dhar and Chakrabarti call it – sites that are not capitalist, nor pre-capitalist. This is not just sanguine and hopeful, but a crucial point, in that postdevelopment is not always just emerging from cracks in the machine, but is the world for many. Here is a reminder to parochialise the West and its development, even within the North, as Bendix, Müller and Ziai show us.

The volume’s invitation to have emerging and prominent scholars and activists engage with postdevelopment practice repeatedly raised the question of ‘practice’ and ‘praxis’. The latter is, of course, a complex notion most powerfully developed by the Marxian tradition, whereby practice is recursively informed by theory. The current project, premised on the coupling of ‘postdevelopment and practice’, and therefore highlighting already existing work within a world of many worlds as knowledges and practices seeking to render these diverse ontologies stronger, immediately calls forth the notion of praxis, though without privileging a Marxian register.

The focus on practice within these pages has led to ways of worlding, of doing economies and futuring, that matter to many, yet we have been reminded that postdevelopment theory is crucial in guiding and reflecting upon practice. Postdevelopment theory assists us from not getting lost in the thick of it – it is the line leading us through the woods. Theory helps critically consider events and processes as postdevelopment, helping us also to assess claims and to rethink how something may or may not be postdevelopment in practice. Here, we see how recovering and thinking with other theoretical traditions remains central. In the volume we are fortunate to have several genealogies for postdevelopmental critique and practice presented. Along with Marxian and poststructural genealogies, Caria and Dominguez show how what came to be known as postdevelopment had also been informed by other strands of sociological critique and ecological thinking

about economy. Similarly, Nakano discusses the earlier work of Yoshirou Tamanoi on regionalism as a form of postdevelopmental critique developed in Japan, which in turn informed diverse environmental and regional projects. Also, Dhar and Charakabarti's work on the world of the third points to yet another series of worlding postdevelopment alternatives. The futures of postdevelopment are being informed by these and other experiences and genealogies of critique, theory and practice. Postdevelopment as practice, reproducing worlds, making worlds, defending worlds, will be informed by dialogues crossing these multiple genealogies.

Sites of postdevelopment in practice also challenge a set of sad and old, but enduring, views. As the volume has emphasised, postdevelopment in practice is not simply a project of the Global South, but also one very much being advanced in the Global North. Sites are bodies – and, as Harcourt so skilfully shows us, flesh may become a site of resistance, resurgence and renewal. Sites of postdevelopment in practice are multiple, art, work and stories, not just what the (sometimes) harsh pen of the academic presents. This practice expands and ignites imaginaries – it affects practice, providing atmospheres of possibility.

Crucially, we must continually reflect on who are the actors of postdevelopment. Who is telling the story, who gets to define worlds? In this volume, our authors are academics, artists and activists who have presented the worlds of people – many writing together with those that are the focus of their chapters. Many of these are communities, as shown in Pattnaik and Balaton-Chrimes, Curchin, and Chitranshi's chapters. Others are people coming from NGOs, such as the work of Schöneberg. There is a lot to learn from this careful work. At the very least, their considerations have to be central to any future project of postdevelopment in practice, to learn from listening – as a *rebel listener* described by Cisneros and Close. They remind us that a rebel listener engages in a politics of care and critique – moving between worlds and tracing the contours and cracks that allow for the possibility of solidarity, collaboration and learning. The rebel listener is just as much about scaling down in order to censor and silence racism and focus in, as much as amplifying out – in order to remind, to project and to interrupt. This work can be doubling down on development research itself – the hard work of holding ourselves and colleagues to account – Christopher Shepherd's warning is raw and serves as a reminder of the ways in which universities have been complicit and have capitalised on development's lie – the many consultancies undertaken and the investments made in training the next generation in Western-oriented technocratic expertise, firmly set on voiding the pluriverse.

Chapters in this collection have also helped us think about the role of the state in postdevelopment in practice. How does a state *do* postdevelopment? Can it? We have seen how this question fares differently in the settler-colonial context to the postcolonial context. Lang's discussion, for instance, foregrounded how the Ecuadorean state has played an ambivalent role as regards *buen vivir*, both promoting it in official documents and seeking to tame its transformational potential, while at the same time enabling local governments to pursue *buen vivir* in complex ways. Yet Spencer, in her work with First Nations groups in the

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Northern Territory in Australia, has shown the difficulties and limited ability of a settler state to engage postdevelopmentally, while also illuminating the limits of research in trying to facilitate this process.

We also cannot forget the technological shifts and functionalities globalising particular worlds. Fry shows how technology has changed everything so that even if ‘the binary logic of development has fallen, [development’s] illusory presence persists, and along with it our understanding of the political’. Given the transformations wrought by what Fry discusses as ‘techno-power’, the practices and politics of postdevelopment must address the agencies of technology, such that the futuring of postdevelopment can no longer be framed in familiar geopolitical, economic or humanitarian terms.

Overall, though, we see how affirming and rediscovering pluriversality is intimately linked to the efforts of postdevelopment in practice, as is a greater concern with our everyday ontologies and their ways of worlding. The chapter by Ashish Kothari, Ariel Salleh, Arturo Escobar, Federico Demaria and Alberto Acosta points to their important project exploring more widely the pluriverse in the *Postdevelopment Dictionary*. A revival is underway.

Postdevelopment in practice: An invitation

In just getting started, this collection makes one wonder what else and who else has something to say about postdevelopment in practice. These final passages, then, must be an invitation to you, the reader, the writer, the activist and the artist, to find ways to also think and communicate moments and experiences of postdevelopment already in train within and towards the pluriverse.

It may be then appropriate to consider this volume as a call to continue sharing already existing postdevelopment practice, to work up this diversity as worlding alternatives already under way. Indeed, all contributions share such a commitment. But an edited volume can only go so far, and much more can be done. The task of sharing projects, of reading their difference, of engaging with their particular histories and struggles, of appreciating the ontologies at stake and the vital ‘cosmopolitical’ challenges, of dialogue and discussion, of forming solidarities in light of pluriversal understandings – all of this points to a postdevelopmental path. If development has no ‘place’, as a reading of Dhar and Chakrabarti’s contribution to this volume may lead us to argue, in documenting this diversity, we seek to facilitate its displacement, though documenting already existing postdevelopment is insufficient on its own. A pluriversal solidarity, in light of postdevelopment practice, is necessary.