

ognized. Income inequality did, however, fall but with Indonesia as important exception. In the human development rankings, Southeast Asian countries mostly followed per capita GDP but Vietnam was, for instance, performed better. By and large, school attendance levels in Southeast Asia have risen, although access to tertiary education remains highly dependent on household income.

Chapter 8 leaves the chronological approach and enters into a theme-based discussion of how governments have intervened in order to raise living standards. National government programmes with regard to land reform, land settlement policies, public works, control of food prices, family planning, and decentralization programmes have produced mixed results with little effect on poverty alleviation. Chapter 9 summarizes the findings of this study. Living standards in Southeast Asia have risen but to different degrees in individual countries. At the same time, income and wealth inequalities as well as differences in access to health and education have proven to be enduring. In sum, economic growth by itself is not sufficient to address imbalances but more efficient policy interventions are needed.

As stated above, this is an impressive book by a leading scholar, providing the reader with a huge amount of detailed information on economic development and its effects on social inequality in Southeast Asia. It is exemplary of what economic history can offer us in terms of process description and systematic explanation. Anne Booth does not only render factual evidence but also critically engages with a huge number of expert studies, quantitative data and the instruments of measurement itself. She

offers a view across entire Southeast Asia, making many interesting comparisons within the region itself but also with the advanced economies in North Asia and elsewhere, so that both shared trends and country specifics are convincingly exposed and explained. In the text, the reader will find many useful tables, in which statistical indicators offer clear insights. Through this approach, a highly differentiated assessment of growth, living standards, and inequality emerges. It is self-evident that in the economic history approach pursued here, cultural factors of social change and subjective experiences of injustice find little place. For this there exists another literature.

**Max Trecker: Red Money for the Global South. East-South Economic Relations in the Cold War, Abingdon: Routledge, 2020, 243 pp.**

Reviewed by  
Besnik Pula, Blacksburg

Historians of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are increasingly disentangling the complex nature of global economic relations during the “bipolar” Cold War era. Among these complexities are the sometimes intricate economic ties that developed between the Soviet Union, its European socialist allies, and the Global South. Examining these historical ties is significant not only for shedding light on the ideologically-driven efforts by the So-

viet Union and its East European allies to offer its international trade and development order as an alternative to the Western capitalist one, but also to understand the politics and the often pragmatic interests that motivated – and sometimes hindered – Soviet and East European economic interests in the South.

Max Trecker presents *Red Money for the Global South* as a contribution to this area of research. The book's title and introduction suggest a focus on East-South economic relations. Upon closer reading one finds the book to more broadly encompass economic relations both within the socialist bloc of the East and between East and South. This is partly due to the fact that the main perspective from which Trecker recounts this history is the Soviet-led trade organization, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). As a distinct and rare kind of socialist international institution, the CMEA offers Trecker the venue from which to view the development of these economic relations. For Trecker, a historian based at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History, the CMEA Secretariat's archives also served an important (but not sole) documentary source for the book.

On the one hand, this approach narrows the historical analysis of East-South economic relations, given that the emphasis remains on multilateral undertakings that were organized by or coordinated under the CMEA, rather than bilateral aid and economic exchange. On the other hand, centring upon the CMEA enables Trecker to gain a handle over this complex topic, by reconstructing distinct episodes, projects, and interactions between state delegations, technical groups, and officials

from the socialist countries and countries of the Global South as diverse as Cuba, Syria, Iraq, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Mexico, and India. As an important by-product, because Trecker is partly interested in the motivations driving cooperation (and non-cooperation), the view from the CMEA also provides useful insight into intra-socialist economic relations, including intra-socialist tensions, through the day-to-day workings of the institution that was claimed to be the embodiment of “socialist internationalism.”

The book is organized in four parts, each with a topical focus on aspects of cooperation, competition, and conflict within the CMEA framework. While the first part discusses the origins of the CMEA in the emerging geopolitical rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, the others parts demonstrate the ways in which the Soviet Union and its allies navigated through and balanced between bold ideological declarations touting the values of solidarity at the international level, geopolitical interests, national economic goals, changing political conditions and opportunities across the South after decolonization, and the pressures of competing internationally against an economically much more powerful bloc of adversaries. Several of the book's chapters illustrate these themes. For example, chapter 3 discusses efforts, beginning in 1971, by CMEA members to shift from basic commodity trade towards the promotion of technologically advanced development through the formulation of the “Complex Programme”. The programme began with ambitious goals of advancing socialist economic integration after Khrushchev's push for instituting joint economic planning at

the CMEA level encountered fatal opposition from the Soviet Union's European socialist partners. The programme led to a number of large inter-socialist projects, including the Mir and Druzhba energy systems, and the establishment of the International Investment Bank to support multilateral projects within and beyond the CMEA. However, the programme's design and implementation demonstrated that CMEA states were not interested in any form of multilateral cooperation that would come at the expense of national economic sovereignty.

Another chapter illustrates episodes of intra-socialist competition by recounting the case of a joint CMEA project to build a cement factory in Syria. Led by East German engineers and with Bulgarian assistance, problems with planning and in procuring necessary supplies led to long delays and increasing impatience among the Bulgarians and frustration by Syrian officials. These produced moments of intense drama in which blame passed from one party to the next, illustrating the practical problems and cross-cutting political and bureaucratic pressures and bottlenecks parties faced in such complex undertakings. Nonetheless, after major delays, the Syrians did get their cement factory, which ultimately proved to be of high economic value for the country, because it dramatically cut Syrian reliance on imported cement. Trecker uses the latter example to show why, even under such difficulties, countries of the South still welcomed CMEA economic and technical assistance. Projects also often came with a dramatically lower price tag than what was on offer from the West and, as Trecker documents, with a certain amount of leverage exercised

by the Southern partners over the terms, such as reimbursing credits with commodity exports.

The book illustrates similar problems of cooperation driven by competing interests, intra-bloc rivalries, bureaucratic inefficiencies, opportunism, and at times outright obstruction by some members within the CMEA. Some of these tensions involve diverging interests in relation to the South between the resource-rich Soviet Union and its resource-poor European allies. We understand how the debt problems of the 1980s intensified CMEA competition for hard currency and the strains they put on East-South economic relations. Of interest is also chapter 9's discussion of the changing balance of industrial prowess in the 1970s, as CMEA members began to see major countries of the South less as economic opportunities and more as competitors.

One major drawback of the book is that, while offering interesting details from historical episodes of East-South relationships, it does not always do enough to situate the cases within a broader historical context of international or regional economic and political relations, or does so unevenly across the chapters. We also do not gain a clear sense of the changing importance of the CMEA as a mechanism of East-South economic ties relative to bilateral and other arrangements. Similarly, the book sporadically addresses a range of theoretical and historiographical concerns, such as questioning depictions of East-East and East-South ties as "imperial" in nature, giving insight into reasons for CMEA's limited formal expansion beyond Europe, and the consequences of the 1980s debt crisis for East-South trade. In

these, it offers thought-provoking interpretations that challenge existing literatures. However, the lack of an overarching theoretical and conceptual framework to organize the book's inquiry, and the lack of any concentrated regional focus with regard to countries of the South, contribute to the book reading more like a set of studies held together by a shared theme rather than functioning as structured case analyses. These lead the book to eventually offer a broad set of general historical observations, more so than advance any specific theoretical or historical argument about East-South relations or Cold War international political economy. Nonetheless, this criticism should not be seen as detracting from the value of the important historical work Trecker has accomplished in this book, whose contributions will be of relevance to global and regional historians, and scholars of globalization and international political economy.

**Sara Lorenzini: *Global Development. A Cold War History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019, 296 pp.**

Reviewed by  
Bence Kocsev, Budapest

Sara Lorenzini's monograph is a quite recent work bringing valuable new perspectives into the promising corpus of research that has been flourishing in the last years on the broader topic of international development and its global history.<sup>1</sup> Delving

into the many sources becoming available in the research field, these studies provide insightful narratives and open up new avenues of research and commentary for the historiography of development. One of the important yields of these studies is that they look beyond American perspectives and consider initiatives coming from different actors to be decisive in the evolution of the international development regime of the Cold War while investigating the complex connections and interactions that these actors produced.

Against this background, the volume under review adopts an innovative approach that seeks to tease out a more a more critical analysis from the contexts within which these policies unfolded in the second half of the twentieth century. Impressive in its scope and depth, Lorenzini's book certainly deserves a prominent place in this discourse. Joining a growing body of research, the book shows that the Cold War was a far more comprehensive conflict that went far beyond military and diplomatic conflicts and clashes, taking on many other facets, including a fierce economic and social rivalry. From this viewpoint, as David Engerman suggests, development politics is essentially the result of the interaction of national and international power struggles.<sup>2</sup>

When analysing the forty years of Cold War development, the book speaks to so many points that it is impossible to summarize its main messages within the limits of this review, and it is much less possible to comment on them with the prominence they deserve. For these reasons, I will just highlight a few selective ones.

In Lorenzini's convincing analysis, international development serves as a cen-