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A World Bank Publication

Pioneers

Lord Bauer
Colin Clark
Albert O. Hirschman
Sir Arthur Lewis
Gunnar Myrdal
Raúl Prebisch
Paul N. Rosenstein-Rodan
Walt Whitman Rostow
H. W. Singer
Jan Tinbergen

FILE COPY

in Development

edited by Gerald M. Meier and Dudley Seers

The "Pioneers in Development" are those whose articles, reports, and books came to dominate thinking about economic development in the late 1940s and 1950s. They shaped the subject by introducing concepts, deducing principles, and modeling the process of development. This book recaptures the spirit and the economic thought of that pioneering period.

The pioneers listed on the front of the jacket were asked to reassess the main themes of their early work and to reconsider their assumptions, concepts, and policy prescriptions in relation to the way the course of development has proceeded since their pioneering days. Their individual chapters now recall the intellectual excitement, expectations, and activism of that unique period. Commentary is provided by economists of the succeeding generation, who reappraise their elders' ideas with the benefit of hindsight.

Not only do the chapters by the pioneers display autobiographical charm, but, taken as a set, they also offer an unusual opportunity for a retrospective view of what has happened to development economics. And the retrospective view naturally has implications for assessing the present and looking to the future. What are the strands of continuity in development thought? What are the recurrent issues? What are the unsettled questions?

An introductory historical chapter by Gerald M. Meier sets the stage, outlining some of the intellectual trends and institutional features that shaped the political and economic environment of the formative period for the pioneers. The final survey chapter by Paul P. Streeten synthesizes various issues in development thought and points toward the resolution of unsettled questions in the subject.

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Foreword

PIONEERS—in any field—are creative and courageous people. Were they not, they would not have risked reaching out to break new ground and to seek new solutions. They are rarely content to stay put with the conventional, or to stand pat on the obvious. They are fired by an insistent curiosity that drives them to burrow deeper and ferret out the unexpected.

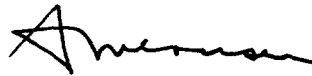
That is why it is worthwhile to get to know them.

In the complex arena of international development economics, this new volume is an invitation to do just that. Here are ten pioneers of that difficult discipline, who have helped define the debate over development issues during the past forty years. They have been not only dedicated teachers and scholars, but active, responsible practitioners as well.

You can read in these pages their candid reflections on their own pioneering work, as well as the perceptive critiques of a select group of their younger colleagues. All in all, it is a stimulating and controversial intellectual bill of fare—and a nutritious one.

We in the World Bank are delighted to have hosted these lectures, and we look forward to further series of similar events. Without question, the international development effort is one of the central historical movements of our era. Its outcome in the decades immediately ahead will largely shape the character of international life throughout the next century.

As development proceeds and conditions change, the world is going to need an ongoing supply of innovators in development strategy. Let us hope that it will be as fortunate with its future pioneers as it has been with those whom this volume commemorates.



A. W. Clausen
President, The World Bank

April 1984

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Preface

IT IS A RARE OCCASION when the pioneers of a subject can be called back to reflect on why they said what they did some thirty or forty years ago—and to assess their earlier thoughts in light of the subsequent evolution of the subject they helped to establish. Such is the occasion of this book.

In the late 1940s and 1950s, several seminal works in development economics appeared as the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America attempted to emerge from their pervasive and persistent poverty. The impulse behind this book is the desire to recapture the spirit and the economic thought of that pioneering period.

To do this, ten pioneers were invited by the World Bank to prepare the essays that appear in this book—Lord Bauer, Colin Clark, Albert O. Hirschman, Nobel laureate Sir Arthur Lewis, Nobel laureate Gunnar Myrdal, Raúl Prebisch, Paul N. Rosenstein-Rodan, Walt W. Rostow, Hans W. Singer, and Nobel laureate Jan Tinbergen.

When the Second World War ended, economists were challenged by the urgent problems of development. During the next decade a few central articles, official reports, and books came to dominate the thinking about development. The authors of these studies were the pioneers who initially shaped the subject by introducing concepts, deducing principles, and modeling the process of development. Some of the pioneers were stimulated to analyze development problems by their previous academic interests, some by their experience in related policymaking activities, some out of idealism, and others by a basic intellectual curiosity.

In this book, the pioneers have been asked to reassess the main themes of their early work and to reconsider their assumptions, concepts, and policy prescriptions in relation to the way the course of development has proceeded since their pioneering days.

In their individual papers, they now recapture the intellectual excitement, expectations, and activism of that unique pioneering period. Not only do their papers display autobiographical charm but, taken as a set, they also offer an unusual opportunity for a retrospective view of what has happened to development economics. And the retrospective view naturally has implications for future directions of the subject.

The pioneers initially prepared their papers for lectures presented at the World Bank. Following each public lecture, a small seminar was arranged with commentators offering a critique. A number of contemporary development economists served as commentators: Dragoslav Avramovic, Bela Balassa, Jagdish Bhagwati, Michael Bruno, Carlos Diaz-Alejandro, Albert Fishlow, Arnold Harberger, Gerald Helleiner, Michael Lipton, Azizali F. Mohammed, Hla Myint, Graham Pyatt, T. N. Srinivasan, and Paul Streeten.

This book presents the papers of the pioneers, together with the comments. An introductory historical chapter sets the stage, outlining some of the intellectual trends and institutional features that shaped the political and economic environment of the formative period for the pioneers. The final survey chapter synthesizes various issues in development thought and points toward the resolution of unsettled questions in the subject.

The selection of the pioneers was necessarily limited in number. Some pioneers declined the invitation, others were believed to be better placed on a list for a successor volume covering the 1960s. And some pioneers are deceased: references to their works are made in both the introductory and closing chapters.

G. M. Meier and Dudley Seers participated in organizing the lecture series and were responsible for editing the essays and comments. Chapter 1 was to be under their joint authorship, but the death of Dudley Seers in March 1983 required that the volume be completed with only one editor. Dudley Seers's final writings were directed to this project, and his intellectual zeal and ceaseless striving to find a solution to the problems of development have been of lasting value in fashioning this volume, which will stand as a tribute to his achievements.

A general expression of thanks must be offered to the many members of the World Bank who contributed their advice and services in the arrangement of the lecture series and the preparation of this book. Especially helpful have been Sidney C. Chernick and F. Leslie C. H. Helmers. The support of Hollis B. Chenery, Mahbub ul Haq, and Ajit Mozoomdar was much appreciated during the initial planning period. For their help in processing the typescript, I am grateful to the editorial staff of the World Bank, Richard Carroll of the Economic Development Institute, Barbara Taylor of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, and Pat Sharp of Stanford University; their assistance has been exceptional both in quantity and quality.

G. M. M.

Stanford, California
January 1984