

**Book Review: Law and Development: Theory and Practice by Yong-Shik Lee**

**By**

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The book examines the well-established field of ‘law and development’ and asks whether the concept of development and discourses on law and development have outlived their usefulness. The contributors ask whether instead of these amorphous and contested concepts we should focus on social injustices such as patriarchy, impoverishment, human rights violations, the exploitation of indigenous peoples, and global heating. If we abandoned the idea of development, would we end up adopting another, equally problematic term to replace a concept which, for all its flaws, serves as a commonly understood shorthand? The contributors analyse the links between conventional academic approaches to law and development, neoliberal governance and activism through historical and contemporary case studies.

The book explores a number of areas which the author finds pertinent. On the General Theory of Law and Development, the book introduces an innovative approach called the General Theory of Law and Development. This theory explains how legal mechanisms impact development. On Economic Development Perspectives, the author analyzes the economic development processes in South Korea, South Africa, and the United States from legal and institutional standpoints. Regarding Relevance Beyond Developing Countries, contrary to common perception, the concept of “development”

is not only relevant to developing nations but also applies to developed economies. Its worth noting that the second edition includes five additional chapters that explore the relationships between law and economic development in areas such as property rights, political governance, business transactions, state industrial promotion, and international trade. It is also important to note that the contributors ask whether instead of these amorphous and contested concepts we should focus upon social injustices such as patriarchy, impoverishment, human rights violations, the exploitation of Indigenous peoples, and global heating? If we abandoned the idea of development, would we end up adopting another, equally problematic term to replace a concept which, for all its flaws, serves as a commonly understood shorthand? The contributors analyse the links between conventional academic approaches to law and development, neoliberal governance and activism through historical and contemporary case studies.

The work, *Law and Development: Theory and Practice* by Yong-Shik Lee is a seminal work that delves into the intricate relationship between law and development. Lee, a renowned expert in the field, offers a nuanced analysis of the role of law in promoting economic development and poverty reduction. This review provides an in-depth examination of the book's key themes, strengths, and weaknesses.

The key themes include a theoretical Framework where Lee establishes a robust theoretical framework, drawing on various disciplines, including law, economics, and development studies. He critiques existing approaches and presents a coherent and comprehensive understanding of law and development. In the same respect, there is Legal Instrumentalism where the author explores the concept of legal instrumentalism, highlighting the potential of law as a tool for achieving development goals. He examines the limitations and challenges of this approach, emphasizing the need for a more nuanced understanding. Additionally, the Institutional Capacity asserts that Lee stresses the importance of institutional capacity in implementing and enforcing laws effectively. He argues that weak institutions can undermine development efforts, even with well-designed laws. Once more is the Human Rights: The book discusses the role of human rights in development, emphasizing their interconnectedness. Lee argues that human rights should be integrated into development strategies to ensure sustainable and equitable progress. Regarding Case Studies, the author presents insightful case studies from various countries, illustrating the complexities of law and development in practice.

These examples demonstrate the challenges of translating theoretical frameworks into practical solutions.

The book also has a number of strengths. The author adopts an Interdisciplinary Approach in which Lee's work seamlessly integrates insights from multiple disciplines, providing a rich and comprehensive understanding of law and development. Additionally, there is a theoretical depth where the book offers a sophisticated theoretical analysis, critiquing existing approaches and presenting a coherent framework for understanding law and development. The book also exhibits a practical relevance: The case studies and examples provided make the book highly relevant for practitioners and policymakers seeking to apply theoretical concepts in real-world settings.

On an analytical note, the book also has some weaknesses and one of them is Density: The book's theoretical density may pose a challenge for readers without a strong background in law, economics, or development studies. The other weakness is in terms of Length: The book's length may deter some readers, although the content justifies the length.

In conclusion therefore, the book provides valuable insights into how legal frameworks contribute to economic progress. If you're interested in understanding the intricate connections between law and development, this book is a recommended read. *Law and Development: Theory and Practice* by Yong-Shik Lee is a landmark work that offers a nuanced understanding of the complex relationship between law and development. While it presents some challenges, the book's strengths make it an indispensable resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Lee's work has the potential to shape the discourse on law and development, informing strategies for sustainable and equitable development. The book is of interest to students and scholars of development, international law, international economic law, governance and politics and international relations and it's an intriguing book that can spark a number of intellectual debates.