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BOOK REVIEW: THE MODELS OF DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA. THE STRATEGIES OF MODERNISATION OF STATES

Piotr Sieniawski*

RUDOWSKI, T.: *Modele rozwoju w Ameryce Łacińskiej. Strategie modernizacji państw*. [The Models of Development in Latin America. The Strategies of Modernisation of States]. Warszawa: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, 2017. 510 p. ISBN 978-83-7901-118-6.

In 2017, a monograph titled *"The Models of Development in Latin America. The Strategies of Modernisation of States"* by **Tomasz Rudowski**, a lecturer at the American Studies Center, University of Warsaw, and at the Vistula Academy of Finance and Business in Warsaw, appeared on the Polish book market. The author is a learned expert on Latin America and his graduate education in the field of International Relations, Culturology and Spanish Philology, as well as his practical experience gained during his many research and study stays in Latin America, indicated a high quality work.

The issue of the development of states and regions is becoming an increasingly frequent subject of research, especially with regard to its topicality, its interdisciplinary character and undoubtedly, its appeal. This was reflected in the creation of a separate field of study - development studies. In Central Europe, however, this branch of social science pays relatively little attention to Latin America, and so far, it has been lacking a comprehensive approach to the development and modernisation of the countries in the region. In his monograph, **Tomasz Rudowski** focused on analysing the perception of development as such in the Latin American region and subsequently on the development of four selected states - Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela.

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The central issue is finding the answer to the question of how development is perceived in Latin America and how development models have been implemented in individual societies. The analysis of these development models is based on the paradigm of structuralism and neo-structuralism and therefore focuses on the policies of Latin American states in the context of relations between the centre and the periphery. The author bases his work on the hypothesis that "Latin America's institutions and policies of development are determined by the historical economic structure, the complexity of economic exchange conditions as well as colonial and post-colonial systems of dependence." (Rudowski, 2017b, p. 11) He subsequently verifies this hypothesis on the basis of an analysis of economic relations between the countries of Latin America and a broadly defined West. Particular attention should be paid to the fact that **Tomasz Rudowski** has consistently endeavoured to deal with terminological problems related to defining the very notion of "development" and the related "progress" as categories in the spheres of political science, sociology, economics, and culture.

The reviewed monograph is characterised by an exceptionally high level of methodology as well as the level of applied scientific tools and techniques. This primarily includes a method of critical analysis of primary sources, a comparative analysis, a method of historical genetics, and a case study method. Its value is undoubtedly increased by its interdisciplinary character, since the monograph in itself, in a very appropriate way, combines the analysis of the political, historical, sociological, economic, anthropological and also geographic and cultural elements of the development of the Latin American states.

In the first chapter, titled "Latin American Model of Development. Perception of Development and Development Strategies of Latin American States", the author chronologically analyses the Latin American countries' development models from independence until the present. Particular attention is paid to the author's consistent political analysis of the role of the state in development, since the state was not necessarily the driving force of development, but at times it acted rather as an inhibitor of development. Very interesting and original is the author's own construction of the Latin-American "hybrid" development model, which explains the process of change and development in the context of the relationship between the centre and the periphery. This hybrid development model is made up of two streams - major development models and alternative models. The main models of development are the model based on the export of mineral raw materials (from the mid 19th to the thirties of the 20th Century), the

import substitution model (1930-1982), the neoliberal model (end of the 20th Century) and the latest trends implemented from the early 21st Century. Alternative models are strategies implemented in Paraguay, Chile, Nicaragua, Haiti and Cuba. Apart from the economic and political aspect of development, the author also points to the cultural context, especially to the dichotomy of civilisation models in Latin America - on the one hand, it is a "materialistic and utilitarian Anglo-Saxon model" and, on the other, a "Spanish model based on spiritual values". (Rudowski, 2017b, p. 43) Latin American culture, combining traditional features with modern and postmodern features, is also often referred to as a hybrid culture in the work of social anthropologists. (Cf. García Canclini, 2005)

Chapter Two, entitled "Mexico – Brazil. Two Faces of Development" presents a comparative analysis of Mexico and Brazil on the basis of seven indicators, namely: (1) historical circumstances of development, (2) implemented models of development, (3) growth and social development, (4) institutions, (5) elites, (6) conflicts against the backdrop of adopted development strategies, and (7) the influence of external factors on the undertaken development efforts. The author analyses the development of these states within the scope of the various implemented models, paying due attention to how the "colonial heritage" of these states influenced the further stages of their development. The political context in which **Tomasz Rudowski** puts forward his analysis allows the reader to better understand the causes of the problems these countries are currently facing, in the case of Mexico - the relatively disproportionate focus of exports towards the US or, in the case of Brazil, to almost gigantic differences between the various social classes. Consequently, the reader has the opportunity to get acquainted with the sociological analysis of the motives behind the actions of the elites, which appropriately complements the previous analysis of macroeconomic relations. Rejecting efforts to modernise may under certain circumstances serve the interests of the ruling group, which seeks to maintain its social status. A sociological and anthropological analysis also allows us to understand the background of social conflicts in these Latin American countries, relating to the confiscation of the lands of the indigenous population, the conflicts between the followers of centralization and the followers of the autonomy of states, or conflicts concerning the relationship between the church and the state.

The third chapter, titled "Venezuela - Colombia. Development in a Trap" contains an analysis of the development strategies of the above states. "The

trap", to which **Tomasz Rudowski** points out, is a mono-cultural economy based on oil exports. The structure of the society and the existing social differences are both an unhealthy heritage of colonialism in the territory of these states. The analysis of development models is very well set in the historical context, enabling the reader to become familiar with societal and economic changes, and thus to better understand the current political situation. In the case of Venezuela, attention is paid to the circumstances that allowed Hugo Chavez to seize power, as well as subsequent social changes that were supposed to lead to the transformation of capitalism into the "socialism of the 21st Century". Similarly, when analysing Colombia's development models, the author does not avoid the issue of structural conflicts or the internal armed conflict that troubled Colombia for a long time. The development mosaic is complemented by the impact of external factors on the development of these countries, in particular the UK's drive for regional influence and later on the US's power ambitions.

In the last, fourth chapter, the author seeks to generalise the results of his analysis in the light of the relationships between the centre and the periphery. The periphery is characterised by structural heterogeneity, a parallel existence of advanced and obsolete forms of production. The actor classifies the factors that create barriers to peripheral development, into economic, political, institutional, historical and social. The neoliberal model of development and the efforts of the Latin American states to implement the development strategies of the advanced states of the "West" ended in failure. The periphery serves the centre mainly as a source of minerals, products with low added value and cheap labour, and also as an "assembly hall". Further scientific and technological development casts the periphery into an even more disadvantageous position, with the centre and the periphery continuously growing apart. While Western European GDP *per capita* in the early 20th Century was about 2.5 times the GDP of the Latin American countries, in 2008 it was more than three times higher. (Rudowski, 2017b, p. 419) This analysis is complemented by the political context of international relations, in which the author approaches the international political ambitions of Brazil, which is seeking to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council in connection with the widely discussed reform of the Council.

Analysis of the various models of development in the countries of Latin America led **Tomasz Rudowski** to reject the thesis of the growing interdependence between the centre and the periphery or the interdependence

between them as such. The author concludes that Latin America has been forced into the role of a reservoir of agricultural products, minerals, cheap labour, as well as an outlet for the countries of the centre. The relation between the centre and the periphery, as the author claims, is rather a relationship of unilateral dependence of the periphery on the centre. The Latin American countries are dependent on the import of technology and the capital of the states of the centre, whereas on the other hand, the states of the centre are not essentially dependent on the export of peripheral states. (Rudowski, 2017b, pp. 143-144 and 447) This relationship is caused by post-colonial dependence as well as disadvantageous business conditions. The basis for the development of capitalism and the accumulation of capital – as J. W. Moore points out - is an advantageous approach to labour power, energy, food and raw materials (the so-called "four cheaps"). (Moore, 2015) The themes presented by **Tomasz Rudowski** are clearly illustrated in the monograph, which facilitates the reader's comprehension of the problem and the understanding of the analysed relationships. Interestingly, the schemes reflect the relationship between the centre and the periphery on two levels - the first is the "base" (in the monograph referred to as the "economic structure"), and the second is the "superstructure" made up of social institutions of a non-economic character. However, in spite of noticeable scepticism the author postulates a vision of a possible increase in the importance of the Latin American region in the international sphere through multilateralisation and democratisation of international relations, although on the other hand, he does not anticipate the total liberation of the periphery from its dependence on the centre. (Rudowski, 2017b, pp. 449-452) At this point, we would like to highlight the fact that the author has consistently devoted his publishing activity to the research of capitalism in Latin America. For a more detailed analysis of the issue of "dependent capitalism" in the context of the paradigm of neo-structuralism, it's especially worth mentioning the author's work titled "Dependent Capitalism and the State in Latin America in the Light of the Dependency Theory" (Rudowski, 2017a).

Tomasz Rudowski's monograph is undoubtedly an exceptionally good and beneficial political analysis of the development of the Latin American states. The original author's construction of the "hybrid" Latin American Development Model allows the reader to understand the process of change and development in the region. The monograph does not have the character of a scholastic narrative that we often encounter in such type of publications. On the contrary, it is written in a very captivating and interesting way, presenting history through specific

problems and not by describing the history of states as it is customary. The monograph has undoubtedly been made more appealing by the author's own views of his many stays in this region. We are convinced that the book will not only speak to the professional public and students of international relations and related social sciences disciplines but will also find its fans among the lay public.

In conclusion, we can only congratulate **Tomasz Rudowski** on this extraordinarily elaborate and beneficial monograph and we are looking forward to other quality titles by him in the future.

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