

## ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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As underdeveloped countries become more visible, they are frequently referred to under the collective label the “Global South”. Despite the advantages this designation offers as a synthesizing term, I consider it ambiguous because it uses a simple geographical criteria to describe a complex social situation which distinguishes poor countries from the wealthiest. The implied North-South dichotomy has never been as geographically fixed as the labels imply. For example, Australia and New Zealand have always been regarded as southern outliers of the North. Some of the richest countries in the world (with a high GDP per capita) are classified as part of the Global South. Yet the model still rests exclusively on a “latidunal” division (see [www.geocurrents.info/economic-geography/there-is-no-third-world-there-is-no-global-south](http://www.geocurrents.info/economic-geography/there-is-no-third-world-there-is-no-global-south)).

In addition, the term Global South is ahistoric and decontextualized. It omits a critical core of dynamic variables that characterize different kinds of countries, especially historical, economic, social, cultural, and political variables, among others. It is these factors that might explain the reality of these countries as a product of a societal process, and the type and origin of the differences among them.

Independently of the aim to define or classify, the Global South concept confronts different groups of countries more than it unifies them into a comprehensive one (“underdeveloped”, “developing”, or “dependent” are better terms to define these types of countries). In connection with its static character, to which I have already referred, the concept of the Global South does not sufficiently take into account the types of relations these different countries have maintained throughout their long histories (Colonialism and Neocolonialism).

Nevertheless “developed” and “underdeveloped” countries imply one another’s existence. They are involved in unequal economic and politic relations and potentially form part of the uneven balance of world power, but they are still part of a shared dialectic reality. Besides, this static definition does not consider enough the global character by itself; this means that it does not take into account the increasing frequency of the contacts or relations among all countries that together make up the present globalized world. As policy issues become global, global or more integrative approaches at international level become necessary in order to solve them.

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