



EDITORIAL

Editor's Note

The Global South is a research concept, which gained currency fast and which tends to replace previously wide-spread notions of the Third World and developing countries. The Global South today is analyzed from a variety of perspectives. It refers to geographical grouping of countries with emerging economic and growing political impact. On the one hand, countries included in the Global South are actively asserting themselves in the international arena, and, on the other hand, are troubled with many issues that significantly differ from those “developed” Global North faces. It is important to note that many of these issues stem from the colonial past of the countries of the Global South.

BRICS as the most advanced of the international organizations of the Global South begins to play increasingly important role in the development of higher education. The evidence for the positive impact it has is the BRICS Network University, the BRICS ministers of education's cooperation efforts, and the interest of the Global Academia in the new models of South-South university collaboration.

This special issue involves scholars and practitioners in discussing how higher education influences the situation in the Global South and whether it can spur its development. Should it focus, for example, on internal problems of the South, such as human development and struggle against poverty, or it must be oriented towards international standards of the research university? Should the governments invest in the excellence programmes to establish world-class universities, or should they create conditions for equal education opportunities and for enhancing inclusive nature of the higher education? Is higher education capable of boosting development in the countries with high unemployment and illiteracy rates?

In Maxim B. Khomyakov's paper, *BRICS and Global South: Towards Multilateral Educational Collaboration*, he notices that BRICS as an international grouping has always been an odd phenomenon. BRICS countries still have very different opinions on many issues; nevertheless, what they have in common is their vision for a new global order, in which education would play the most important role. The situation, however, is very complex, since education (especially, higher education) both has very important national tasks, and is an element of the nation's global performance. That is why higher education is

mostly ridden with contradictions between its functions in developing imaginaries and its role in competition on the global educational market. In the article, he reflects upon the discussion of the contradiction between global orientation of the universities, and the necessity for them to play important role in domestic affairs through addressing local problems and developing valuable imaginaries. This tension among other things is expressed in contradiction between various global excellence projects, on the one hand, and horizontally structured university networks and associations, on the other. In addition, he analyzes the role of BRICS countries in the light of articulating the interests of Global South.

Dr. David Monyae in the paper *US, Russia, China and Africa in the Evolving Global Order* rises the complex issue of the post-World War II global order, which is in deep crisis now due to changing roles of such powers as USA, Russia, and China. Dr. Monyae's main concern is the African states, which are disregarded by this new order, and are "no longer seen to be of any importance, as they had been during the Cold War". However, as he mentions, there is an emerging "intra-west" competition over gaining favour with African countries, and developing countries can take advantage of this. In addition, Dr. Monyae stresses the importance for African scholars to study intensively the historical and present intentions of the foreign policy of the above-mentioned countries. He concludes that African states should not "pick sides" in global struggle for dominance, but follow their own agenda based on long-term goals and prospects seeking cooperation with these powers "only insofar as there can be an Africa-centred outcome".

In the paper *Higher Education, Development, and Inequality in Brazil and South Africa* Maria Lígia de Oliveira Barbosa, André Pires, and Tom Dwyer undertake the comprehensive analysis of the higher education in Brazil and South Africa taking into consideration both countries' controversial history of inequality, as well as the expansion of the role and scale of universities in last 25 years. The authors pose the question if the growth of the number of higher educational institutions and enrollments creates high quality or "world-class universities" in these countries; in answering this question, they provide deliberative report on the quality and problems of education there. Among other issues, they reflect upon the international ranking as popular method for evaluating educational institutions, which presently is under sharp debates all over the world. The authors conclude that in spite of important steps towards greater democratization of higher education in both countries, still it is not sufficiently inclusive, and remains relatively closed, particularly in courses that give access to more prestigious and well-paid careers.

Yuyun Li in the paper *Development of Cooperation in Higher Education in BRICS Countries* stresses the fact that the BRICS countries see the collaboration in higher education as being extremely important; at the same time, she strives to distinguish existing difficulties and problems in current cooperation such as the shortage of funds and the lack of publicity. She believes that five countries can learn from each other, and explore solutions in the area of education: "When higher education in one country accepts and adopts ideas, curriculum, languages, cultures, traditions and even talent training from other countries' education systems, the

collaboration between education systems leads to amplified results and guaranteed intelligence, and forms the basis for long-term and stable cooperation". Li Yuyun suggests enhancing of multi-disciplinary and multi-form educational exchanges and cooperation projects with mutual participation, which creates an open and diverse partnership network in educational development.

The current issue of CS&P also contains two book reviews. The first one is of Victoria Smolkin's (2018) *A Sacred Space Is Never Empty: A History of Soviet Atheism*, presented by Andrey S. Menshikov. As it is argued in the review, Smolkin's book as a "panoramic study is a must-read for those who specialize in the Soviet history as well as for those who work in Religious Studies". The second review is of Jonathan Floyd's book (2017) *Is Political Philosophy Impossible? Thoughts and Behaviour in Normative Political Theory*, presented by Daniil I. Kokin. The reviewer makes some critical remarks on the book and concludes that generally it is an important contribution to the foundations of political philosophy.

Discussions on the topics raised in the current issue will be continued in the subsequent issues of our journal, and new themes will be introduced. We welcome suggestions for thematic issues, debate sections, book reviews and other formats from readers and prospective authors and invite you to send us your reflections and ideas!

For more information, please visit the journal web-site: <https://changing-sp.com/>

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Acknowledgements

A special word of gratitude is due to **Maxim B. Khomyakov** who helped with the collection and copy-editing papers of this special issue.