

GEOS3524

Week 1 – Introduction to GEOS3524 + What is Development? – included in exam

- What does a geographical perspective bring to these issues?
 - o How does spatiality interact with development processes and outcomes?
 - o How do we understand development processes at different scales?
- Geographers seek an 'integrative' understanding of development processes
- **What is development?**
 - o 'the meanings of definitions of "development" vary substantially across national territory and between different social groups...[and are] in way, place-specific...[the term] is truly the stuff of myth, mystique and mirage' (Power, 2003, p.1)
- **Development as 'project'**
 - o 'development is nearly always seen as something that is possible, if only people or countries follow through a series of stages or prescribed instructions' (Power, 2003, p.1-2)
 - o Development in the vernacular usually implies 'more' or 'better' or 'improved' or 'good change'
 - o How do we measure it? Whose measurements count?
- **Material wellbeing**
 - o GDP (or GNI) per capita...a measurement of the volume of economic activity in a given time period (usually a year) divided by the population → market activity
 - o Oftentimes, 'development' is implicated the with replication, across the world, of living standards, lifestyles and value-systems of the West
 - o It involves waiting/hoping for/trying to encourage those countries at the bottom of the world league table to catch up with the West
 - o How about happiness? Lots of research saying above a certain amount of money does not make you happier
- **Human Development approach**
 - o Human beings are ends of development, not the means
 - o Human Development Index (UNDP) measures 'the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living'