



Dynamics among Nations: The Evolution of Legitimacy and Development in Modern States (MIT Press)

By Hilton L. Root

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Liberal internationalism has been the West's foreign policy agenda since the Cold War, and the West has long occupied the top rung of a hierarchical system. In this book, Hilton Root argues that international relations, like other complex ecosystems, exists in a constantly shifting landscape, in which hierarchical structures are giving way to systems of networked interdependence, changing every facet of global interaction. Accordingly, policymakers will need a new way to understand the process of change. Root suggests that the science of complex systems offers an analytical framework to explain the unforeseen development failures, governance trends, and alliance shifts in today's global political economy.

Root examines both the networked systems that make up modern states and the larger, interdependent landscapes they share. Using systems analysis -- in which institutional change and economic development are understood as self-organizing complexities -- he offers an alternative view of institutional resilience and persistence. From this perspective, Root considers the divergence of East and West; the emergence of the European state, its contrast with the rise of China, and the network properties of their respective innovation systems; the trajectory of democracy in developing regions; and the systemic impact of China on the liberal world order. Complexity science, Root argues, will not explain historical change processes with algorithmic precision, but it may offer explanations that match the messy richness of those processes.

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Editorial Review

Review

Hilton Root examines international relations from the perspective of complexity theory, the science of the twenty-first century. His analysis will compel a complete re-thinking of the current dominant narrative on globalization, with its assumption of convergence to Western liberal values. A very original, well-written, and highly thought-provoking book.

(Paul Ormerod, Partner, Volterra Partners)

A creative and sophisticated treatment of the dynamics of global change. By fleshing out the notion of a 'networked global society,' Root at once makes an important theoretical contribution and advances our understanding of the interdependent--yet decentralized--world that lies ahead.

(Charles A. Kupchan, Georgetown University and Council on Foreign Relations, Author of *No One's World*)

As China gets richer, why is it not becoming more like the West? Because, says Hilton Root in this outstanding new book, development does not work the way that most social scientists think. Borrowing the tools that natural scientists use to explain evolution and complex systems, *Dynamics among Nations* reveals the hidden logic behind global economics, governance, and security. Everyone who wants to understand how our world is changing should read this compelling book.

(Ian Morris, author of *Why the West Rules--For Now*)

About the Author

Hilton L. Root, an expert on international political economy and development, is Professor at the George Mason University School of Public Policy. He is the author of *Alliance Curse: How the U.S. Lost the Third World*, *Capital and Collusion: Political Logic of Global Economic Development*, and other books.

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