

**Title—After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South, 1957-1986**

**Authors—Giuliano Garavini and Richard R. Nybakken**

**Year—2012**

Categories: Decolonization, Migration, Empire, Politics, Integration

Place: The World

Time: 1957-1986

Argument Synopsis:

Garavini and Nybakken's book is primarily concerned with the end of European empires and the rise of self-assertion of the Third World. They seek to craft a history of the postwar process of Western European integration that focuses on the retreat from empire, the alternative order established by decolonization and the cultural, political, and economic challenges faced by empires first and nations later. The book is as much about the effect of decolonization on European integration as it is about integration itself. The authors begin in 1957 by analyzing the revolt against the West by the Third World. The global South should not be dismissed as the passive victim of a process that transferred control of empires from European to American hands or that gave birth to a new form of neocolonialism exercised through free trade and indirect economic and political control. Garavini and Nybakken aim to tell a story of proactive cooperation among nations with often divergent political regimes, which managed to forge a common strategic vision. They begin by providing a broad account of the parallel births and initial interaction between the global South and the European Economic Community. The authors highlight the common cause made by the countries of the developing world to change their position in the international economy, the partial success of their efforts and subsequent collapse of their united front after the twin oil and monetary shocks as developments that had a profound impact on the nature of Western European integration itself.

Garavini and Nybakken assert that the international crises of the early 1970s formed a pendular moment in the formation of a common Europe. They emphasize the emergence of an economic dimension to Third World internationalism and the new recipes for development that eventually led to the collective attempt of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to reform the international economy. They demonstrate how the UN Conference on Trade and Development sought to use Third World cooperation to reset the profound inequalities of international trade that beset raw material producers. The theme of Third World economic inequality became closely linked in the minds of Europeans to other important questions of that crucial debate, including issues of working conditions, environmental degradation, and neo-Marxist thought. Garavini and Nybakken argue that the inequality of the Third World moved to the center of socio-political debates, became closely linked to the broader issues of inequality in the Western world and widened the sphere of European political participation. They claim that it is impossible to understand the oil shock independent of the broader conflict between the developed and developing countries.

Key Themes and Concepts:

- The common cause made by the countries of the developing world to change their position in the international economy had a profound impact on the nature of Western European integration itself
- The economics of Third World nationalism was not lost on the European nations
- Theme of Third World economic inequality became closely linked in the minds of Europeans to other aspects of the debate, such as working conditions, environmental degradation, and neo-Marxist thought