

Prof. James Robinson



Prof. James Robinson is a political scientist and an economist at Harvard University. He studied economics at the London School of Economics and completed a Ph.D. at Yale.

He is a world-recognized expert on Latin America and Africa and has done research in Botswana, Mauritius, Sierra Leone and South Africa. His main research interests are in the fields of comparative economic and political development, with a focus on the long-run with a particular interest in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Prof. James Robinson became very famous due to the book that he published together with his colleague Daron Acemoğlu - "Why Nations Fail". The main research topic of the book is why some countries happen to be rich, while others – poor, why some succeed and others fail. Is the reason hidden in culture, in climate or geography? Or may be due to the lack of knowledge what the right policies are?

According to the authors, the success or failure of societies, cities and states is a result mainly of their institutions. In order to find the sources of economic progress, the authors look at many historic world examples and group the institutions in two types: inclusive and extractive.

Based on 15 years of thorough research, Robinson and Acemoğlu present data from the Roman Empire, the Mayan city-states, medieval Venice, the Soviet Union, Latin America, England, Europe, the USA and Africa and develop a new political and economic theory that deals with the big questions of our times.