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Fairness, Globalization, and Public Institutions

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Introduction

Introduction

Jim Dator, Dick Pratt, and Yongseok Seo

This book focuses on linkages among fairness, globalization, and public institutions that were discussed during and after an intensive, three-day international "dialogic" conference held in Honolulu, Hawaiʻi, in 2002. However, it is not a record of papers presented at the conference, since no papers were presented at all. Nor is it organized according to the format of the conference, since it is not possible to capture the essence of the highly interactive process in chronological form. This book is, however, fully informed and guided by the discussion of the three days of the conference and of a great many days of research, writing, and group discussion thereafter. Hence the "dialogue" continued long after the conference was over and the visitors had gone home. Indeed, we hope this volume will continue and expand the discussion worldwide, and we invite comments sent to the Web site of the conference.[1]

The book is divided into five sections that reflect the main ideas about the processes and effects of fairness in respect to globalization, responses to globalization, and what next to research and teach about fairness, globalization, and public institutions in East Asia and elsewhere. We purposely invited to the conference scholars and practitioners with differing experiences and viewpoints in order to exemplify varying notions about fairness and globalization itself and the wide range of available responses to its potentially beneficial as well as harmful impacts. We supplement many chapters with "Further Thoughts" written by conference participants in order to elaborate on significant points raised in the chapter or to gain an alternative perspective to a controversial subject.

Thus part 1 is an introductory consideration of each of the three major themes of the book, answering the question "What is fairness, globalization, and public institutions?" The three chapters explain and link the concepts and build a foundation upon which to explain how public institutions can and should promote fairness in an era of globalization. Jim Dator's first chapter reviews various philosophical and ethical ideas about the concept of fairness, especially raising

the new concern of responding fairly to future as well as to current generations. Further Thoughts by Sohail Inayatullah and Edgar Porter give substance to the adage "Think Globally, Act Locally," or question the universality of the idea of "fairness," suggesting it might be a Western cultural concept, while "harmony" might make more sense in the East Asian context. Dator's next brief chapter, "What Is Globalization?" presents historical as well as current examples that remind us that what we now call "globalization" is in fact not new, but merely a contemporary manifestation of an age-old process. Finally, Dick Pratt concludes the introductory part of the book by examining the concept of "public institutions" (stressing that the term implies more than formal governmental structures and actors alone) while discussing the role public institutions can, and should, play in the global context.

Part 2 offers theoretical, critical, and personal perspectives on competing notions of fairness and globalization in order to situate the debate in the contemporary environment. Christopher Grandy defends economic growth and trade by highlighting the benefits of globalization. James Rosenau follows with an innovative plan to achieve fairness in a world that is simultaneously fragmenting and integrating. Next, Ivana Milojevic challenges conventional views of fairness and globalization by employing a range of critical lenses, from feminist to environmentalist to social constructivist. Finally, Sohail Inayatullah's warm personal reflection on the experience of citizenship and globalization in his own life provides a human dimension to the more esoteric aspects of the debates.

Part 3 presents a rich variety of contemporary responses to globalization and discusses many innovative opportunities available to address the challenges of the future. Dick Pratt critiques the "New Public Management" (NPM) that swept governments worldwide during the 1990s and early years of the twenty-first century. However, Jim Dator once again reminds us, in the following chapter, that NPM is simply the latest in a long line of worldwide fads of governance and administration and speculates on what is coming next. Doug Allen's chapter is a poignant personal tale of the travails of a Canadian public servant who has labored on behalf of fairness for many years in various parts of the world. Ron Brown then shows how globalization is impacting national as well as international law and is tending toward a kind of global common law. Martin Khor considers fairness and globalization within an environmental context by focusing on the necessity of global governance for sustainable development. Fred Riggs, a longtime world expert in comparative public administration and practice, offers his thoughts about the futures of bureaucracy, democracy, and representation, while Jim Dator concludes part 3 with a long review of proposals for governance reform.

Part 4 provides brief case studies of various attempts of public institutions in East and Southeast Asia to respond fairly to globalization. Yongseok Seo and

Shunichi Takekawa first show that "responding to globalization" can be considered a leitmotif throughout the entire history of the region, and not something novel. Jingping Ding, Yong-duck Jung, Ryo Oshiba, Chanto Sisowath, and Le Van Anh (all participants at the Honolulu dialogic conference) discuss the contemporary situation in China, South Korea, Japan, Cambodia, and Vietnam, respectively. The way each approaches and displays the subject matter in their country is as illustrative of the challenge as is the material they specifically present in their individual chapters. Yongseok Seo and Sohail Inayatullah close part 4 by focusing on generational differences regarding culture and "Asian values" in East Asia.

Part 5 states our conclusions. Since a major purpose of the conference was to come up with education, training, and research projects dealing with fairness, globalization, and public institutions in East Asia, Chris Grandy and Dick Pratt provide a chapter that draws together the wide range of issues discussed and develops pedagogical and research projects that should become the next steps in our project. This is followed by a chapter that draws more general conclusions.

Conference That Inspired the Book

Our interest in the issues that link globalization, public institutions, and fairness first found expression in a "dialogic" conference held in January 2002 at the Center for Korean Studies at the University of Hawai'i.[2] (See Walt Anderson's Further Thoughts, "The Need for Global Dialogue," on page 11, for an expanded discussion.) The goal of the conference was to have a conversation among knowledgeable individuals that took place within three broad parameters. First, we felt that many of the concerns about globalization were directly related to notions about fairness. Second, we were certain that, in one way or another, public institutions (including governments, nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], and other organizations that emerge from civil society) will be significant in dealing with, or ignoring, fairness in relation to globalization. And third, we felt it would be valuable at this point in the evolution of globalization to address these links in relation to Asia, especially East Asia.

We agreed that a small group composed of both scholars and practitioners was needed to undertake this conversation. We also believed that while most participants should come from East Asia, other perspectives ought to be represented. While we looked for diversity in backgrounds, the ability to work in spoken English was a common requirement. In the end, we were pleased to have representatives from the People's Republic of China, the United States, South Korea, Cambodia, Japan, and Laos. Participants' backgrounds included employees of NGOs (such as the Asia Development Bank), two American academics, a Canadian practitioner, and a futurist from Yugoslavia living in Australia.

We did not want these carefully selected individuals to come and tell us, in a

series of presentations, what they already knew. The objective instead was to have a multifaceted and intimate dialogue that explored complex issues, and thereby to have understandings emerge from interacting across the represented cultures and professional perspectives. To accomplish that, we set up a three-and-a-half-day "dialogic" process that seemed risky but turned out to work well. First we asked each participant to come with an example from his/her personal experience of something connecting the three conference themes of fairness, globalization, and public institutions. Second, we asked participants to write down their initial thoughts to the following twelve questions, around which twelve one-and-a-half-hour sessions were organized.

1. What kinds of societal, environmental, and intergenerational challenges to public institutions do you believe can be attributed to globalization?

2. How do you see public institutions presently responding to these challenges? That is, what are the specific practices that are wholly or in part responses to challenges presented by globalization?

3. How do you think globalization may be changing our ideas of what public institutions are?

4. How is globalization changing what is meant by fairness in society, or for future generations, or in relation to the environment?

5. What goals and specific practices should public institutions, as we understand them, adopt in your society in the immediate future to respond to globalization fairly, in relation to society, future generations, or the environment?

6. What obstacles do public institutions currently encounter that prevent them for doing what you believe is desirable?

7. What obstacles are public institutions likely to encounter in the future (more than five years) that may prevent them from doing what is desirable?

8. What are the existing developments and forces that, if encouraged or supported, can help to facilitate the desired responses of public institutions? Similarly, what new forces or factors need to be encouraged or supported in order to facilitate the desired responses of public institutions?

9. What educational, training, and research activities should be undertaken in order to overcome the obstacles, nourish the opportunities, and invent new processes that address fairness in relation to the societal, environmental, and intergenerational issues raised by globalization?

10. To what extent is this range of education, training, and research activities being done, or not done, in, or for, your society?

11. What are the educational, training, and research needs likely to be in the future (more than five years) that are different than today?

12. When the current or anticipated educational, training, and research activities are not being addressed, who should undertake these activities? Are those who should undertake this likely to be different in the future?

We asked each participant to initiate one of the twelve sessions by sharing his/her thoughts and then facilitate a discussion. The organizers talked to each of the facilitators in advance to be clear on the facilitation norms we wished to use and were available to provide assistance as needed (which was very little). Third, at the end of each session we asked a participant and/or an observer to sum up and interpret what he/she had just heard. Composed of faculty and graduate students from different programs and departments at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa, the observers listened to the conversation. Some became commentators, and others are contributors to this volume. Finally, at the end of the last session, participants and observers were asked for final thoughts, and as the organizers we offered our own.

The results of this process were very positive. The conversations were intense, so much so that we all were exhausted by the end of the third day. Participation across the cultures, professions, ages, and genders was quite even and very open. Most felt fully involved, even though differences in English ability sometimes worked against this. The questions, which intentionally built on one another, created a logic, or at least continuity, in the conversation. Time restrictions on presentations reinforced the willingness to listen and engage one another. Substantively, what came out of the conference was rich. Shared concerns about the implications of globalization were evident, but also apparent were differences about what globalization means for the futures of these societies and their relationships with each other.

Even though questions about balancing the interests of future generations with those of present generations were asked of the delegates, most of the participants did not raise the issue during the discussion or subsequently. Those few who did, such as Sohail Inayatullah, have long been participants in the future generation debate sponsored by the Kyoto group (discussed later in the book).

One clear example of why the needs of future generations need to be fully addressed occurred during a spirited discussion of fairness and economic growth. Some people said that if China were to develop by the same processes and achieve the same standard of living as the West, then the impact on the environment would be catastrophic. "China cannot be allowed to 'develop' at the cost of global survivability," they said. "No, that is not fair," said others in response. "It is not fair to deny the Chinese (or anyone else) the right to achieve the same standard of living people in the West have. Chinese have every right to catch up with (and surpass) the West economically as soon as possible."

Although the impact on the environment was mentioned, no one took the opportunity to bring up the question of what is fair for future generations. Even though present generations in China might want to develop as soon as possible, what about future generations in China, never mind elsewhere? Are they likely to be happy with the current Chinese policy if that means (because of the severe toll on the environment) that they actually will live in even greater misery and poverty than present generations do now, which of course they may or may not?

The point is that the issue of fairness to future generations was not even brought up during the discussion or spontaneously anywhere else during the three days, showing, we believe, how utterly absent this ethical obligation (and structural requirement) is among even ethically oriented people concerned about globalization and fairness today. Some might be concerned about the environment, but few think to care about future generations.

As we will argue more fully later, we believe it is absolutely essential that all polities, especially those that are willing to experiment with notions of fairness in relation to globalization, should include discussions of how to be fair to future generations. The absence of this discourse and of looking for structures and processes of governance that enable present generations to fulfill the obligation is a huge and terrifying failure of all governance specialists and practitioners today.

Recently, we discussed this issue with some students. There were several that were very active in efforts to restore sovereignty, stolen by the United States in 1898, to the Hawaiian people. One activist noted that many young Hawaiians are busy tracing their genealogy back to see where their ancestors stood and what they did during the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. Since they are now so opposed to the overthrow and so desirous of restoring Hawaiian sovereignty (perhaps even the monarchy), they expected to find that their ancestors bravely fought against the overthrow.

Sometimes they do find that. But sometimes they find that their ancestors were either silently, or actively, complicit in the overthrow. And they are ashamed of their ancestors and of themselves. So, the students suggested, why don't we develop and formalize an ethic that says that we should live now so that when future generations trace their genealogies back to us, they will be proud of us, pleased that at least we did our best, that we cared enough to try to live with the needs of future generations effectively in mind, even if we did do things that future generations in fact don't like?

Once upon a time, we all tried to live so that our dead ancestors would be proud of us. That is still good and noble. But now we also need to live so that our descendants, not yet born, and all future generations will cherish our memories and not curse us for the misery we have unnecessarily and selfishly visited upon them.

Defining the East Asian Region

A survey of how East Asian public institutions respond to the pressures of globalization with fairness might begin with recognition of the region's characteristics. In defining the East Asian region, as with any region, various characteristics might be considered, particularly traditional geographical classifications and degrees of "interdependence" and "integration" in the region. In general, East Asia could include the five countries of northeast Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Taiwan) and eleven Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN 11). However, we will focus only on the Confucian-led societies of East Asia, namely China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and Singapore. These conceptions of region still remain ambiguous and competing and are subject to change. East Asia is indeed a region of diversity; the countries in the region are all quite distinct politically, economically, linguistically, religiously, and ethnically from each other.

Along with these differences, the countries of East Asia also share characteristics such as common histories, cultural values, writing systems, and political attitudes with others throughout the region. Among other things, one of the most common conceptualizations of East Asia is probably Confucianism, which has spread and permeated all of East Asia throughout many centuries. Confucian values were greatly important as principles of social value, which are still deeply embedded in the societies of East Asia. Confucianism in particular has had a profound influence on political and administrative concepts of East Asia that have provided the necessary cosmological framework for the politics and institutions of this region. More significantly, "Confucian concepts have been reinterpreted and adapted when East Asian countries have faced pressures for renovation in development."[3]

The East Asian countries in our book are known as "Confucian countries" or "Confucian-based societies" where Confucian values such as faithfulness to authority, social harmony, conformity, sincerity, and dedication to collectivity are still considered important. As Dao Minh Chau states, "[M]ost institutions of the modern governments in Confucian countries have been borrowed from the West, but they do not work in the same way as those in their countries of origin. Rather, they have been modified according to the spirit of Confucianism."[4] In brief, the preexisting Confucian traits in administrative concepts are still embedded in East Asian public institutions, and they have enabled East Asia to be unique and stand out from other regions, particularly in relation to the West.

An additional reason we focus on East Asia is that we still remain confident that the region will be especially important over the twenty-first century. Scholars often say that East Asia is a region of dynamism, as East Asia has been playing a major role as an "engine of growth" for the world economy. In fact, no one has questioned the unprecedented economic development of the region since the end

of World War II. This development started in Japan and was followed by the so-called Newly Industrializing Economies: Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and most recently the People's Republic of China. In particular, many argue that the rise of China as an economic power will likely become a new engine of growth for the world economy as well as for the region.[5]

However, our reasons for focusing on East Asia are not due solely to the region's economic dynamism. The primary reason for our focus on East Asia lies in the region's tremendous human and intellectual resources. We believe that the manner in which the region "responds in fairness to globalization" will be important not only within the region, but also for all humanity. Indeed, East Asia has been a very dynamic region and has a long tradition that has provided abundant "human and intellectual resources" for world development in many respects, namely philosophies, writing systems, political thoughts and institutions, and scientific devices. As Gilbert Rozman has put it,

> East Asia is a great region of the past, having been in the forefront of world development for at least two thousand years, until the sixteenth, seventeenth, or even the eighteenth century, after which it suffered a relatively brief but deeply felt eclipse. Projecting recent patterns of achievement by countries in the region and by transplanted persons whose families have moved abroad, most observers now agree that East Asia promises to be a great region of the future.[6]

The East Asian intellectual resources that contributed to world development have been conspicuous "in the areas of humanities and social and political thoughts."[7] As Su-Hoon Lee observed, the inherent profusion of scholarly learning and Confucian traditions such as commitment to education and reverence for scholarship has enabled East Asian societies to develop their own solid intellectual tradition in social knowledge.[8]

As a resurgence of East Asian dynamism continues, we believe that the way this region "responds in fairness to globalization" will continue to be important for all of humanity. Although socialist systems have failed in practice, capitalist systems are still an incomplete and insufficient system for humanity since they lack fairness to future generations resulting from its destructiveness to the environment, its unequal distribution of wealth, and its rewarding of materialism at the expense of other values. We are also facing the problems of a modern society such as the debates over a lack of morality, the growth of greed and selfishness, and the termination of families and communities.[9] In this vein, we are confident that the resurgence of human and intellectual resources in East Asia (which once had a splendid tradition and made great contributions to humanity) will act as a new alternative to unrestricted global capitalism or provide a foundation in a post-globalization epoch by interacting with other great traditions in the world.

Finally, even though we focus on political institutions in East Asia, broadly defined, we also include discussions of the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world from time to time when their experiences seem especially relevant to our discussion.

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Further Thoughts

The Need for Global Dialogue

Walt Anderson

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If there is to be a strong and lasting global civilization, it will come about not merely from wise leadership or high levels of public participation, but because many people have learned to practice the simple (yet somehow elusive) art of dialogue. Dialogue is not debate, negotiation, or decision making (all of which are necessary to politics and governance), but the deeper human interaction that precedes them and makes them possible, as people begin to understand the frames of reference of others and develop shared visions and common language. Dialogue is not just about policy, but also about morality, worldviews, and emotions.

The frames of reference that shape personal convictions about public issues are largely implicit, are rarely examined or deliberately revised, and play a large part in triggering emotional responses. In smaller and more homogenous societies, people's frames of reference may be quite similar and dialogue over differences relatively easy to achieve. This is certainly not the case in pluralistic, multicultural societies. Indeed, there are some indications that advanced industrial societies may be becoming less, rather than more, capable of serious, informed deliberation around major issues. Increasing mobility and access to communications make it easy for people to seek out and join subcultures of like-minded others rather than engage in dialogue with those who think differently. This makes it easy to demonize those who are on the other side of issues concerning such matters as globalization, free trade, environmental protection, and the ethics of biotechnology. We may be getting better at generating controversy and confrontation than at encouraging civil conversation aimed at achieving understanding and consensus.

James Rosenau has argued eloquently in various writings that more and more people all over the world are taking part in a "skill revolution" as they learn how to mobilize, form coalitions, use information/communications technologies, and influence public opinion. There is much evidence to support this, and it is one of the most hopeful developments of our time. But it is urgently necessary that the skill of engaging in dialogue across cultural, political, and worldview boundaries be a part of this revolution.