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Fairness, Globalization, and Public Institutions

Dator, Jim

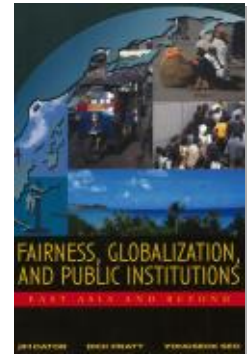
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❧ PART 2 ❧

Globalization and Fairness

The Debate

This section introduces and discusses some of the various contentions about fairness and globalization. Four very different stories are told from four very different perspectives. The first is written by Christopher Grandy, an economist in the Public Administration Program at the University of Hawai‘i who considers the prospects for fairness to be generally good, if economic processes are allowed to operate as they should. After discussing the fact that economic globalization limits the ability—and more important, the desirability—of nation-states (and their units) to protect certain interests of citizens and the environment, Grandy carefully, clearly, and sympathetically lays out the dominant view of economists who support economic globalization. He concludes that “[f]airness equals equity *and* efficiency.” He also maintains that a robust body of literature supporting that conclusion has been in existence since the 1970s and 1980s, though he admits that “it is fair (no pun intended) to say that it has had little direct influence on public policy.”

In contrast, James Rosenau, an American political scientist who has for many years thought long and hard about fairness and globalization, argues that the issues can best be understood by a new word—“framigration”—that expresses in a single term their simultaneously integrated and fragmented nature. Rosenau attributes framigration largely to microelectronic technologies, the worldwide “skills revolution,” the rise of citizen organizations and networks, increased population mobility, the dynamic tension between state-centric politics, and the multicentric world of NGOs and transnational entities of many kinds. This framigration is associated with the concomitant weakening of traditional sources of power and authority; all are strongly influenced by and influencing

the globalized economy and the globalization of all national economies. Rosenau concludes that prolonged fragmentation suggests that fairness for most people will be hard to obtain.

Ivana Milojevic finds little good in global economic integration as currently envisioned and manifested. While there are various anti-global positions, she says that there are basically two positive visions of a global society. One, Globotech, is dominant and is put forward largely by white, academic males situated in developed countries. The vision is presented as inevitable and basically unproblematic. While some people might suffer in the short term, in the long run the Globotech future will be good for everyone. The other positive vision of a globalized world, Ecarmony, comes primarily from women and others on the margins of contemporary society. It is viewed as naive, fanciful, and unrealistic. But of the two, it is only Ecarmony that is sustainable, Milojevic believes.

Finally, Sohail Inayatullah presents a humorous and bittersweet personal story of what passports, visas, national boundaries, and citizenship mean to him. During his life, he has lived in many parts of the world, but his brown skin and ominous-appearing name often make boundary crossing quite an adventure. He is riding the wave of a swelling future.