

The Lexus and The Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization

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The book starts from opening scene: The World Is Ten years Old. Author starts the world history from when the Berlin wall fell in 1989. The discussion is about how this new era of globalization became the dominant international system at the end of twentieth century by replacing cold war. This portion of the book also examines that how globalization is shaping everyone's domestic politics, commerce, environment and international relations.

In part two author identifies the new forms and actors of power. He calls them Shapers and Adaptors. Shapers are those who define the rules and control, Adaptors are those who adapt these rules. Economic and technological are new forms of power.

Multinational companies, influential global institutions, Internet, ecommerce, Microsoft, eBay, IBM, and etc...

The lives of people are changed entirely with the advent of technology. He has discussed the importance of advanced technology and its effect of society on individual and collective levels.

The most interesting thing of the book is its title 'The Lexus and the Olive Tree'. These both symbols represent the post-cold war world.

He writes in part one of the book " half the world seemed to be emerging from the Cold War intent on building a better Lexus, dedicated to modernizing, streamlining, and privatizing their

economies in order to thrive in the system of globalization. And half of the world-sometimes half the same country, sometimes half the same person-was still caught up in the fight over who owns which olive tree.” (p:31)

Olive trees represents our roots and Lexus depicts modernization. Author has tried to show the contrasts which today’s world is experiencing. The importance of olive trees means sticking to the old traditions, and aspiration of driving Lexus means catching up with modernization.

As a whole the book covers seeing the system, plugging into the system, the backlash against the system, and in end America and the system.

The final opinion/solution of author about the struggling situation of Lexus and the olive tree is to maintain a healthy balance between them. According to him ‘olive trees are important’ but ‘sooner or later the Lexus always catches up with you.’

He cites America as a model society of such balance and suggests that every society has to work for achieving this kind of balance.

The language of the book is easy and understandable. The writing style of the author is so interesting; it includes the serious issues world is confronting but the reader will not lose interest at any point. Author identifies and compares the changes and its impact by indicating common things around us.

Book spots transformations, presents comparison, identifies challenges, and discusses possible opportunities of catching up with new system and losses of leaving the old values.

Book explains today's world and addresses with forthcoming problems. It provides sufficient knowledge about impact of technology, new economic order, impact of these changes on nation-states and societies, geo-economics and geo-politics.

The New York Times writes about the book: "Breathtaking... exhilarating...A spirited and imaginative exploration of our new order of economic globalization."

Reviewer

Kiran Sami

