

THE LAW OF GLOBALISATION

by Laurence Boulle

A major gap in the Australian legal literature has been filled. This book analyses the many different laws from a wide range of sources that together support and regulate globalisation. In eight chapters the author traverses a broad landscape. From the legal requirements for the market economy and the national laws needed to support globalisation, through to emerging law and governance in the global economy and the interaction of the rule of law and globalisation, the intellectual breadth of this work is impressive. It analyses the downsides of globalisation and gives fair treatment to the phenomena's many critics.

Few authors, alone, could have written this text, and it is much the stronger for being the work of one mind. It has a coherence that few multi-authored legal texts share. Laurence Boulle teaches an undergraduate course on the law of globalisation at Bond University, and the book is aimed primarily at law students, undergraduate and postgraduate, but there is much in here for scholars. Globalisation is not new. As the Nobel laureate, Amartya Sen, pointed out in his Deakin Lecture in Melbourne in 2000:

high technology in the world of 1000 AD included paper and printing, the crossbow and gunpowder, the clock, the iron chain suspension bridge, the kite, the magnetic compass, the wheelbarrow and the rotary fan. Each one of these examples of high technology ... a millennium ago was well-established and extensively used in China and ... practically unknown elsewhere. Globalisation spread them across the world, including Europe.

But while globalisation is an age-old phenomenon, its potency has been greatly enhanced by modern telecommunications, international finance and the manufacturing practices of multinational corporations. Australian law schools have, to the best of my knowledge, been relatively slow to offer courses in the law of globalisation, preferring to treat this information in traditional categories such as the law of trade, the law of international organisations, international finance law, and the like. However, there is much to be said for subjects on the law of globalisation, or globalisation and the law, the title depending, perhaps, upon whether one wishes to stick fairly tightly to the law that governs globalisation, as this text does, or one wishes to take an even broader approach to a truly global topic. Laurence Boulle's text does an admirable job of supporting the teaching of courses in this new field.

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