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*Linguistic Justice for Europe and for the World* par Van Parijs, Philippe, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, 312 pages.  
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Gilles Grenier

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tation d'un modèle d'analyse du capital d'attraction et de rétention des immigrants en région québécoise. Ce modèle, basé sur une littérature préexistante (dont trois des chapitres présentés dans le présent ouvrage), tente d'intégrer une variété de modèles présentés dans le chapitre traitant de plusieurs aspects reliés à l'immigration en région québécoise dont les facteurs d'attraction et de rétention des personnes immigrantes ainsi que le développement régional.

Cet ouvrage réussit à allier tant recherche et pratique qu'empirisme et théorie dans une perspective de dialogue entre les acteurs intéressés par la question de l'immigration en région. En effet, les études de cas, principalement effectuées dans les régions de la Capitale-Nationale, de Chaudière-Appalaches et de l'Estrie, permettent une compréhension nuancée des dynamiques locales concernant l'intégration des personnes immigrantes en région ainsi que des enjeux de développement régional qui y sont associés. De plus, l'inclusion d'interventions de la part d'acteurs communautaires témoigne de la pertinence des études effectuées. En conclusion, les textes présentés dans cette œuvre font preuve de rigueur, une caractéristique d'autant plus manifeste grâce au modèle proposé à l'initiateur du dernier chapitre.

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**Linguistic Justice for Europe and for the World**

par Van Parijs, Philippe, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, 312 pages.

ISBN: 978-0-19-920887-6.

If you are reading these words, you are either a native English speaker or, at some point earlier in your life, you learned English as a second language. If you are in the second category, you may remember how difficult it was to become fluent in a

new language. This took time and effort that could have been used to do something else. With economic globalization, the use of English as the international *lingua franca* has increased extensively. If so many people decide to communicate in English, it is because they see some advantages to it. Clearly, communication among large groups of people is more efficient if they all share the same language. However, there are also some concerns with that trend which may be seen as providing an unfair advantage to the native English speakers and as a threat to linguistic and cultural diversity that many think should be preserved.

Philippe Van Parijs is a philosopher with a background in welfare economics who tries to analyze those issues rigorously. Viewing language as a public good, native English speakers behave as free riders, benefiting from the use of a common language without having to pay the cost to learn it. In addition to being a public good, a language is also an individual asset and those who know English have more opportunities than others. Does that mean that English speaking people should compensate the others for the use of their language? Or should we try to stop or limit the expansion of English?

While the author acknowledges that there are elements of unfairness in the above situations, he takes the provocative position that the trend towards English is good, that it should even be "welcomed and accelerated", not only because it is efficient, but also because it is fair. The use of a common language is fair in the sense that it facilitates direct communication and access to knowledge for the largest number of people. He dismisses the proposals that would aim at compensating the non-English countries for the use of English. In practice, the value of such compensations would be difficult to estimate and implementation would be almost impossible. He also dismisses the efforts that could be made in some countries to prevent the learning of English.

However, there is another dimension of fairness that Van Parijs considers important. It is what he calls "parity of esteem": members of linguistic communities are entitled to equal respect and have the right to promote their identities. What he proposes is an arrangement based on linguistic territoriality, whereas communities can impose their domestic languages in their own institutions, while still using English for external communications. Of course, this may not be possible for all linguistic groups, but those that are strong enough and have the resources can do it.

The author's reflection is carried mainly in the context of the European Union, where twenty-three languages now have an official status, but where the expanding domination of English has become a common source of frustration. He argues that this frustration is misplaced, both in Europe and in the rest of the world. There is very little discussion in the book of the case of Canada, but I think that there may be some interesting implications. There are two official languages in Canada, with one of them being the international *lingua franca*. Official bilingualism is the norm, but in reality English is used a lot more than French in the federal government and other national institutions. This used to be due to a large extent to the inferior status of the French Canadians, but it is no longer the case. Even if a lot of French Canadians have made it to the top, the international supremacy of English makes the position of the French language still fragile. In that context, the decision of the Quebec government to impose French on its territory, as opposed to official bilingualism as some would have liked, makes sense and it is consistent with the author's recommendation.

One quality of the book is that it tackles in a rational way issues that are sometimes emotional. I would personally disagree with the view that the spreading of English should be accelerated. The trend is already

strong enough. I would rather say that we must take advantage of a common *lingua franca*, but that its expansion must be kept under control. The book provides an interesting argument that the worldwide use of English is not incompatible with linguistic diversity.

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### **The Fissured Workplace: Why Work Became So Bad for So Many and What Can Be Done to Improve It**

by David Weil, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014, 424 pages.

ISBN: 978-0674725447.

A "seismic shift in the focus of employment" has taken place. David Weil's book describes this shift through the concept of fissuring, that is, businesses' shedding of work done internally to subsidiary organizations, a dynamic that has fundamentally transformed the employment relationship for many workers. Motivated by strategic concerns pertaining to a focus on core competencies and cost-cutting, lead businesses have used subcontracting, franchising, and supply chain management as means of absolving themselves from the responsibilities inherent to managing their workforces. As a consequence, greater numbers of workers have experienced marked declines in wages, benefits, health and safety conditions, and in their share of wealth creation.

According to Weil, this is so because fissured workplaces operate under different pressures than do lead businesses. Subsidiary organizations often operate under tight margins and strict guidelines that make poor pay and working conditions a precondition to solvency. So how have fissured workplaces manifested themselves over the course of the twentieth century? This question is largely addressed in Part 1 of the book. Weil describes how vertically inte-