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Review of Branko Milanovic, The Haves and the Have-Nots: A Brief and Idiosyncratic History of Global Inequality, Basic Books, 2011, 258 pp.

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Elizabeth Bennet and Anna Karenina – the original gold-diggers? Were these two famous female protagonists simply playing the love card to overcome the inequality that existed at the time, marrying up to make it into the infamous top 1%? Branko Milanovic's *The Haves and the Have-Nots* employs examples such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Anna Karenina* to illustrate the historical trends of inequality and introduce the dialogue that surrounds global inequality today. By combining critical explanations of measures and theories of inequality that inform the academic perspective with real-world examples, Milanovic arms his readers with a preliminary vocabulary of inequality and ultimately suggests that there should be an equilibration of average income across the globe or else a scaling back of globalization. The information provided is well explained and accessible, yet the reader would benefit from a slightly more critical discussion of the theories introduced and some concrete suggestions for what can be done to reduce global inequality.

Milanovic divides the issue of inequality into three major forms – inequality within a nation, among nations, and among individuals around the world – dedicating one chapter to each. He begins the discussion of each type of inequality with an essay to orient the reader within the academic discourse that already exists and defines the essential terms associated with each type of inequality. The essay is followed by a series of short vignettes that require the reader to immediately apply the knowledge acquired.

Chapter one, "Unequal People," is dedicated to examining the inequality among individuals within a single nation, looking at income distribution, welfare

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programs, and especially the measurement of the Gini coefficient. The vignettes that follow put these new theories and terms in a variety of contexts that are presumed to be compatible with common knowledge.

The next chapter, "Unequal Nations," changes the scale of inequality considered by looking at the disparity among countries. Milanovic defines concepts, such as Purchasing Power Parity, "income divergence," and the importance of economic development in the incredibly populous India and China, and then further examines these ideas in the vignettes using the colloquial contexts of migration, communism and the success of Obama.

Milanovic, in his final chapter, "Unequal World," investigates inequality within the concept of global citizenship. In the vignettes that follow, the readers are asked to engage in the conversation by determining their own standing within the global income distribution as well as explore the tangible result of the interaction between various measures of inequality with an explanation of the comparable inequality in Latin America and Asia.

The author's explanations rely exclusively on the terminology that he defines within each chapter, and while this results in an appreciatively accessible discourse, some of the existing critiques of these theories are not introduced. Though the book is intended as an introduction to the dialogue of inequality, it is important to include the imperfections inherent in some of the content discussed. For example, Milanovic's use of the Gini coefficient in his discussion is pervasive, accurately reflecting the importance of the coefficient in the international discussion. The Gini coefficient, however, has real shortcomings in its representation of the percentage of populations within countries actually living in poverty; countries with the same Gini coefficient can have very different income distributions. This fact is not given enough attention; therefore a reader without any previous exposure to the term is not introduced to the limitations of the measurement and with what critical considerations it should be interpreted.

Milanovic's use of vignettes may come at the expense of a more active discussion on what can be done about inequality. On one hand, the fact that he provides many different ways to think about inequality, making use of colloquialisms such as the size "venti" from Starbucks (p.116), serves to make his book accessible to the widest audience possible. The multitude of vignettes allows readers with different learning styles to grasp the central concepts of inequality, applying the

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theories of the essays into different contexts that may elucidate their meaning for one reader while a different context clarifies for another reader. On the other hand, the discussion is purely descriptive and there is brief mention of what should be done about the endemic inequality that Milanovic describes. The suggestions that Milanovic gives of a convergence of global incomes or a halt to the forces of globalization are posed with little indication of the perceived feasibility of either and no actions necessary to bring these changes about. Addressing these issues would give the reader some direction with his or her newly acquired knowledge of global inequality.

Milanovic's unique combination of essays and vignettes creates an accessible text for those interested in understanding the historical and modern contexts of inequality. An audience already somewhat knowledgeable about the subject of inequality may wish for more emphasis on what are the next steps for ending inequality. Overall, for those new to the subject matter and even those with some previous exposure, Milanovic's book is both an approachable and palatable discussion of an important albeit often complicated and distressing issue.

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