



WHITE, J., delivered the opinion of the Court, in which BURGER, C. J., and STEWART, POWELL, REHNQUIST, and STEVENS, JJ., joined. BRENNAN, J., filed a dissenting opinion, *post*, p. 299. MARSHALL, J., filed a dissenting opinion, in which BLACKMUN, J., joined, *post*, p. 313. BLACKMUN, J., filed a dissenting opinion, *post*, p. 317.

Herbert Rubin argued the cause for petitioners. With him on the briefs were *Dan A. Rogers*, *Bernard J. Wald*, and *Ian Ceresney*.

Jefferson G. Greer argued the cause for respondents. With him on the brief was *Charles A. Whitebook*.

MR. JUSTICE WHITE delivered the opinion of the Court.

The issue before us is whether, consistently with the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, an Oklahoma court may exercise *in personam* jurisdiction over a nonresident automobile retailer and its wholesale distributor in a products-liability action, when the defendants' only connection with Oklahoma is the fact that an automobile sold in New York to New York residents became involved in an accident in Oklahoma.

I

Respondents Harry and Kay Robinson purchased a new Audi automobile from petitioner Seaway Volkswagen, Inc. (Seaway), in Massena, N. Y., in 1976. The following year the Robinson family, who resided in New York, left that State for a new home in Arizona. As they passed through the State of Oklahoma, another car struck their Audi in the rear, causing a fire which severely burned Kay Robinson and her two children.¹

The Robinsons² subsequently brought a products-liability action in the District Court for Creek County, Okla., claiming that their injuries resulted from defective design and placement of the Audi's gas tank and fuel system. They joined as defendants the automobile's manufacturer, Audi NSU Auto Union Aktiengesellschaft (Audi); its importer, Volkswagen of America, Inc. (Volkswagen); its regional distributor, petitioner World-Wide Volkswagen Corp. (World-Wide); and its retail dealer, petitioner Seaway. Seaway and World-Wide entered special appearances,³ claiming that Oklahoma's exercise of jurisdiction over them would offend the limitations on the State's jurisdiction imposed by the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.⁴

The facts presented to the District Court showed that World-Wide is incorporated and has its business office in New

¹ The driver of the other automobile does not figure in the present litigation.

² Kay Robinson sued on her own behalf. The two children sued through Harry Robinson as their father and next friend.

³ Volkswagen also entered a special appearance in the District Court, but unlike World-Wide and Seaway did not seek review in the Supreme Court of Oklahoma and is not a petitioner here. Both Volkswagen and Audi remain as defendants in the litigation pending before the District Court in Oklahoma.

⁴ The papers filed by the petitioners also claimed that the District Court lacked "venue of the subject matter," App. 9, or "venue over the subject matter," *id.*, at 11.

York. It distributes vehicles, parts, and accessories, under contract with Volkswagen, to retail dealers in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Seaway, one of these retail dealers, is incorporated and has its place of business in New York. Insofar as the record reveals, Seaway and World-Wide are fully independent corporations whose relations with each other and with Volkswagen and Audi are contractual only. Respondents adduced no evidence that either World-Wide or Seaway does any business in Oklahoma, ships or sells any products to or in that State, has an agent to receive process there, or purchases advertisements in any media calculated to reach Oklahoma. In fact, as respondents' counsel conceded at oral argument, Tr. of Oral Arg. 32, there was no showing that any automobile sold by World-Wide or Seaway has ever entered Oklahoma with the single exception of the vehicle involved in the present case.

Despite the apparent paucity of contacts between petitioners and Oklahoma, the District Court rejected their constitutional claim and reaffirmed that ruling in denying petitioners' motion for reconsideration.⁵ Petitioners then sought a writ of prohibition in the Supreme Court of Oklahoma to restrain the District Judge, respondent Charles S. Woodson, from exercising *in personam* jurisdiction over them. They renewed their contention that, because they had no "minimal contacts," App. 32, with the State of Oklahoma, the actions of the District Judge were in violation of their rights under the Due Process Clause.

The Supreme Court of Oklahoma denied the writ, 585 P. 2d 351 (1978),⁶ holding that personal jurisdiction over petitioners was authorized by Oklahoma's "long-arm" statute,

⁵ The District Court's rulings are unreported, and appear at App. 13 and 20.

⁶ Five judges joined in the opinion. Two concurred in the result, without opinion, and one concurred in part and dissented in part, also without opinion.

Okla. Stat., Tit. 12, § 1701.03 (a)(4) (1971).⁷ Although the court noted that the proper approach was to test jurisdiction against both statutory and constitutional standards, its analysis did not distinguish these questions, probably because § 1701.03 (a)(4) has been interpreted as conferring jurisdiction to the limits permitted by the United States Constitution.⁸ The court's rationale was contained in the following paragraph, 585 P. 2d, at 354:

"In the case before us, the product being sold and distributed by the petitioners is by its very design and purpose so mobile that petitioners can foresee its possible use in Oklahoma. This is especially true of the distributor, who has the exclusive right to distribute such automobile in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The evidence presented below demonstrated that goods sold and distributed by the petitioners were used in the State of Oklahoma, and under the facts we believe it reasonable to infer, given the retail value of the automobile, that the petitioners derive substantial income from automobiles which from time to time are used in the State of Oklahoma. This being the case, we hold that under the facts presented, the trial court was justified in con-

⁷ This subsection provides:

"A court may exercise personal jurisdiction over a person, who acts directly or by an agent, as to a cause of action or claim for relief arising from the person's . . . causing tortious injury in this state by an act or omission outside this state if he regularly does or solicits business or engages in any other persistent course of conduct, or derives substantial revenue from goods used or consumed or services rendered, in this state. . . ."

The State Supreme Court rejected jurisdiction based on § 1701.03 (a)(3), which authorizes jurisdiction over any person "causing tortious injury in this state by an act or omission in this state." Something in addition to the infliction of tortious injury was required.

⁸ *Fields v. Volkswagen of America, Inc.*, 555 P. 2d 48 (Okla. 1976); *Carmack v. Chemical Bank New York Trust Co.*, 536 P. 2d 897 (Okla. 1975); *Hines v. Clendenning*, 465 P. 2d 460 (Okla. 1970).

cluding that the petitioners derive substantial revenue from goods used or consumed in this State.”

We granted certiorari, 440 U. S. 907 (1979), to consider an important constitutional question with respect to state-court jurisdiction and to resolve a conflict between the Supreme Court of Oklahoma and the highest courts of at least four other States.⁹ We reverse.

II

The Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment limits the power of a state court to render a valid personal judgment against a nonresident defendant. *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, 436 U. S. 84, 91 (1978). A judgment rendered in violation of due process is void in the rendering State and is not entitled to full faith and credit elsewhere. *Pennoyer v. Neff*, 95 U. S. 714, 732–733 (1878). Due process requires that the defendant be given adequate notice of the suit, *Mullane v. Central Hanover Trust Co.*, 339 U. S. 306, 313–314 (1950), and be subject to the personal jurisdiction of the court, *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, 326 U. S. 310 (1945). In the present case, it is not contended that notice was inadequate; the only question is whether these particular petitioners were subject to the jurisdiction of the Oklahoma courts.

As has long been settled, and as we reaffirm today, a state court may exercise personal jurisdiction over a nonresident defendant only so long as there exist “minimum contacts” between the defendant and the forum State. *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, *supra*, at 316. The concept of minimum contacts, in turn, can be seen to perform two related, but

⁹ Cf. *Tilley v. Keller Truck & Implement Corp.*, 200 Kan. 641, 438 P. 2d 128 (1968); *Granite States Volkswagen, Inc. v. District Court*, 177 Colo. 42, 492 P. 2d 624 (1972); *Pellegrini v. Sachs & Sons*, 522 P. 2d 704 (Utah 1974); *Oliver v. American Motors Corp.*, 70 Wash. 2d 875, 425 P. 2d 647 (1967).

distinguishable, functions. It protects the defendant against the burdens of litigating in a distant or inconvenient forum. And it acts to ensure that the States, through their courts, do not reach out beyond the limits imposed on them by their status as coequal sovereigns in a federal system.

The protection against inconvenient litigation is typically described in terms of "reasonableness" or "fairness." We have said that the defendant's contacts with the forum State must be such that maintenance of the suit "does not offend 'traditional notions of fair play and substantial justice.'" *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, *supra*, at 316, quoting *Milliken v. Meyer*, 311 U. S. 457, 463 (1940). The relationship between the defendant and the forum must be such that it is "reasonable . . . to require the corporation to defend the particular suit which is brought there." 326 U. S., at 317. Implicit in this emphasis on reasonableness is the understanding that the burden on the defendant, while always a primary concern, will in an appropriate case be considered in light of other relevant factors, including the forum State's interest in adjudicating the dispute, see *McGee v. International Life Ins. Co.*, 355 U. S. 220, 223 (1957); the plaintiff's interest in obtaining convenient and effective relief, see *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, *supra*, at 92, at least when that interest is not adequately protected by the plaintiff's power to choose the forum, cf. *Shaffer v. Heitner*, 433 U. S. 186, 211, n. 37 (1977); the interstate judicial system's interest in obtaining the most efficient resolution of controversies; and the shared interest of the several States in furthering fundamental substantive social policies, see *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, *supra*, at 93, 98.

The limits imposed on state jurisdiction by the Due Process Clause, in its role as a guarantor against inconvenient litigation, have been substantially relaxed over the years. As we noted in *McGee v. International Life Ins. Co.*, *supra*, at 222—

223, this trend is largely attributable to a fundamental transformation in the American economy:

“Today many commercial transactions touch two or more States and may involve parties separated by the full continent. With this increasing nationalization of commerce has come a great increase in the amount of business conducted by mail across state lines. At the same time modern transportation and communication have made it much less burdensome for a party sued to defend himself in a State where he engages in economic activity.”

The historical developments noted in *McGee*, of course, have only accelerated in the generation since that case was decided.

Nevertheless, we have never accepted the proposition that state lines are irrelevant for jurisdictional purposes, nor could we, and remain faithful to the principles of interstate federalism embodied in the Constitution. The economic interdependence of the States was foreseen and desired by the Framers. In the Commerce Clause, they provided that the Nation was to be a common market, a “free trade unit” in which the States are debarred from acting as separable economic entities. *H. P. Hood & Sons, Inc. v. Du Mond*, 336 U. S. 525, 538 (1949). But the Framers also intended that the States retain many essential attributes of sovereignty, including, in particular, the sovereign power to try causes in their courts. The sovereignty of each State, in turn, implied a limitation on the sovereignty of all of its sister States—a limitation express or implicit in both the original scheme of the Constitution and the Fourteenth Amendment.

Hence, even while abandoning the shibboleth that “[t]he authority of every tribunal is necessarily restricted by the territorial limits of the State in which it is established,” *Pennoyer v. Neff*, *supra*, at 720, we emphasized that the reasonableness of asserting jurisdiction over the defendant must be assessed “in the context of our federal system of govern-

ment," *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, 326 U. S., at 317, and stressed that the Due Process Clause ensures not only fairness, but also the "orderly administration of the laws," *id.*, at 319. As we noted in *Hanson v. Denckla*, 357 U. S. 235, 250-251 (1958):

"As technological progress has increased the flow of commerce between the States, the need for jurisdiction over nonresidents has undergone a similar increase. At the same time, progress in communications and transportation has made the defense of a suit in a foreign tribunal less burdensome. In response to these changes, the requirements for personal jurisdiction over nonresidents have evolved from the rigid rule of *Pennoyer v. Neff*, 95 U. S. 714, to the flexible standard of *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, 326 U. S. 310. But it is a mistake to assume that this trend heralds the eventual demise of all restrictions on the personal jurisdiction of state courts. [Citation omitted.] Those restrictions are more than a guarantee of immunity from inconvenient or distant litigation. They are a consequence of territorial limitations on the power of the respective States."

Thus, the Due Process Clause "does not contemplate that a state may make binding a judgment *in personam* against an individual or corporate defendant with which the state has no contacts, ties, or relations." *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, *supra*, at 319. Even if the defendant would suffer minimal or no inconvenience from being forced to litigate before the tribunals of another State; even if the forum State has a strong interest in applying its law to the controversy; even if the forum State is the most convenient location for litigation, the Due Process Clause, acting as an instrument of interstate federalism, may sometimes act to divest the State of its power to render a valid judgment. *Hanson v. Denckla*, *supra*, at 251, 254.

III

Applying these principles to the case at hand,¹⁰ we find in the record before us a total absence of those affiliating circumstances that are a necessary predicate to any exercise of state-court jurisdiction. Petitioners carry on no activity whatsoever in Oklahoma. They close no sales and perform no services there. They avail themselves of none of the privileges and benefits of Oklahoma law. They solicit no business there either through salespersons or through advertising reasonably calculated to reach the State. Nor does the record show that they regularly sell cars at wholesale or retail to Oklahoma customers or residents or that they indirectly, through others, serve or seek to serve the Oklahoma market. In short, respondents seek to base jurisdiction on one, isolated occurrence and whatever inferences can be drawn therefrom: the fortuitous circumstance that a single Audi automobile, sold in New York to New York residents, happened to suffer an accident while passing through Oklahoma.

It is argued, however, that because an automobile is mobile by its very design and purpose it was "foreseeable" that the Robinsons' Audi would cause injury in Oklahoma. Yet "foreseeability" alone has never been a sufficient benchmark for personal jurisdiction under the Due Process Clause. In *Hanson v. Denckla*, *supra*, it was no doubt foreseeable that the settlor of a Delaware trust would subsequently move to Florida and seek to exercise a power of appointment there; yet we held that Florida courts could not constitutionally

¹⁰ Respondents argue, as a threshold matter, that petitioners waived any objections to personal jurisdiction by (1) joining with their special appearances a challenge to the District Court's subject-matter jurisdiction, see n. 4, *supra*, and (2) taking depositions on the merits of the case in Oklahoma. The trial court, however, characterized the appearances as "special," and the Oklahoma Supreme Court, rather than finding jurisdiction waived, reached and decided the statutory and constitutional questions. Cf. *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, 436 U. S. 84, 91, n. 5 (1978).

exercise jurisdiction over a Delaware trustee that had no other contacts with the forum State. In *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, 436 U. S. 84 (1978), it was surely “foreseeable” that a divorced wife would move to California from New York, the domicile of the marriage, and that a minor daughter would live with the mother. Yet we held that California could not exercise jurisdiction in a child-support action over the former husband who had remained in New York.

If foreseeability were the criterion, a local California tire retailer could be forced to defend in Pennsylvania when a blowout occurs there, see *Erlanger Mills, Inc. v. Cohoes Fibre Mills, Inc.*, 239 F. 2d 502, 507 (CA4 1956); a Wisconsin seller of a defective automobile jack could be haled before a distant court for damage caused in New Jersey, *Reilly v. Phil Tolkman Pontiac, Inc.*, 372 F. Supp. 1205 (NJ 1974); or a Florida soft-drink concessionaire could be summoned to Alaska to account for injuries happening there, see *Uppgren v. Executive Aviation Services, Inc.*, 304 F. Supp. 165, 170–171 (Minn. 1969). Every seller of chattels would in effect appoint the chattel his agent for service of process. His amenability to suit would travel with the chattel. We recently abandoned the outworn rule of *Harris v. Balk*, 198 U. S. 215 (1905), that the interest of a creditor in a debt could be extinguished or otherwise affected by any State having transitory jurisdiction over the debtor. *Shaffer v. Heitner*, 433 U. S. 186 (1977). Having interred the mechanical rule that a creditor’s amenability to a *quasi in rem* action travels with his debtor, we are unwilling to endorse an analogous principle in the present case.¹¹

¹¹ Respondents’ counsel, at oral argument, see Tr. of Oral Arg. 19–22, 29, sought to limit the reach of the foreseeability standard by suggesting that there is something unique about automobiles. It is true that automobiles are uniquely mobile, see *Tyson v. Whitaker & Son, Inc.*, 407 A. 2d 1, 6, and n. 11 (Me. 1979) (McKusick, C. J.), that they did play a crucial role in the expansion of personal jurisdiction through the fiction of implied consent, *e. g.*, *Hess v. Pawloski*, 274 U. S. 352 (1927), and that

This is not to say, of course, that foreseeability is wholly irrelevant. But the foreseeability that is critical to due process analysis is not the mere likelihood that a product will find its way into the forum State. Rather, it is that the defendant's conduct and connection with the forum State are such that he should reasonably anticipate being haled into court there. See *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, *supra*, at 97-98; *Shaffer v. Heitner*, 433 U. S., at 216; and see *id.*, at 217-219 (STEVENS, J., concurring in judgment). The Due Process Clause, by ensuring the "orderly administration of the laws," *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, 326 U. S., at 319, gives a degree of predictability to the legal system that allows potential defendants to structure their primary conduct with some minimum assurance as to where that conduct will and will not render them liable to suit.

When a corporation "purposefully avails itself of the privilege of conducting activities within the forum State," *Hanson v. Denckla*, 357 U. S., at 253, it has clear notice that it is subject to suit there, and can act to alleviate the risk of burdensome litigation by procuring insurance, passing the expected costs on to customers, or, if the risks are too great, severing its connection with the State. Hence if the sale of a product of a manufacturer or distributor such as Audi or Volkswagen is not simply an isolated occurrence, but arises from the efforts of the manufacturer or distributor to serve, directly or indirectly, the market for its product in other States, it is not unreasonable to subject it to suit in one of those States if its allegedly defective merchandise has there been the source of injury to its owner or to others. The forum State does not

some of the cases have treated the automobile as a "dangerous instrumentality." But today, under the regime of *International Shoe*, we see no difference for jurisdictional purposes between an automobile and any other chattel. The "dangerous instrumentality" concept apparently was never used to support personal jurisdiction; and to the extent it has relevance today it bears not on jurisdiction but on the possible desirability of imposing substantive principles of tort law such as strict liability.

exceed its powers under the Due Process Clause if it asserts personal jurisdiction over a corporation that delivers its products into the stream of commerce with the expectation that they will be purchased by consumers in the forum State. Cf. *Gray v. American Radiator & Standard Sanitary Corp.*, 22 Ill. 2d 432, 176 N. E. 2d 761 (1961).

But there is no such or similar basis for Oklahoma jurisdiction over World-Wide or Seaway in this case. Seaway's sales are made in Massena, N. Y. World-Wide's market, although substantially larger, is limited to dealers in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. There is no evidence of record that any automobiles distributed by World-Wide are sold to retail customers outside this tristate area. It is foreseeable that the purchasers of automobiles sold by World-Wide and Seaway may take them to Oklahoma. But the mere "unilateral activity of those who claim some relationship with a nonresident defendant cannot satisfy the requirement of contact with the forum State." *Hanson v. Denckla*, *supra*, at 253.

In a variant on the previous argument, it is contended that jurisdiction can be supported by the fact that petitioners earn substantial revenue from goods used in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Supreme Court so found, 585 P. 2d, at 354-355, drawing the inference that because one automobile sold by petitioners had been used in Oklahoma, others might have been used there also. While this inference seems less than compelling on the facts of the instant case, we need not question the court's factual findings in order to reject its reasoning.

This argument seems to make the point that the purchase of automobiles in New York, from which the petitioners earn substantial revenue, would not occur *but for* the fact that the automobiles are capable of use in distant States like Oklahoma. Respondents observe that the very purpose of an automobile is to travel, and that travel of automobiles sold by petitioners is facilitated by an extensive chain of Volkswagen service centers throughout the country, including some in Okla-

homa.¹² However, financial benefits accruing to the defendant from a collateral relation to the forum State will not support jurisdiction if they do not stem from a constitutionally cognizable contact with that State. See *Kulko v. California Superior Court*, 436 U. S., at 94-95. In our view, whatever marginal revenues petitioners may receive by virtue of the fact that their products are capable of use in Oklahoma is far too attenuated a contact to justify that State's exercise of *in personam* jurisdiction over them.

Because we find that petitioners have no "contacts, ties, or relations" with the State of Oklahoma, *International Shoe Co. v. Washington*, *supra*, at 319, the judgment of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma is

Reversed.

¹² As we have noted, petitioners earn no direct revenues from these service centers. See *supra*, at 289.

*[This opinion applies also to No. 78-952, *Rush et al. v. Savchuk*, *post*, p. 320.]