



ROUTLEDGE  
HANDBOOKS

# The Routledge International Handbook of Social Justice

Edited by Michael Reisch

# ROUTLEDGE INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

In a world where genocide, hunger, poverty, war and disease persist and where richer nations often fail to act to address these problems or act too late, a prerequisite to achieving even modest social justice goals is to clarify the meaning of competing discourses on the concept. Throughout history, calls for social justice have been used to rationalize the status quo, promote modest reforms and justify revolutionary, even violent action. Ironically, as the prominence of the concept has risen, the meaning of social justice has become increasingly obscured.

This authoritative volume explores different perspectives on social justice and what its attainment would involve. It addresses key issues, such as resolving fundamental questions about human nature and social relationships; the distribution of resources, power, status, rights, access and opportunities; and the means by which decisions regarding this distribution are made. Illustrating the complexity of the topic, it presents a range of international, historical and theoretical perspectives, and discusses the dilemmas inherent in implementing social justice concepts in policy and practice. Covering more than abstract definitions of social justice, it also includes multiple examples of how social justice might be achieved at the interpersonal, organizational, community, and societal levels.

With contributions from leading scholars around the globe, Reisch has put together a magisterial and multi-faceted overview of social justice. It is an essential reference work for all scholars with an interest in social justice from a wide range of disciplines, including social work, public policy, public health, law, criminology, sociology, and education.

**Michael Reisch** is the Daniel Thursz Distinguished Professor of Social Justice at the University of Maryland, USA. He has published and presented widely on the history and philosophy of social welfare, social justice and multiculturalism, community organization, the non-profit sector, and contemporary policy issues, such as poverty, health care, welfare reform, and the impact of globalization on social welfare.

*Page Intentionally Left Blank*

# ROUTLEDGE INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

*Edited by Michael Reisch*

First published 2014  
by Routledge  
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge  
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY, 10017, USA

*Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business*

© 2014 selection and editorial material, Michael Reisch; individual chapters,  
the contributors

The right of the editor to be identified as the author of the editorial material,  
and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in  
accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents  
Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or  
utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now  
known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in  
any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing  
from the publishers.

*Trademark notice:* Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered  
trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without  
intent to infringe.

*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Routledge international handbook of social justice / edited by Michael  
Reisch.—1st Edition.

pages cm

1. Social justice. I. Reisch, Michael, 1948– II. Title: International handbook  
of social justice.

HM671.R68 2014

303.3'72—dc23

2013034623

ISBN: 978-0-415-62043-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-85753-4 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo, with Minion  
by Book Now Ltd, London

### **Dedication**

To Jennifer and Nikki: With boundless love and admiration for  
their commitment to social justice.

*Page Intentionally Left Blank*

# CONTENTS

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>List of illustrations</i> | <i>xi</i>    |
| <i>Contributors</i>          | <i>xiii</i>  |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i>       | <i>xxiii</i> |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Introduction          | 1 |
| <i>Michael Reisch</i> |   |

## **PART I**

### **Historical and cultural concepts of social justice** 7

|                                                                                                                                |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction to Part I                                                                                                         | 9  |
| <i>Michael Reisch</i>                                                                                                          |    |
| 1 The emergence of social justice in the West                                                                                  | 14 |
| <i>Walter Lorenz</i>                                                                                                           |    |
| 2 Religious influences on justice theory                                                                                       | 27 |
| <i>Daniel C. Maguire</i>                                                                                                       |    |
| 3 The Gandhian concept of social justice                                                                                       | 39 |
| <i>J. Prasant Palakkappillil</i>                                                                                               |    |
| 4 Social justice in an era of globalization: must and can it be<br>the focus of social welfare policies? Japan as a case study | 48 |
| <i>Tatsuru Akimoto</i>                                                                                                         |    |



|                                           |                                                                                                                                                      |            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 5                                         | Social justice in the Middle East<br><i>Elizabeth F. Thompson</i>                                                                                    | 61         |
| 6                                         | Decolonizing livelihoods, decolonizing the will: solidarity<br>economy as a social justice paradigm in Latin America<br><i>Ana Margarida Esteves</i> | 74         |
| 7                                         | Social justice, transitional justice, and political transformation<br>in South Africa<br><i>Simon Stacey</i>                                         | 91         |
| 8                                         | Indigenous struggles for justice: restoring balance within the<br>context of Anglo settler societies<br><i>Hilary N. Weaver</i>                      | 111        |
| <b>PART II</b>                            |                                                                                                                                                      |            |
| <b>Theories and conceptual frameworks</b> |                                                                                                                                                      | <b>123</b> |
|                                           | Introduction to Part II<br><i>Michael Reisch</i>                                                                                                     | 125        |
| 9                                         | Social justice and liberalism<br><i>Michael Reisch</i>                                                                                               | 132        |
| 10                                        | Conservatism and social justice<br><i>David Stoesz</i>                                                                                               | 147        |
| 11                                        | Social justice and critical theory<br><i>Jan Fook</i>                                                                                                | 160        |
| 12                                        | Social justice feminism<br><i>Mel Gray, Kylie Agllias, and Kate Davies</i>                                                                           | 173        |
| 13                                        | Postmodern perspectives on social justice<br><i>Stanley L. Witkin and Allan Irving</i>                                                               | 188        |
| 14                                        | The capability approach and social justice<br><i>Seon-Mi Kim and Margaret Sherrard Sherraden</i>                                                     | 202        |
| 15                                        | Human rights as pillars of social justice<br><i>Joseph Wronka</i>                                                                                    | 216        |

|                                                                                                   |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>PART III</b>                                                                                   |            |
| <b>Social justice issues in policy and practice</b>                                               | <b>227</b> |
| Introduction to Part III                                                                          | 229        |
| <i>Michael Reisch</i>                                                                             |            |
| 16 Social justice and income support policies                                                     | 237        |
| <i>Greg Marston</i>                                                                               |            |
| 17 Social justice and education                                                                   | 249        |
| <i>Maurianne Adams</i>                                                                            |            |
| 18 Social justice and criminal justice                                                            | 269        |
| <i>Frederic G. Reamer</i>                                                                         |            |
| 19 Social justice for children and youth                                                          | 286        |
| <i>Susan P. Kemp</i>                                                                              |            |
| 20 Housing, homelessness and social justice: no fate but<br>what we make                          | 300        |
| <i>Jeffrey Singer</i>                                                                             |            |
| 21 Environmental justice                                                                          | 319        |
| <i>Robert R. Kuehn</i>                                                                            |            |
| 22 Health inequality and social justice                                                           | 339        |
| <i>Johan Fritzell</i>                                                                             |            |
| 23 Psychological justice: distributive justice and psychiatric<br>treatment of the non-disordered | 353        |
| <i>Jerome C. Wakefield</i>                                                                        |            |
| 24 Violence and safety: a social justice perspective                                              | 385        |
| <i>Betty Garcia</i>                                                                               |            |
| 25 Social care and social justice                                                                 | 398        |
| <i>Malcolm Payne</i>                                                                              |            |
| 26 A looming dystopia: feminism, social justice, and<br>community-based long-term care            | 409        |
| <i>Martha Holstein</i>                                                                            |            |

|                                               |                                                                                                           |            |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 27                                            | The last frontier?: indigenous Australians and social justice<br><i>John Whyte and Catherine McDonald</i> | 424        |
| 28                                            | Why poverty and inequality undermine justice in America<br><i>Mark R. Rank</i>                            | 436        |
| <b>PART IV</b>                                |                                                                                                           |            |
| <b>Cultural reflections on social justice</b> |                                                                                                           | <b>449</b> |
|                                               | Introduction to Part IV<br><i>Michael Reisch</i>                                                          | 451        |
| 29                                            | Justice, culture and human rights<br><i>Stuart Rees</i>                                                   | 455        |
| 30                                            | The use of the arts in promoting social justice<br><i>Izumi Sakamoto</i>                                  | 463        |
| 31                                            | By its absence: literature and the attainment of social<br>justice consciousness<br><i>Cheryl Clarke</i>  | 480        |
| 32                                            | Music and social justice<br><i>Jowi Taylor</i>                                                            | 492        |
| 33                                            | Social justice and cinema<br><i>Gerald Sim</i>                                                            | 502        |
|                                               | <i>Index</i>                                                                                              | 513        |

# ILLUSTRATIONS

## Figures

|      |                                                                                                                                                               |     |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 2.1  | The three forms of justice                                                                                                                                    | 32  |
| 22.1 | Class differentials in the risk of ill-health (measured as odds ratios) in Sweden                                                                             | 343 |
| 22.2 | Class differences in death risks by broad causes of death by household social class                                                                           | 345 |
| 22.3 | Under-5 mortality rates by socioeconomic quintile of the household for selected countries                                                                     | 346 |
| 30.1 | Ito Tari in performance, <i>I guess it's better that radiation doesn't have color...Sigh</i>                                                                  | 468 |
| 30.2 | <i>I guess it's better that radiation doesn't have color...Sigh</i>                                                                                           | 469 |
| 30.3 | One of the posters from the Coming Together project                                                                                                           | 471 |
| 30.4 | The title page of the booklet from the collaborative of arts-informed, community-based research on homelessness                                               | 472 |
| 30.5 | The director and co-author of the reader's theater, "Theatre of the Canadian Experience" (Jessica Bleuer) holds the mask while the author (Sakamoto) looks on | 475 |
| 30.6 | The cast and crew receive applause after the reader's theater, "Theatre of the Canadian Experience"                                                           | 475 |

## Table

|      |                                                                             |     |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 22.1 | Class differences in infant mortality in England and Wales in 1911 and 2001 | 346 |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

## Box

|      |                                         |     |
|------|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| 12.1 | Key features of social justice feminism | 175 |
|------|-----------------------------------------|-----|

*Page Intentionally Left Blank*

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Maurianne Adams** is Professor Emerita, Social Justice Education, in the School of Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst. She is editor of *Equity & Excellence in Education*, and co-editor of *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* (2nd edition, 2007) and *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (3rd edition, 2013). She has authored book chapters and articles on social justice education, pedagogy, religious oppression, and classism.

**Kylie Agllias**, Ph.D., is a social work lecturer at the University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia. Her social justice-related research interests include: the impact of neoliberal reform on unemployed people and frontline human service work; heterosexism in social work education; and the gendered implications of poverty, violence, and family estrangement.

**Tatsuru Akimoto** is Director and Professor of the Social Work Research Institute at the Asian Center for Welfare in Society, Japan College of Social Work (2010–), Professor Emeritus at Japan Women's University, President of the Asian and Pacific Association for Social Work Education (APASWE) and Vice President of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) (2009–). He also served in the International Labor Organization (ILO) as Employment Promotion Expert (1992–1994). He has written widely in the areas of labor and work and international social work. His articles have been published in such journals as *International Social Work*, the *Japanese Journal of Social Services*, *Social Welfare*, *Sanseiken Forum*, *Josai Journal of Economics*, and the *Monthly Journal of the Japan Institute of Labour*. His books include *Japan in the Passing Lane; An Insider's Account of Life in a Japanese Auto Factory* (ed. & trans.), *Shrinkage of Urban Slums in Asia and their Employment Aspects* (ed.), *The Future of the US Labor Movement—Foreseeing the 21st century from the 80s*, and *Child Labor in “Developed Countries.”* Professor Akimoto has a degree in labor law from Tokyo Metropolitan University, an MSW from Wayne State University, and a DSW from the City University of New York. He can be reached at [akimoto@jcs.ac.jp](mailto:akimoto@jcs.ac.jp).

**Cheryl Clarke** is a poet and essayist. She is the author of four books of poetry, *Narratives: Poems in the Tradition of Black Women* (1982), *Living as a Lesbian* (1986), *Humid Pitch* (1989), *Experimental Love* (1993), the critical study, *‘After Mecca’: Women Poets and the Black Arts Movement* (Rutgers Press, 2005), and *The Days of Good Looks: Prose and Poetry, 1980–2005* (Carroll & Graf, 2006). Her writing has been published in numerous journals, anthologies, and magazines, including *Signs*,

*The Black Scholar*, *Callaloo*, *Feminist Studies*, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, and *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*. She is retiring from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, where she has served in a number of administrative positions since 1980. She is working on a new manuscript of poems, *By My Precise Haircut*. She attended Howard and Rutgers Universities.

**Kate Davies** is a sociologist whose research has focused on the relationships between social justice, service-user participation and evidence-based practice. She is also an international aid worker, with extensive experience in social policy, welfare and community development in Australia and throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

**Ana Margarida Esteves** is a scholar-activist, researcher and educator, born in Portugal in 1975. She has a Ph.D. in sociology from Brown University and held a Postdoctoral Fellowship at Tulane University's Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies (New Orleans, LA, USA). She does research and teaches on Social and Solidarity Economy, popular education, community-based finance, participatory action research, alternative food systems, local development and direct and participatory democracy, as well as on how to integrate "specialist" and "lay" knowledge in academic and activist research. She is the author of several articles and edited book chapters on these topics. She is also a co-founder and member of the international spokescouncil of *Interface: A journal for and about social movements* [www.interfacejournal.net](http://www.interfacejournal.net). Ana Margarida is currently working on a book manuscript, tentatively entitled "Insurgent Economics: Democratic innovation and the promotion of a cooperation-based economy by the Brazilian Solidarity Economy movement". She is also a co-founder of *Associação Academia Cidadã/The Citizenship Academy*, a popular education collective and think-tank, modeled after The Highlander Center (New Market, TN, USA), which is headquartered in Lisbon, Portugal.

**Jan Fook** currently holds a Chair in Education (Critical Reflection) in the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education at Kingston University, UK and St Georges, University of London, UK. She has formerly held positions at Dalhousie University, Canada, Royal Holloway (University of London) and Southampton University, UK. She was formerly Professor and Director of the School of Social Work at Dalhousie University. She originates from Australia but has recently worked in the UK and Norway, and has held professorial posts at Southampton University and the University of London. She is also an Academician with the Academy of Social Sciences (UK). She has been a social work academic for over 30 years and is known for her work in critical social work and critical reflection, particularly its application in individualised practice, and she travels internationally to deliver training in this area. She has had a long interest in researching practice, and its complexity, from the point of view of the practitioner. She also has a side interest in animals. She has published 14 books and over 80 book chapters and articles. Her latest book (with Fiona Gardner) is *Critical Reflection in Context: Specific Applications in Health and Social Care*.

**Johan Fritzell** is Professor of sociology at the Centre for Health Equity Studies (CHESS), Stockholm University and Karolinska Institutet. A major focus in Fritzell's work concerns comparative studies of poverty, income distribution, and health inequalities. He has published extensively also on the determinants and distribution of health and welfare in Sweden, and was a member of the Swedish Welfare Commission. He co-directed the NEWS project, is currently directing a Nordic project on inequality impacts, and is involved in several international collaborative projects. He is a member of the board of the Luxembourg Income Study. Recent publications

include *Changing Social Equality: The Nordic Welfare Model in the 21st Century* (Kvist, Fritzell, Hvinden, & Kangas, Policy Press, 2012).

**Betty Garcia** is a Professor at California State University, Fresno, Department of Social Work Education, and a licensed clinical social worker. She is on the editorial board of *Social Work* (published by the National Association of Social Workers in the United States), has been a member of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Board of Directors and chaired the CSWE Track on Cultural Competence. She also was a member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Board of Directors and chaired the National Committee on Racial and Ethnic Diversity (NCORED). Dr. Garcia has co-authored two books on teaching diversity content, another on the APA Diagnostic Statistical Manual, and has other publications on diversity teaching, cultural competence, and immigration. She has practiced in community-based mental health clinics and forensic mental health, and teaches classes in public mental health, direct practice, group work and practice with couples and families.

**Mel Gray** is Professor of social work in the School of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Newcastle, the highest ranked social work research program in Australia. Mel has an extensive, highly acclaimed research and publication profile focused on the relationship between social work ethics, theory, research, and practice. Her recent books include the *Sage Handbook of Social Work* (with Midgley & Webb 2012), *Environmental Social Work* (with Coates & Hetherington, Routledge, 2013), *Social Work Theories and Methods* (2nd ed., with Webb, Sage, 2013), *Decolonizing Social Work* (with Coates, Yellow Bird, & Hetherington, Ashgate, 2013), and *The New Politics of Social Work* (with Webb, Palgrave, 2013). Mel is currently Book Review Editor for the *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work and Social Development*.

**Martha Holstein** has worked in the field of aging for almost 40 years and is now the Co-Director of the Center for Long-Term Care Reform at the Health and Medicine Policy Research Group. She also teaches health care ethics part-time at Loyola University in Chicago and organizational ethics in the Program in Non-Profit Management at the Spertus Institute for Jewish Studies. Her most recent book, co-written with two Loyola colleagues, is titled *Ethics, Aging, and Society: The Critical Turn*. Her next big writing project, about which she is very excited, is a book on older women, with publication expected in 2014. A version of her essay will appear in the *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics*.

**Allan Irving**, born in Vancouver, has a Ph.D. in social welfare and social philosophy from the University of Toronto, an MSW from Carleton University, Ottawa and a BA in Philosophy from York University in Toronto. His publications include *Doctor to the World: A Biography of Brock Chisholm* (Chisholm was the first Director-General of the World Health Organization), and, as co-editor, *Reading Foucault for Social Work*. He is completing a manuscript for Columbia University Press, *Escaping the Enlightenment?: Social Work Practice in the Postmodern Era*. Allan taught at the University of Western Ontario, Widener University (Chester, Pennsylvania) and the University of Toronto; he retired in 2011 and now teaches part-time at the University of Pennsylvania. The arts and humanities and their incorporation into social work education and practice are a special interest. He lives in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania with his wife Dianne and son Dylan. His daughter, Bea, lives in Toronto.

**Susan P. Kemp** is Charles O. Cressey Associate Professor at the University of Washington School of Social Work. Her research and scholarly interests focus on place, environment, and community



in the lives of low-income children, youth, and families, public child welfare, and social work history and theory. Recent work has included a national study of social justice-oriented urban youth programs and related publications. She is also co-author of *Person-Environment Practice: The Social Ecology of Interpersonal Helping* (Kemp, Whittaker, & Tracy: Aldine de Gruyter, 1997), and co-editor of two recent books, *The Paradox of Urban Space: Inequality and Transformation in Marginalized Communities* (Sutton & Kemp, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), and *Communities, Neighborhoods, and Health: Expanding the Boundaries of Place* (Burton, Kemp, Leung, Matthews & Takeuchi, Springer, 2011).

**Seon-Mi Kim** is Assistant Professor of social work at Ramapo College of New Jersey, School of Social Science and Human Services. Her research objectives revolve around creating and evaluating domestic and international social and economic development for low-income women and communities. Especially, she focuses on testing innovative and empowerment-oriented approaches that emphasise alternative economic development, such as microenterprise, social enterprise, and community economic development strategies. She had worked for women's empowerment and democracy as a policy director at Korea Women's Associations United for 10 years. She founded UC Smiles, a local currency movement agency, in Urbana-Champaign, IL, USA. She teaches Philosophical Understanding of Social Policy and macro practice. She has recently published articles in such journals as *Affilia: The Journal of Women in Social Work*, and *International Social Work*.

**Robert R. Kuehn** is a Professor of law, Associate Dean for clinical education, and Co-Director of the Interdisciplinary Environmental Clinic at Washington University School of Law in St. Louis where he teaches in the areas of environmental law, clinical legal education, and professional responsibility. His Interdisciplinary Environmental Clinic provides free assistance to needy communities facing environmental harms. He previously taught at Tulane Law School where he founded and directed the Tulane Environmental Law Clinic, the first recipient of the American Bar Association's "Award for Distinguished Achievement in Environmental Law and Policy" for its work in representing minority and low-income communities on environmental justice issues. He was the vice-chair of the Enforcement Subcommittee for the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC), the founder of the Hurricane Katrina Legal Assistance Project, and past president of the Clinical Legal Education Association (CLEA), the nation's largest association of law teachers. Professor Kuehn holds a B.A. from Duke University, J.D. from George Washington University, LL.M. from Columbia University, and M.P.H. from Harvard University.

**Walter Lorenz** completed a degree in theology and philosophy at the University of Tübingen and then a post-graduate vocational qualification in Social Work (M.Sc.) at the London School of Economics in 1976. In the 1970s he worked as a social worker in the area of youth work. From 1978, he was a lecturer in Social Work at the National University of Ireland, University College Cork where he was also appointed Jean Monnet Professor for European Social Policy in 1995. Since 2001, he has been in charge of the degree course in social work at the Faculty of Education at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano and has been rector of that institution since 2008. He has been involved in various research projects at both a European and national level concerning social work and, in particular, in the development of European professional courses.

**Daniel C. Maguire** is Professor of ethics at Marquette University. He is the author of 14 books, most recently *Ethics: A Complete Method of Moral Choice* (Fortress Press, 2009) and 250 articles

published in various journals, and is the editor of three anthologies. He is past President of the Society of Christian Ethics and the Religious Consultation on Population, Reproductive Health, and Ethics. He can be reached at [daniel.maguire@marquette.edu](mailto:daniel.maguire@marquette.edu).

**Greg Marston** is Professor of social policy in the School of Public Health and Social Work at QUT, Australia. He has previously held positions at the University of Queensland and RMIT University and visiting appointments in Europe and the United States. Greg's main research interests focus on poverty and social justice, comparative social policy and contemporary social theory. His latest book, co-authored with Emeritus Professor Catherine McDonald, and published by Palgrave Macmillan (2013) focuses on the tensions and contradictions between social, fiscal, and occupational welfare in Australia.

**Catherine McDonald** is Emeritus Professor of social work at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. She taught social work and social policy for 25 years prior to retirement. Prior to that, she worked in child welfare and child protection, and in residential care. She has also pursued an alternative career in policy activism through various national and state forums, working in the interests of the low income and disadvantaged. She has published widely in journals and in books. Her interests range from the experiences of the long term unemployed, the impact of welfare reform, and most recently, on the effects of engaging with pay-day lenders on the poor.

**J. Prasant Palakkappillil**, generally called Fr. Prasant, is a Roman Catholic Priest of the ancient East Syriac rite of India, Kerala. He is a member of the first indigenous religious order of India, Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI) which focuses on education as their core ministry, having a worldwide network of around 500 schools and 50 colleges. He is a trained social worker from the nationally renowned Tata Institute of Social Sciences with a specialization in Urban and Rural Community Development. A believer in Gandhian concepts of community (rural) development, he tries to integrate a Gandhian vision of welfare and development in his efforts for sustainable development, especially with a stress on optimization and conservation of natural resources. He writes, speaks, and campaigns on issues related to sustainable development through zero waste management and natural resource management. He headed the first School of Social Work in Kerala established in 1955 from 2007 to 2010, and then took charge as the Principal of Sacred Heart College, Thevara, Kochi, a leading Arts, Science & Commerce College in that part of the country. He holds a doctorate in social work with a dissertation on the community development aspects of subaltern groups (*dalits*) in the otherwise forward-looking community of the Syrian Catholics of Kerala.

**Malcolm Payne** is a social worker and higher education professional, author/co-author of 16 books and more than 350 articles and chapters, and co-editor of 11 books on social work, health care, and end-of-life care. His work has been published in 15 languages and 18 countries. From 2003 to 2012, he was director of psychosocial and spiritual care and policy and development adviser, St Christopher's Hospice London and, prior to that, Professor and Head of applied community studies, Manchester Metropolitan University, now Emeritus Professor. He currently has honorary academic appointments at Kingston University/St George's University of London, England; Helsinki University, Finland; and Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia. His successful and regularly updated blogs on practice and policy on older people, personal self-development, social work and end-of-life care, and his widely followed Twitter feed demonstrate his use of modern social media as part of his work.

**Mark R. Rank** is the Herbert S. Hadley Professor of Social Welfare at Washington University in St. Louis. He is widely recognized as one of the foremost experts and speakers in the country on issues of poverty, inequality, and social justice. His life course research has demonstrated that a majority of Americans will experience poverty and will use a social safety net program at some point during their lives. His most recent book is entitled *Chasing the American Dream: Understanding the Dynamics That Shape Our Fortunes*, published by Oxford University Press. It explores through a multi-method approach the nature of the American Dream, and the economic viability of achieving the Dream. Professor Rank's research has been reported in a wide range of media outlets including the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *USA Today*. He has provided his research expertise to members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, as well as to many national and state organizations involved in issues of economic and social justice.

**Frederic G. Reamer** is Professor in the graduate program of the School of Social Work, Rhode Island College, where he has been on the faculty since 1983. His research and teaching have addressed a wide range of human service issues, including mental health, health care, criminal justice, and professional ethics. Reamer received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and has served as a social worker in correctional and mental health settings. He has served as Director of the National Juvenile Justice Assessment Center of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor of Rhode Island; and as a Commissioner of the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, the state housing finance agency. Since 1992, Reamer has served on the State of Rhode Island Parole Board. He also served as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Social Work Education* and Associate Editor of the National Association of Social Workers *Encyclopedia of Social Work*. Reamer is the author of many books and articles. He chaired the national task force that wrote the current National Association of Social Workers' Code of Ethics.

**Stuart Rees** is a former Professor of social work at the University of Sydney. He was the founder and Director of Sydney's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and is the current Chair of the Sydney Peace Foundation. His many books have included *Verdicts on Social Work* (1982), the co-edited *Human Rights, Corporate Responsibility* (2000), *Passion for Peace* (2003), and the poetry anthology *Tell Me the Truth About War* (2004). Prior to his academic appointments, he worked as a probation officer and in community development in the UK, Canada, India, and Sri Lanka. In 2005, Professor Rees was awarded The Order of Australia for service to international relations.

**Michael Reisch** is the Daniel Thursz Distinguished Professor of Social Justice at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. He has held faculty and administrative positions at four other major U.S. universities, been a visiting professor at the New Bulgarian University in Sofia, Bulgaria, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the University of California, Berkeley, and a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the University of Queensland in Australia. He is the author or editor of over 15 books, 200 other publications, and 400 papers on such topics as the history and philosophy of social welfare, social justice and multiculturalism, community organization, the nonprofit sector, and contemporary policy issues, such as poverty, health care, welfare reform, and the impact of globalization on social welfare. He has recently published *Social Policy and Social Justice* and *The Handbook of Community Practice* (with Marie Weil & Mary Ohmer), both by Sage Publications. He is currently working on two books, *Social Work Practice and Social Justice: Concepts, Challenges, and Strategies* (with Charles Garvin, Oxford University Press), and *Politics and Social*

*Work* (Columbia University Press), and conducting research on social work with immigrants and refugees – past, present, and future. He has held leadership positions in national, state, and local advocacy, professional, and social change organizations, directed and consulted on political campaigns at the federal, state, and local levels in four states, and been honored for his work by the Maryland General Assembly, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, the National Association of Social Workers, and numerous nonprofit organizations, professional associations, and universities.

**Izumi Sakamoto** is Associate Professor, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto. A former Fulbright Scholar, she received her MSW, MS, and Ph.D. (social work & psychology) from the University of Michigan and BA and MA (Social Welfare) from Sophia University, Japan. Dr. Sakamoto's research and teaching focus on anti-oppression, empowerment, globalization, community organizing, qualitative research, and decolonization of dominant knowledge through community-based and arts-informed research. Dr. Sakamoto has focused on the issues of (im)migrants and sojourners for the past 15 years and specifically on skilled immigrants to Canada for 10 years, including employment, structural, and psychosocial issues. With six government grants (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) as the Principal Investigator, Dr. Sakamoto's research has focused on equity, anti-oppression and social inclusion of immigrants as well as ciswomen and transwomen who have experienced homelessness. Focusing on the tacit dimension of knowledge and collaborating with professional artists, she has used photography and theatrical techniques to create knowledge with research participants, which then led to various knowledge mobilization activities including reader's theatre performances, art exhibits, and videos (for more information see [www.beyondcanadianexperience.com](http://www.beyondcanadianexperience.com), [www.comingtogether.ca](http://www.comingtogether.ca), [www.artsandhomeless.com](http://www.artsandhomeless.com)).

**Margaret Sherrard Sherraden** is Professor of social work at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, and research professor at Washington University in St. Louis. She teaches social policy and social and economic development. Her teaching and research focus on financial capability, adult and youth savings in the U.S. and international contexts, community development, and international volunteering. Recent books include *Financial Capability and Asset Development* (Oxford University, 2013, with J. Birkenmaier & J. Curley, Eds.), *Striving to Save* (University of Michigan, 2010, with A. M. McBride), and *Kitchen Capitalism: Microenterprise in Low-Income Households* (State University of New York Press, 2004, with C. K. Sanders & M. Sherraden).

**Gerald Sim** is Associate Professor of film studies in the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies at Florida Atlantic University, where he specializes in American cinema, national cinema, and critical theory. He is the author of *The Subject of Film and Race: Retheorizing Politics, Ideology, and Cinema*, forthcoming from Bloomsbury in 2014. His research method is informed by the Frankfurt School, which drives the analysis in published work on CNBC personality Jim Cramer in *Rethinking Marxism*, on commercial cinema's move to digital cinematography in *Projections*, and on cognitive film music theory in the *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*. Another essay, "Said's Marxism: Orientalism's Relationship to Film Studies and Race," appeared recently in *Discourse*. His scholarship on world cinema appears in *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, *Film Quarterly*, and *Asian Cinema*.

**Jeffrey Singer** teaches health and social policy at the University of Maryland School of Social Work, writes and edits for Baltimore's street newspaper *Word on the Street*, and organizes for the homelessness advocacy group Housing Our Neighbors. Previously, he was employed at Health Care for the Homeless of Maryland (for 24 years) and at the Baltimore City Department of

Social Services (for 14 years). His work has included child and adult protective services; mental health, addiction, and HIV services; street outreach, community organizing, public policy advocacy, and administration. During the 1990s he was the Director of the National Mobilization Project for the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, where he sought to create a right to housing and health care for all in the United States. Singer's volunteer activities have included helping to organize the Baltimore Homeless Union, the People's Homesteading Group, the Homeless Persons Representation Project, CASH (City Advocates in Solidarity with the Homeless), and a self-managed homeless shelter, Eutaw Center. He has published on health care, housing, poverty, addictions, and homelessness in street newspapers and academic journals.

**Simon Stacey** is the Director of the Honors College at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, and an affiliate in the Department of Political Science. He received his Ph.D. from the Department of Politics at Princeton University and a bachelor's degree from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, where he taught in the Department of Politics. He is a political theorist by training, and is particularly interested in applying the conceptual resources of canonical political theory to contemporary issues. He is currently working on a book about the contribution Machiavelli, Locke, Kant, and Rawls can make to our understanding of the contemporary problem of transitional justice, as well as investigating the relevance of classical criticisms of democracy to representative democracy as it exists today. He has also written about John Locke, political violence and civil society, the South African Truth Commission, public-private partnerships in service delivery, and the work of philanthropic foundations in establishing democracy.

**David Stoesz** has held direct practice and administrative appointments in public welfare and mental health. He is co-author of a widely used text: *American Social Welfare: A Pluralist Approach*, 7th edition. His book, *Quixote's Ghost: The Right, the Liberati, and the Future of Social Policy* (Oxford University Press) won the 2006 Pro Humanitate Literary Award. Currently, he is a Professor at Mississippi Valley State University and is writing a book, *The Rise of the Dynamic Welfare State*.

**Jowi Taylor** is a multiple award-winning writer and broadcaster best known for his long-running CBC Radio program "Global-Village," the Peabody Award winning radio series "The Wire: The Impact of Electricity on Music," and its celebrated companion series: "The Nerve: Music and the Human Experience." He left CBC in December of 2009. His independent "Six String Nation" multi-media project – centered around a guitar built literally from pieces of Canadian heritage – combines Jowi's various fascinations, including music, media, community-building, and the intersection of Canada's history and multicultural identity. His book about the project, *Six String Nation: 64 Pieces, 6 Strings, 1 Canada, 1 Guitar*, is available from Douglas & McIntyre Publishers. He continues to travel with the project as a presenter and public speaker to festivals, schools, conferences, and community events across Canada and beyond. He is also frequently active as a consultant to cultural institutions and initiatives including the National Capital Commission and the Canada 150 via public consultations around the country's upcoming sesquicentennial celebrations.

**Elizabeth F. Thompson** is author of *Justice Interrupted: The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Middle East* (Harvard University Press, 2013), about the transformation of ideals of justice in the Middle East with the rise of mass movements in the 20th century. Her first book, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (Columbia

University Press, 2000), won national prizes from the American Historical Association and the Berkshire Conference on Women's History. She is currently working on books about World War I's political impact in the Middle East and about the cinema and the political sphere in the late colonial era. She is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Virginia.

**Jerome C. Wakefield** is University Professor, Professor of social work, and Professor of the Conceptual Foundations of Psychiatry, as well as Affiliate Faculty in Bioethics and in the Center For Ancient Studies, and Honorary Faculty of the Institute for Psychoanalytic Education, at New York University. Before coming to NYU, he held faculty positions at the University of Chicago, Columbia University, and Rutgers University. He is the author of over 200 publications on the conceptual foundations of the mental health professions, the validity of psychiatric diagnosis, the boundary between normal distress and mental disorder, and the social justice foundations of the mental health professions. Dr. Wakefield is the co-author (with Allan Horwitz) of *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder* (Oxford, 2007), named best psychology book of 2007 by the Association of Professional and Scholarly Publishers, and *All We Have to Fear: How Psychiatry Transforms Natural Fear into Mental Disorder* (Oxford, 2012). He is currently completing a book on Freud's case history of Little Hans and its significance in the history of psychoanalysis, to be published by Routledge.

**Hilary N. Weaver** is a Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the School of Social Work, University at Buffalo (State University of New York). Her teaching, research, and service focus on cultural issues in the helping process with a particular focus on indigenous populations. She currently serves as President of the American Indian Alaska Native Social Work Educators Association. Dr. Weaver has presented her work regionally, nationally, and internationally including presenting at the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at the United Nations in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2013. She has numerous publications including the text, *Explorations in Cultural Competence: Journeys to the Four Directions* (2005) and is currently compiling an edited book, *Social Issues in Contemporary Native America: Reflections from Turtle Island*. Dr. Weaver has received funding from the National Cancer Institute to develop and test a culturally grounded wellness curriculum for urban Native American youth, the *Healthy Living in Two Worlds* program.

**John Whyte** is a Lecturer in the social work program at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia. Prior to coming to RMIT, he was a Research Fellow and Project Coordinator at the University of Melbourne, where he received his Ph.D. Dr. Whyte has taught and researched in social work, social theory and the human services for nearly a decade internationally. His particular interests are in the general areas of cross-worldview social work practice – particularly with Indigenous Peoples – and the development of chaos and complexity approaches in practice contexts. In addition to his extensive practice and research engagement with Indigenous Australian and Native American communities and agencies, he has also served as program manager on a number of urban low-income housing and rural community development projects. Currently, Dr. Whyte is a Chief Investigator on the ARC international Linkage Project *From colonisation to conciliation: A collaborative examination of social work practices with indigenous populations*. He is also involved in a community project examining concepts of well-being informing human service agencies.

**Stanley L. Witkin** is a Professor in the Department of Social Work at the University of Vermont and the President and co-founder of the *Global Partnership for Transformative Social Work*, an organization interested in the potential of postmodern thought for social work education, practice and inquiry. His primary scholarly interest is in social construction and its application to a variety of



topics, particularly those germane to social work. Recent books include *Narrating Social Work through Autoethnography* (forthcoming, 2014, Columbia University Press), *Social Construction and Social Work Practice: Interpretations and Innovations* (2012, Columbia University Press), and *Social Work Dialogues: Transforming the Canon in Inquiry, Practice, and Education* (with Dennis Saleebey, 2007, CSWE Press). He has been a Fulbright fellow at the University of Lapland, Finland (2004) and at University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin, Ireland (2012).

**Joseph Wronka** is Professor of social work, Springfield College, Massachusetts, the Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva for the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), and Fulbright Senior Specialist Scholar in social justice and poverty. He has had extensive post-graduate teaching and practice experience in various parts of the United States, such as the arctic and sub-arctic regions of Alaska, the inner city of New York, and in Europe and India. He is the author of four books, which include *Human Rights and Social Policy in the 21st Century: A Comparison of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with United States Federal and State Constitutions* (University Press of America, 1998) and *Human Rights and Social Justice: Social Action and Service for the Helping and Health Professions* (Sage, 2008), and numerous articles in scholarly and popular fora on human rights and social justice. His doctorate in social policy is from the Heller School at Brandeis University where he later served as a Research Associate and Visiting Scholar.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I grew up in public housing in New York City and attended public schools. My grandparents were immigrants and my parents' families experienced the hardships of the Great Depression of the 1930s. My father and most of my uncles served in the armed forces during World War II; many of them belonged to labor unions. They were staunch supporters of the New Deal and Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, and life-long Democrats. I grew up in a working-class family and a racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse environment. While my family rarely discussed the explicit subject of social justice, the issue of "fairness" formed the backdrop of every political conversation.

Throughout my childhood, there was a constant fear of nuclear war. In school, I had to participate in "take cover" drills and watch propaganda films which focused on the threat of Communism and the Soviet Union. I remember going to sleep during the height of the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis wondering if I would be alive the next morning.

As a student, I developed a love of history and politics. My interest in social justice crystallized through participation in anti-war and civil rights activities. When the U.S. government simultaneously launched the "War on Poverty" and expanded the war in Southeast Asia, I began to see the relationship between militarism and the existence of domestic problems, such as poverty, inequality, and injustice.

Since I grew up in a multi-racial community, it felt unfair and even unnatural to me that people were denied basic rights because of their race, ethnicity, or religion. Television images of civil rights activists in the South being beaten or attacked by police dogs strengthened my resolve to participate in the civil rights movement through such organizations as the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Later, my political activities expanded to include work on behalf of welfare rights, displaced workers, low-income children and families, immigrants and refugees, women, and individuals with AIDS/HIV. The theme which connects all of this work is the pursuit of social justice.

In addition to the knowledge I acquired from older, more seasoned activists (and my own mistakes) as part of what I call my "informal education," I developed an interest in social justice through my formal schooling. Several teachers, from high school through graduate school, were sources of inspiration and wisdom. They encouraged me to read widely and to pursue intellectual and political questions which provided me with greater understanding of the meaning of social



## *Acknowledgments*

justice, the causes of social injustice, and the ways in which people around the world, for centuries, have attempted to achieve social justice in their own societies.

I learned that there are basically three aspects of social justice, each of which emerged from a different philosophic or ideological position: (1) that each individual and community, regardless of its demographic or cultural characteristics or socio-economic status should be treated with decency and humanity, and that social policies and social services should be developed which enable every individual and community to achieve its fullest potential and contribute optimally to society as a whole; (2) that societal structures and institutions should be designed to promote a more equitable distribution of resources, rights, opportunities, power, and status, and that systems which lead to unjustified inequalities and skewed societal priorities should be eradicated; and (3) that the processes by which decisions are made regarding the distribution of such resources (in societies, communities, and organizations) should be fair, democratic, and open to everyone.

Over the past 25 years, I have added fourth component—that any vision of social justice must now encompass a global perspective. It is no longer viable to contemplate socially just solutions solely within a local or national context or based on a single ideology. Too many problems—from the effects of economic globalization to environmental crises, from migration to militarism, and from poverty to public health—can only be solved on an international level. In a world where genocide, hunger, poverty, and disease continue to plague us and where richer nations often fail to act or act too late, “doing justice” requires us to cut through the fog of competing rhetorical choruses.

\*\*\*\*\*

I have a coffee cup on my desk with a quote from Michelangelo: “I am still learning.” The opportunity to continue to learn is one of the privileges of working in an academic environment. I am very grateful for this opportunity and to the many teachers, colleagues, and students who have contributed to my ongoing education. Working in university settings has allowed me to travel widely and to meet many fascinating people, whose perspectives have challenged me to reflect on my ideas and whose insights have stimulated my thinking about social justice and its various manifestations both historically and in contemporary society.

First, I want to thank the authors of the essays in this volume—some of whom I know personally, others whose work I had read for a long time yet whom I have never met. Their work taught me a great deal and reinforced my original belief about the importance of promoting global discourse on the topic of social justice. I wish them all the very best.

I also want to thank my colleagues Jayshree Jani, Megan Meyer, and Simon Stacey at the University of Maryland; Joel Blau at Stony Brook University; Felix Rivera, the late Tim Sampson, and the late Pat Purcell at San Francisco State University; Mark Stern, Jane Lowe, and Richard Estes at the University of Pennsylvania; and Charles Garvin, Beth Reed, and Mieko Yoshihama at the University of Michigan for their friendship, support, and insights about social justice over the years. In addition, I want to thank my many hosts at universities in other nations for their gracious hospitality and intellectual stimulation: Dr. Toma Tomov and his colleagues at the New Bulgarian University in Sofia; Professor Hans-Uwe Otto and his colleagues at the University of Bielefeld and the University of Zurich; Professors N.P. Ngai, Joyce Ma, and Wong Wing Shing, Dean of the Graduate School, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong; Dr. Catherine McDonald and Professor Lesley Chenoweth at the University of Queensland (now Professor Emeritus at RMIT University in Melbourne and Director of the School at Griffith University in Brisbane, respectively); Dr. Mary Venus Joseph at Rajagiri College in Kochi, India; the faculty at the University of British

## *Acknowledgments*

Columbia and the *Ecole Francaise de l'Animation Sociale* in Lille, France; and the staff at the *Ente Italiano di Servizio Sociale* in Rome, the Center for European Studies at New York University, and the Leo Baeck Institute in New York and London. The Fulbright Foundation provided support for travel to Australia; the University of Pennsylvania funded a summer in Bulgaria and two trips to Germany; the University of Michigan supported travel to several international conferences; and the University of Maryland enabled me to travel to Hong Kong and India. Each of these trips broadened my intellectual horizons and introduced me to stimulating new colleagues, some of whom have contributed to this volume.

Finally, I want to thank several research assistants at the University of Maryland—Katie Januario, Stephanie Klapper, Meredith Slater, Jourdan Munster, Pamela Parnell, and Todd Vanidestine—whose assistance and infectious enthusiasm are much appreciated. Katie's help, in particular, was invaluable during the past year. I could not have completed this book without her help and good judgment. All errors and omissions are entirely my responsibility.

Michael Reisch  
*Baltimore, Maryland, USA*

*Page Intentionally Left Blank*

# INTRODUCTION

*Michael Reisch*

One of the ironies of the early 21st century is that proponents of vastly different visions of society—secular and religious, democratic and authoritarian, individualist and collectivist—march under the banner of social justice. As they have been for millennia, calls for social justice are used to rationalize the status quo, promote modest reforms, and justify revolutionary, even violent action. Consequently, labels like “good” and “evil,” freely used to characterize supporters or opponents, have become increasingly ambiguous and the meaning of social justice has become increasingly obscured. In a world where genocide, hunger, poverty, and disease persist, where richer nations often fail to act or act too late to address these problems, and where climate change threatens human life on Earth, a prerequisite to achieving even modest social justice goals is to cut through the fog of competing discourses on this topic.

But what does the attainment of social justice really mean, on individual, community, national, and international levels? Most discussions about social justice focus on the eradication or reduction of injustices. But just as peace is not merely the absence of war, and love is not merely the absence of hate, achieving social justice requires more than the elimination of injustice. It involves envisioning what a just society would look like. It requires us to address fundamental questions about human nature and social relationships; about the distribution of resources, power, status, rights, access, and opportunities; and about how decisions regarding this distribution are made. In a world that, ironically, is both more interdependent and more polarized than ever, it is possible that our definition of social justice may need to be tailored to specific contexts.

Yet, most discussions of social justice today assume that particular visions of social justice can be applied universally; this ignores the reality that conflicting ideas about social justice have long competed with each other. Even in relatively homogeneous Western societies, recent political debates about government’s role in addressing the social and economic consequences of globalization reflect this ongoing conflict. As societies around the world become increasingly diverse, as new demographic and cultural realities transform nations and communities at an unprecedented pace, there is a greater need to develop processes through which the ideological foundations of these conflicts can be openly discussed and resolved both within and among nations.

One component of such processes would be the development of a revised and expanded view of *injustice* that explores how people are affected by the intersection of their race, gender,

ethnicity, class, religion, age, and sexual orientation. New conceptions of social justice are needed, therefore, which incorporate an understanding of how such demographic and cultural factors, singly and in combination, result in the systematic exploitation of people—through societal institutions, personal relationships, and their ideological or cultural rationalizations.

For decades, both secular and religious thinkers have proposed various strategies to end this exploitation. In the West, some secular philosophers, like the late John Rawls (1971, 1999), have attempted to synthesize liberal/individualist and egalitarian/collectivist perspectives by asserting that an unequal distribution of resources is permissible in a just society only if it serves the benefit of the least advantaged. Similarly, religious leaders, like the U.S. Catholic bishops, have proclaimed “distributive justice requires that the allocation of income, wealth and power in society be evaluated in light of its effect on persons whose basic needs are unmet” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986).

It has become increasingly clear, however, that the expansion of social provision alone cannot create a socially just society. The creation of socially just outcomes involves more than constructing policies which allocate societal “goods” more equitably. It also requires the development of socially just means to formulate, implement, and evaluate those policies, coupled with a recognition that the translation of an idealized abstraction (social justice) into concrete terms may take different forms in different circumstances. The goal of social justice is, therefore, neither simple nor ever entirely realized. It is a goal which is constantly pursued rather than completely attained.

While there are countless books that focus on social justice in some way, few address the multiple implications of the topic in a comprehensive, global manner. This *Handbook* is an initial, albeit incomplete attempt to fill this gap in a creative way. The 33 essays included in this volume, written by scholars and activists from multiple disciplines and over a dozen nations, illustrate the complexity of the topic, present a range of historical and theoretical perspectives, and discuss the dilemmas inherent in implementing social justice concepts in policy and practice. The *Handbook* tries to go beyond the mere presentation of abstract definitions of social justice by including numerous examples of how social justice might be achieved at the interpersonal, organizational, community, and societal levels.

Most of the literature on social justice presents a specific interpretation of the concept, descriptions of various injustices, and ways in which these injustices can be overcome. The *Handbook* is distinguished by its inclusion of multiple visions of justice from diverse cultural, theoretical, and disciplinary perspectives, and essays that address both socially just goals and socially just processes. It focuses, therefore, on the forces that create injustice (individual to global), how social justice is defined and interpreted, and what alternatives have been imagined or already exist. In addition, the book contains essays that address how the concept of justice has been expressed in art, music, literature, and film. This material is intended to make this complex subject more vivid, especially to students, and to link modern concerns about social justice with their cultural and historical roots.

One of the shortcomings of most books on social justice published in English is the failure to include definitions of social justice which are derived from cultures different from the West. The *Handbook* attempts to correct this limitation by including essays, particularly in Part I, that present these alternative views of social justice—from Japan, India, South Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. The eight essays in this portion of the book discuss the historical evolution of social justice concepts in different regions, the major ideological, political-economic, and cultural influences (religious and secular) on their development, and contemporary critical perspectives. Cultural and ideological differences in defining social justice have made it difficult to translate the ideals of social justice into public policies and micro- or mezzo-level practices

both within and among nations. A particular emphasis of the essays in Part I, therefore, is the relationship of theories of social justice to the development of the institutions, policies, and practices that emanate from a society's efforts to achieve and sustain social justice goals, however they are defined.

Although there have been periodic attempts to develop a "universal concept" of social justice (e.g., 7th-century Islam, medieval Christian doctrine, the work of 18th-century Enlightenment philosophers and political theorists in France, Great Britain, and the United States, the writings of German philosophers such as Kant and Hegel, and the numerous documents of revolutionary socialism and anarchism in the 19th and 20th centuries), until the mid-20th century there was no systematic attempt to codify social justice in a global way. This first occurred in the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1949).

During the past half century, serious debates have emerged about the interpretations, biases, omissions, and applications of universal concepts of human rights in a multi-cultural but still unequal global environment. These include a serious schism among both philosophers and activists about the conflict between social justice and human rights. The contradictions between the rhetoric of cultural pluralism and the reality of cultural hegemony also complicate the definition of social justice and its application to twenty-first-century realities. The persistence of global cultural, religious, and political conflicts impedes the development of a universal definition of social justice and provokes questions regarding the utility of such efforts.

Part II of the *Handbook*, therefore, explores the major theories and conceptual frameworks which underlie contemporary views of social justice. It includes essays that trace how the classic liberal definition of social justice—which framed it in terms of equal rights, the diminution of class privileges, the preservation of individual dignity, and the creation of equal opportunity—expanded to include racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities and women. A major theme of these essays is the distinction between group specific and universal concepts of social justice. Other themes are the differences between social justice and equality, social justice and freedom, and the conflict between social justice and universal human rights. Unfortunately, the valuable contributions of three distinguished authors, who had to withdraw for personal or health reasons, could not be included in this section.

Social justice has been fundamental to the development of public policies and political institutions in rhetoric if not in practice, for several centuries. Today, while it plays a prominent role in the official documents of many national and international organizations, it is often presented without a clearly articulated and shared definition or understanding of its meaning or implications. Complicating matters further, until recently the mainstream discourse on social justice largely occurred apart from discussions of racial or gender equality, although it had long been acknowledged that issues of social justice inevitably involved conflicts over race, gender, citizenship, and culture. The emergence of multiculturalism as both a social fact and a prominent issue has, in effect, made explicit the underlying and unspoken conflicts over our definitions of social welfare and human well-being.

Statements by major professional organizations, such as the *Code of Ethics* (1997, 2010) of the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) in the United States, and the mission statement of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW, 2010) establish social justice as an ethical imperative. In spite of the growing emphasis on social justice rhetoric, there are few texts which provide guidance to faculty, students, and practitioners who are struggling to meet the practical and ethical challenges of working toward social justice goals using socially just methods in complex and increasingly multicultural societies. The essays in Part III of the *Handbook* represent an initial attempt to fill this gap.

In a rapidly changing political and economic environment, characterized by globalization and major demographic, technological, and socio-cultural transformations, the development and implementation of socially just policies have become increasingly complex. The locus of policy-making and implementation has also shifted: on the one hand, as a consequence of devolution from the national to state and local arenas; on the other hand, as a result of globalization from the nation-state to supra-national institutions, and from the public to the non-profit and for-profit sectors. Ironically, greater attention must now be paid both to trans-national issues and the distinctive character of local needs and concerns. While socially just policies require greater democratization, many critical policy decisions are increasingly made through non-democratic means, often outside of long-standing political processes. The essays in this section will describe how the concepts and theories presented earlier in the *Handbook* could be applied to specific arenas of policy and practice, including anti-poverty and employment policies, public assistance and social care, health and mental health, child welfare, domestic violence, education, housing and homelessness, policies that affect women and indigenous peoples, criminal justice, and the environment.

Although these essays focus on different areas of policy, they contain several common components. They attempt to clarify what constitutes a socially just policy in terms of its goals, substance, and impact. They analyze policies from the perspective of their redistributive effects and their specific consequences on oppressed and marginalized populations. An underlying theme is the challenge of combining universal and selective approaches to policy formulation that achieve the goal of “justice for all.”

These essays will also explore how socially just policies can be promoted both from inside what are often socially unjust institutions and from the outside, through advocacy and other forms of social action. They analyze the points of the policy development process which are most accessible to the incorporation of socially just components, even in structures with seemingly antithetical goals, and address potential strategies to increase the participation of individuals and groups, especially from low-power communities, in the policy-making process.

Although the power of art, music, literature, and film to shape people’s thoughts and emotions has long been established, few attempts have been made to incorporate cultural illustrations into books about social justice. Explicit efforts to link consciousness-raising, justice-focused education, and various cultural forms, have been widespread, however, in fields like drama and music. The use of multi-media content provides a more vivid interpretation of abstract ideas and broad historical, cultural, and institutional forces. It modifies the effects of traditional conceptual “filters” through which most ideas about social justice are transmitted.

The five essays in Part IV discuss how social justice concepts have been expressed through various cultural means and how cultural activities can serve as vehicles to educate, motivate, and mobilize people in the pursuit of social justice goals.

\*\*\*\*\*

This book can be used either as a text or as a major resource for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in professional schools, such as law, medicine, nursing, business, public health, public policy, education, and social work; social science courses in departments of anthropology, economics, sociology, and political science; humanities courses in departments of history, literature, and philosophy; and inter-disciplinary courses in such areas as women’s studies and cultural studies. In addition, practitioners and scholars who wish to orient their work to social justice issues may find this book an important resource.

## **References**

- International Federation of Social Workers (2010). *Definition of social work*. Retrieved June 6, 2010 from <http://www.eassw.org/definition.asp>.
- National Association of Social Workers (U.S.) (1997). *Code of ethics*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Association of Social Workers (U.S.) (2010). *Statement on the purpose of social work*. Washington, DC: Author.
- National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1986). *U.S. Catholic bishops pastoral letter on Catholic social teaching and the U.S. economy*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rawls, J. (1999). *Justice: A restatement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



*Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## PART I

# Historical and cultural concepts of social justice

*Page Intentionally Left Blank*

# INTRODUCTION TO PART I

*Michael Reisch*<sup>1</sup>

The essays in Part I provide a selective overview of the evolution of secular and religious concepts of social justice in nations and cultures around the globe. This international focus is important because most contemporary discussions of social justice reflect both universalist and temporal fallacies. First, they often assume that social justice, particularly as it is conceived in the West, is either embraced or rejected in its entirety throughout the world, and that cultures that articulate a view of social justice share similar goals, values, and ideological perspectives. They also assume either that the concept of social justice emerged only in modern times or that the concept is fixed—i.e., that people defined social justice in the same way throughout history. Finally, they assume that whatever societal differences exist regarding the meaning of social justice can easily be reconciled in practice through the development of a common framework such as human rights.

Yet, in an increasingly interdependent world in which many previously homogeneous societies are becoming more ethnically and religiously diverse, it seems clear that the concept of social justice requires a more complex and nuanced understanding. For practitioners, policymakers, and scholars these complexities give rise to new, previously unacknowledged challenges. This section of the book, therefore, attempts to de-center this important discussion away from Western perspectives and to emphasize the importance of context, culture, and history in the formulation and implementation of ideas about social justice.

As these essays demonstrate, ideas about social justice have been used *both* to promote greater equality and social equity and to perpetuate or rationalize existing inequalities, often in subtle or unintended ways. There are both remarkable similarities and significant differences in how social justice has been defined and implemented in different societies and within different eras. This neither implies that social justice is a universal concept, nor that it does not exist as an ideal, in some form, in all societies. Instead, it suggests that a more nuanced understanding of its meaning and application is required to grasp the complexities of the 21st-century world.

The eight essays in Part I each examine the relationship between the evolution of particular conceptions of social justice and the environments in which they emerged. The essays are broadly representative, rather than inclusive, and inevitably reflect the subjectivity and limitations of the editor. Collectively, they seek to contextualize the meaning of social justice in order to move contemporary discourse beyond rhetorical appeals to normative concepts to the development of justice-oriented principles for policy and practice. It is also important to note that the purpose

of these essays is neither to demonstrate the inevitability of “progress” in the development of concepts about social justice nor to argue that certain concepts of social justice are superior to others. Rather, they introduce the reader to several ways of examining ideas about social justice and alternative means of implementing them.

In the first essay, “The emergence of social justice in the West,” Walter Lorenz, current Rector at the Free University of Bozen–Bolzano and former Jean Monnet Professor for European Social Policy at the National University of Ireland, discusses how a concern with issues of social justice, which emerged due to the disruption of social bonds and relationship structures produced by the industrial revolution and the political revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries, marked a decisive transition point towards modernity in Western history. He posits that the goal of creating more just societies evolved in the West as a consequence of efforts to improve the quality of life for all peoples. Lorenz argues that this notion of justice resulted from a synthesis of two different principles: the creation of laws and policies that affect the multiple dimensions of people’s lives in a society and the construction and nurturance of the social relationships required to properly care for the people that live within that society in a non-discriminatory manner. He further argues that in the 21st century the goal of social justice increasingly represents a project whose advancement depends on the recognition that it is interpreted in a variety of ways and on open and democratic dialogue between proponents of diverse perspectives. Citing Habermas (1990) and Bankovsky (2012), Lorenz regards the future pursuit of social justice as both a collective commitment to the creation of authentic forms of communication and a core element of human existence.

In the second essay, “Religious influences on justice theory,” Daniel C. Maguire, Professor of Ethics at Marquette University and past President of the Society of Christian Ethics, emphasizes the contemporary relevance of ancient religious ideas about social justice and discusses how these ideas intermingled with secular concepts to create modern notions of justice. For example, he asserts that expressions of prophetic justice in the Bible symbolized recognition of the importance of establishing social justice principles in societies that were increasingly stratified on the basis of status, power, class, and wealth; at the same time, they also illustrated the need to create redistributive and systemic solutions to address these social conditions. Biblical ideas of justice, therefore, left a legacy that focused more on social and distributive justice than on commutative justice—principles that were also embodied in Islam. (See essay by Esteves, Chapter 6.) Similarly, millennia ago, Buddhists identified humanity’s principal failings as greed, delusion, and ill will and criticized people’s lack of interrelatedness and interdependence.

Maguire argues that all the world religions give special emphasis to social justice because it is through this emphasis that human selfishness is most challenged and where our resistance to sharing is most put to the moral test. He asserts that these principles are more relevant today than ever. The growing disparities that exist between social classes today stems from the persistence of the human attraction towards greed. The history of religious views of social justice, therefore, provides a distinctive framework to comprehend the three major forms of justices that are used today—commutative, social, and distributive—and to develop solutions to the problems of human suffering, selfishness, and unequal resource distribution.

The remaining essays in Part I discuss how diverse concepts of social justice emerged on virtually every continent in different historical eras under different circumstances. In his essay, “The Gandhian concept of social justice” (Chapter 3), J. Prasant Palakkappillil, the Principal of Sacred Heart College, in Thevara, Kochi, India, reviews the spiritual, political, ethical, and religious life work of Mohandas K. Gandhi, with a particular focus on the principles of social justice he espoused and their implications for social and political practice. Emerging from years of persecution under British imperialism in South Africa and India, Gandhi developed

a philosophy of non-violence as a means to overcome oppression and create a just society. Seeking to produce both a political and spiritual revolution, Gandhi rejected the material world of possession and consumption, violence and oppression in favor of a life that brings balance and joy, healing and justice. He regarded the pursuit of justice as inseparable from the pursuit of both the emotional and physical well-being of individuals and communities. Gandhi believed that the most critical manifestation of justice occurred in the fusion of ethics and economics and that this integration was impossible in a market-driven culture which sanctioned immoral practices and the accumulation of wealth at the expense of the needy. His ideas about social justice and about the means to achieve it continue to influence activists and revolutionaries on every continent.

Gandhi rejected Western ideas about social justice because of their materialist foundation. For similar reasons, Japanese philosophers, scholars, and political leaders have not embraced the concept of social justice as the basis of their nation's social policy. Tatsuru Akimoto, Director and Professor of the Social Work Research Institute at the Asian Center for Welfare in Society at the Japan College of Social Work, questions whether Western concepts of social justice can be applied to a society like Japan whose cultural values and norms are so different, even in an era of globalization in which dominant nations attempt to impose their ideologies throughout the world ("Social justice in an era of globalization," Chapter 4). He argues that in Japan, people seldom speak of and demand "justice" directly, a consequence of the structure of Japanese psychology. In Japanese culture, the desire for justice is not expressed openly, but only as a last resort. Instead, norms of distribution are established on principles of social obligation and solidarity. The implications of this case study in the current international context are significant. Akimoto challenges us to examine whether the promotion of universal principles of social justice is a viable and effective exercise in nations that developed social policies based on other values. His essay underscores the importance of understanding context and history in evaluating the practices of other societies and in promoting human well-being.

Contemporary conflicts over the meaning of social justice are more visible in the Middle East than in any other region. According to Elizabeth Thompson, Associate Professor of History at the University of Virginia, ideals of social justice in today's Middle East are articulated in political discourses rooted in both a history common to most post-colonial societies and in the region's particular traits that are the products of its Islamic culture and proximity to Europe. Her essay, "Social justice in the Middle East" (Chapter 5), traces the evolution of these ideals from the rise of Islam in the 7th century to the recent Arab Spring. She emphasizes the existence of two fissures between the ideal and practice of social justice: the growth in state power resulting from the abuse of public trust and the uneven distribution of wealth and legal rights which was a byproduct of colonization. For two centuries, the presence of these inequalities has produced a backlash and the rise of political movements that have linked state injustice directly to the growing influence of European powers.

Since the early 20th century, Islamists have sought to strip away the legacy of imperialism, secular law, and the legal codes borrowed from Europe and have reopened the dilemma facing 19th-century societies in the region: how to combine Islamic political tradition with the advent of universal codes of justice built on the principle that all citizens enjoy equal, human rights. The Arab Spring exploded, moreover, as the region's marginalization in the digitalized global economy has become more evident. Thompson asserts that the vast unemployment and under-education of the Middle East's youthful majorities will drive politics toward new models of social justice. She maintains that the effects of the Arab Spring demonstrate the importance that the citizens of the Middle East, especially the youth, place on dissolving the oppressive political regimes of the past and instilling a practice of democracy based on socially just principles. As in Japan and

India, the delicacy of implementing a highly Western philosophy onto societies that have a strong political tradition is a process that requires a deep understanding of their history, culture, religion, and socio-political context in order to define what equality and social justice mean to a country's people.

Latin America is another region in which alternative views of social justice have emerged in response to the effects of centuries of colonization and exploitation by Western powers. In addition to tracing the evolution of Latin American ideas about social justice, the essay by Ana Margarida Esteves, "Decolonizing livelihoods, decolonizing the will: solidarity economy as a social justice paradigm in Latin America" (Chapter 6), analyzes the emergence of the concept of Solidarity Economy as both a development paradigm and a social movement. This concept represents an attempt to create an "alter-modernity" that bases the modernization of society on the elimination of the Western distinction between the "public" and "private" spheres of social life. According to Esteves, the idea of a Solidarity Economy reflects an approach to community that includes all living and inanimate beings and recognizes the emancipatory potential of the norms, social dynamics, and forms of organization of subaltern groups, particularly "the poor." It is based on a notion of social justice that complements and enriches the ideas of the Western Enlightenment. Yet, it goes beyond Western ideas about social justice, which focus on issues of equity, redistribution, and the social contract, by adding the dimension of solidarity, a "cosmic" conception of community and social emancipation, as the key goal of economic activity and politics. Instead of focusing on procedural rationality as the core of public life, Solidarity Economy attempts to create a "counter-public" that contributes to the deepening of democracy.

Esteves asserts that it is critical to understand the concept of Solidarity Economy in order to comprehend the challenges Latin American societies face in conceptualizing and implementing social justice in a post-colonial era dominated by neo-liberalism and economic globalization. In contrast with the values underlying traditional capitalism, it represents an effort to integrate marginalized populations into the community through the implementation of just economic principles, based on a view of human rights that recognizes the need for both social cooperation and social emancipation.

The next essay, by Simon Stacey, "Social justice, transitional justice, and political transformation in South Africa" (Chapter 7) illustrates another alternative approach to social justice that emerged in a post-colonial society. Stacey, Director of the Honors College at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, points out that when South Africa's first democratically elected government took power in 1994, the country was one of the most politically and racially divided and socio-economically unequal societies in the world. The new government faced several daunting tasks created by the *apartheid* system. One was to address the extraordinary level of economic inequality and deprivation affecting the overwhelming majority of the population in such fundamental areas as land ownership, housing, sanitation, health care, social services, electricity and communication services, and education. The other was to overcome the effects of a racially discriminatory legal and political system that left White and Black South Africans deeply alienated from and suspicious of, if not openly hostile towards, each other. At the same time that it struggled to deal with the high-profile human rights abuses of the *apartheid* state and to reconstitute a deeply divided citizenry as a single nation, it sought, as a country of relatively limited resources, to respond to the demands of vast numbers of poor Black South Africans for services, jobs, and education.

Although the use of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions have helped unite the nation and forestalled the post-transition bloodshed that many analysts predicted, twenty years after the end of *apartheid* South Africa continues to struggle with deeply rooted issues of discrimination, land ownership, and human rights concerns. The slow process of integrating new governmental policies

and the development of a just legal system illustrates the difficulty of implementing the principles of social justice into a post-colonial mindset, particularly within the context of an increasingly competitive global economy.

The final essay in Part I, “Indigenous struggles for justice: restoring balance within the context of Anglo settler societies” (Chapter 8), by Hilary N. Weaver, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the School of Social Work, University at Buffalo, also addresses the challenge of applying different ideas about social justice under circumstances of long-standing colonial domination. Weaver argues that while it is clear that indigenous peoples have suffered and continue to suffer significant injustices and experience a variety of socio-economic disparities under colonial settler societies it is less clear how to apply indigenous concepts of social justice in the process of decolonization. Colonization involves maintaining an imbalance in power; efforts to empower indigenous peoples through decolonization, therefore, must upset this imbalance through a process of disequilibrium.

Colonization, however, involved more than the establishment and maintenance of unequal power relations. In all areas of the world, it also involved a disruption in the lives of indigenous peoples through the imposition of beliefs and behavioral norms that diverged from their cultural values and undermined the bases of their livelihood. Achieving social justice for indigenous people, therefore, is impossible without decolonization. Weaver maintains that remedial approaches to social justice will always be difficult and contentious and that even the most well-intentioned efforts to address contemporary injustices will never fully be able to make up for the damage that was done by centuries of cultural domination.

### **Note**

- 1 Katie Januario, MSW, assisted with both the research and writing of this introduction.



# 1

## THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE WEST

*Walter Lorenz*

The notion of justice implies a particular mode of social relationships between people or groups of people who “matter” to each other. Referring to criteria of justice means that values determine people’s belonging to a social entity and not their mere physiologically or habitually defined similarities (in the form of genetically or culturally defined criteria) and that these values need to be treated as an important normative dimension of the sets of relationships that make up a social unit. This perspective gives questions of justice altogether an intrinsic social dimension, although of course the treatment of the issue of social justice needs to focus more specifically on the particular quality of life resulting from relationships oriented towards justice.

This social dimension of the notion of justice, however, can be expressed in two fundamentally different ways. One starts from a general structural clarification of the principles of justice as they affect all spheres of society to which the law and more generally attitudes and actions related to principles of justice apply, such as civil contracts, definitions of citizenship, politics, and economics. It then moves on to consider particular sets of relationships outside or on the fringes of those spheres to which principles of justice have to be extended, such as children, people with disabilities, or immigrants to determine how and to what extent their situation and their actions should be treated procedurally according to principles of justice and whether or how they should, therefore, “matter” in relation to the social reference unit regardless of their individual characteristics. The principles that determine justice from this perspective are enshrined in institutions or rather in the hypothetical or transcendental notion of what constitutes a perfectly just society from the particular point of view. Sen (2009) calls this approach “transcendental institutionalism.”

The other takes the reference to “the social” as constitutive for actions which demonstrate, enact, and promote principles of justice in full consideration of the particular differences that characterize individuals and groups and, therefore, distinguish them from one another. In the case of the discourse of recognition, this happens by precisely giving those differences equal recognition. Here it is important that people interact with each other in such a way that the “sense of justice” enhances social integration according to particular normative criteria.

The term “social justice” has come to refer commonly to social policies and other rights-based initiatives that protect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of national or global society from oppression, discrimination, and exclusion or that support them materially. In this way social justice has been a key reference point in the development of welfare services generally, and of social

services in particular (Reisch, 2007). By invoking criteria of justice a clear line can be drawn between charitable approaches which seek amelioration of situations of social suffering through assistance outside a legal framework and approaches which make specific reference to the assistance as an entitlement. The frequent coupling of social justice with “equality” underlines, however, the normative ambiguity of the mere reference to justice and invokes the claim that principles of justice need to be substantiated to become meaningful and effective.

Undoubtedly the subject matter of “justice” as such is by no means a Western prerogative but has been discussed and developed by thinkers all over the globe and at various points in history, as Sen for instance, remarks (Sen, 2009). The concern with issues of social justice, as the concern with “the social” in general, marks, however, a decisive point of transition in the history of Western societies associated with the turn to modernity (Miller, 1999). This relates to the disruption of social bonds and relationship structures brought about by the industrial revolution and taken up by the political revolutions of the 18th and 19th century. On the organizational side, the process of industrialization meant that the distinction between capital and labor became more pronounced, bringing laborers into an acute state of dependency and potential exploitation with the principle of the division of labor imposing the need for a regime of rationality, coordination, and inter-dependency (Durkheim, 1984). The accompanying economic principles of capitalism reinforced those pressures and called at the same time for the security of contractual arrangements, which would ensure the smooth running of production free from anomic disruption.

On the cultural and political side, this was mirrored by the growing assertion of individual agency, the desire to liberate oneself from the restrictions of conventional forms of authority and power. These were increasingly recognized as being arbitrary and without legitimation through rational argument, as this became the criterion against which authority had to justify itself. The emergent citizens strove to assert their personal freedom and participation in the rational constitution of a democratic society. All this meant that “the social sphere” in the sense of both the forming of social relationships and the emergence of an entity that could now be called a society (against a mere aggregate of communities) could no longer be assumed to exist and develop “naturally” but became something that had to be explicitly constructed and provided. The social order had to be organized, regulated, and maintained according to principles, which individuals had the right to negotiate.

This transition from traditional communities to modern societies, therefore, created a fundamental and persistent tension between the importance attributed to individual freedom and autonomy on the one hand and the necessity to contain the effects of the unfettered exercise of freedom within principles which reflected the interests of society overall, like the principle of equality. The emphasis on autonomy meant, for instance, that notions of a “common good” were overshadowed by the utilitarian principle of “the greatest good of the greatest number,” which promoted and legitimated the market as a “fair” mechanism of distribution not only in the immediate field of capitalist economics but in the non-economic institutions of society as well (Schofield, 2006). This, in turn, created massive problems of poverty and inequality which called into question the “justice” of this individualized principle of social and economic relations and gave rise to discourses and movements which demanded counter-measures in the name of justice, interpreted as equality but inevitably bringing with them restrictions. It is in this force field that the notion of justice as social justice arose and gained significance. Inequality became a matter of ardent political debate rather than remaining shrouded in the cloak of “fate” over which humans had no control (Toulmin, 1990; Jost & Kay, 2010).

Seen from this perspective, social justice issues assumed growing importance in the development of modern nation states and their efforts of establishing social order through legal and

political institutions, and these in turn found expression in the notion of citizenship in successive stages. Citizenship implies sets of legally secured relationships both between individuals and with the political institutions guaranteeing these rights in the form of the state. Having the status of a citizen means having legally guaranteed rights, and the notion of citizenship, therefore, symbolizes the existence of a system of justice, though not necessarily of a just society.

In T. H. Marshall's (1992) analysis, the development from civic citizenship to political and eventually to social citizenship in the history of modern European nation states traces the necessity to render the justice element implied in the citizenship status ever more concrete and tangible. While civic and political citizenship meant merely that citizens had an equal right to enter into binding civil contracts and to participate as voters equally in the political processes characteristic of democracies, social citizenship signified a decisive step beyond those formal expressions of justice. It secured people's entitlement to having basic social needs fulfilled. Justice in the form of social justice is thereby realized in the daily experiences of citizens. This development, therefore, seems to have endorsed Sen's contention that "justice cannot be indifferent to the lives that people can actually live. The importance of human lives, experiences, and realizations cannot be supplanted by information about institutions that exist and the rules that operate" (Sen, 2009, p. 19). This is of particular contemporary significance in a global political phase in which social citizenship is being called into question as a consequence of neoliberal policies and their reliance on market mechanisms.

The term social justice as such makes its first appearance in Europe in the writings of a Jesuit advisor to the Vatican, Luigi Taparelli d'Azeglio, writing in the context of the Italian *risorgimento* in 1840, a political movement which, while promoting the unification of Italy, posed severe challenges to the existing social and political order, including the Catholic Church (Burke, 2011). For Taparelli, the term *giustizia sociale* signified an attempt to justify the established social stratification (which was highly unequal and based on special privileges of aristocracy and church) while giving credence to "modern" principles of individual responsibility and, in that sense, of autonomy. In opposing the liberalism and the associated demands for equality promoted by the American Revolution in the tradition of Locke (1960), Taparelli emphasized instead the legitimacy of differences as "natural facts" which the principles of social justice have to respect and protect rather than eliminate. "All individual human beings are naturally unequal among themselves in everything that pertains to their individuality, just as they are naturally equal in all that pertains to the species" (Taparelli d'Azeglio, 1845, par. 355, quoted in Burke, 2011, p. 37).

In the sophisticated manner of Jesuit argumentation, Taparelli captured the spirit of the revolutionary times with the term "social justice," only to give it a conservative, order-preserving interpretation. According to this interpretation, social differences can be legitimated and guarded against being perceived as inequalities and injustices when they can be grounded in the factual, "essential" constitution of these differences. In addition, possible weaknesses arising from these differences in natural constitution need to be protected by the interventions of a benevolent "bigger unit." This idea constituted the core of the principle of "subsidiarity" which assumed a central role not only in Catholic social teaching but also in the social policies of corporatist states such as Bismarckian Germany (Hennock, 2007).

Taparelli distinguished the role of smaller social units, such as the family, from that of bigger ones such as the state to give the smaller ones absolute priority over the latter but obliging the latter to support the smaller ones if their own capacity to resolve problems did not suffice. In this form the principle of subsidiarity as the realization of social justice entered directly into the social teaching of the Catholic Church, initially in the form of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891 (Leo XIII, 1981) in which Pope Leo XIII, a former student of Taparelli,

defined the Church's social commitment as being both a fight against Communism with its pursuit of equality and its reliance on collective action, and against excessive liberalism which left the individual abandoned by the collective and created scandalous social differences and injustices. In this line of development social justice became a virtue, a striving at all levels of society for the just distribution of personal freedom combined with responsibility and for public support consistent with the principle of justice when individual commitments proved insufficient.

This theme was taken up in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* by Pope Pius XI (1931), celebrating the effects and reaffirming the principles of Catholic social teaching at the height of the Great Depression and at the historical start of the confrontation between Communism and Fascism in Europe. The Pope reminds governments of their role in bringing moral order to a society by protecting the weak and warding off Communism. The Encyclical consolidated the Catholic Church's understanding of social justice. Another Jesuit, Oswald von Nell-Breuning, had worked on its draft. He later became a leading figure in shaping Germany's post-World War II social policies, which strongly reaffirmed the principle of subsidiarity, which had been a central feature of Bismarck's first social legislation after the founding of the Second German Reich in 1871 (Krier Mich, 1998; Novak, 2000). West-Germany's post-war social politics emphasized the freedom of individuals not in an absolute sense but in the form of their being embedded in organisms of civil society which, in that country's strong anti-fascist and anti-communist orientation, had to form a safeguard against the powers of the state becoming too domineering (Huber & Stephens, 2001).

Social justice, in this typically conservative version, consists therefore, of ensuring everybody's (different) place in society in such a way that society could become an organic whole where all the different members worked together harmoniously (the organism metaphor also appears in Catholic social doctrine). This interpretation of the principle of social justice does not seek to eliminate differences but reduces them to a level where they do not lead to social unrest. This, in turn, is achieved by relating inequalities back to "indisputable facts," in which metaphysical evaluations of those facts, such as the religious meaning of poverty or the "sanctity of the family," play a supporting role. Both the criteria of individual freedom and of equality can thus be respected in relation to each other, albeit in a very specific interpretation. "To each according to his rank" expresses social justice from this perspective.

This conservative interpretation of social justice, which lies at the core of 20th-century corporatist "welfare regime" versions of social policies, emerged as a defense against the arguments of two opposing interpretations of social policy which equally gave rise to distinct social policy regimes.

One pathway in the constitution of basic political positions in the history of Western ideologies was liberalism. Its overriding orientation is that it seeks to realize social justice by means of liberating the individual from domination by others and from the fetters of collective institutions of power and their imposed norms and demands, particularly those centered on substantial equality, which is often understood to involve a leveling of personal differences (Gray, 1995). As a product of the Enlightenment, liberalism operates above all with references to reason and, hence, subjects the principles and institutional arrangements that are meant to guarantee a just society to an examination by "reasonable individuals" (Gaus 2004).

Liberalism comprises many different positions in relation to the issue of justice and given its prime orientation towards the interests of individuals it becomes obvious that it did not find an immediate conceptual bridge to addressing "the social" and, hence, the issue of social justice. In relation to issues of justice generally, classical liberalism was primarily concerned with securing individual property rights. The right to control one's private property, either in the form of

capital or labor, is regarded as the crucial indicator of liberty and, thus, for classical liberals the redistribution of wealth by the state can never be legitimate. In the philosophical tradition of Locke (1960), which directly inspired the American and the French revolutions, this requires a contractual relationship of citizens with each other and with the state whose role is specified to protect life, liberty, and property.

However, as the Enlightenment progressed and economic conditions began to change, the liberal approach to property became more differentiated. Adam Smith, often cited as the prime exponent of this version of liberalism, was critical of a distribution of property based on inheritance and privilege, but defended individual property rights that resulted from fair achievement (Gray, 1995). According to Smith, a just society furthers the freedom of the individual whose only limits are set at the point where it might encroach on the freedom of others. For Smith, the chief instrument for the realization of this notion of justice and at the same time of economic efficiency is the market. In the following famous quote from Smith's seminal publication, *The Wealth of Nations*, the self-interest of the individual as the expression of freedom is set in relation to the interests of society: "By pursuing his (i.e., the individual's) own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it" (Smith, 1957, p. 400). Nevertheless, the state should have a role not only in ensuring that contracts are being kept but also that certain public works should be undertaken, an aspect of Smith's political economy that is often overlooked: The state has also "the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions, which it can never be for the interest of any individual, or small number of individuals, to erect and maintain" (Smith, 1957, p. 407).

Since the 18th century, liberalism always oscillated between emphasizing the mere absence of constraints as the precondition for liberty, without specifying the "positive" uses of freedom, and attempts at specifying the latter. Jeremy Bentham's utilitarian project tries to specify and even quantify the latter as a criterion of public justice with references to "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," defined by happiness (or pleasure) being the contrast to pain. This again testifies to the necessity of liberals addressing the "public dimension" of questions of freedom in relation to justice in the form of the question of just government (Burns, 2005).

Equality, therefore, features in those early expressions of liberalism prevalently in the form of equality of rights to ensure that the processes of negotiation and the validity of contracts are safeguarded in such a way that individuals have an equal right to participate and be partners in these transactions. The constraining aspect of justice in relation to the otherwise boundless freedom of individuals can be perceived as legitimate when it contributes to social stability, but it always needs to reflect a balance of interests. Social justice more specifically manifests itself in these early liberal philosophical and political designs as the realization of "due desert" that allows individuals to reap the fruits of their achievements. Having a right to the ownership of one's achievements was one of the driving forces behind both the political revolutions of the 18th and 19th century that sought to establish the autonomous citizen in the form of the bourgeois and the corresponding emergence of the economic system of capitalism.

But as the need for the state to take an active part in securing social peace and stability in industrial societies began to dawn even on governments with a clear liberal orientation, for instance with the introduction of limited social insurance in the UK under the Liberal-led government of Lloyd George in 1904–1914, this began to herald a shift in liberal positions towards a more explicit treatment of issues of social justice (Paul, Miller, & Paul, 2007), a shift which was given a further push by the experience of the Great Depression and World War II (Stedman Jones, 2012). This meant that the role of government in ensuring social justice, precisely for purposes

of securing and enhancing the freedom of individuals, came to be part of the political agenda of liberals, even the early Hayek (Gaus, 2003).

A key text in the foundation of this new approach to a philosophical grounding of liberal approaches to issues of justice was Rawls' 1971 work, *A Theory of Justice*. It represents an attempt to overcome the "self-centered" individualism of the classical liberal position by relating rational considerations concerning self-interest to the interests of a collective like society (Rawls, 1971). His liberal theory of justice thereby immediately becomes the foundation for a theory of social justice. If members of a society engage in deliberations about an optimal state of society in such a manner that their rational choices about what is desirable place their self-interests behind a "veil of ignorance," meaning that they abstract from their actual place in society, considerations and criteria of self-interest can indeed come to include the interests of others. The version of a just society conceived in this hypothetical "original position," and hence the social quality of such a society, would correspond to criteria of fairness for all members of that society in as much as no single member wants to be in a position that would be intolerable or undesirable for others. Preconditions for this are, according to Rawls, the two principles of justice: the liberty principle, which states that basic liberties, such as political freedom, freedom of speech, and freedom of the person in relation to property, are the entitlements of each member of society; and the difference principle, which states that inequalities are only legitimate when, as differences in resource, they are arranged to the benefit of the least advantaged and in terms of power differences attach to offices which all can obtain under conditions of "equality of opportunity."

Although the transition from interpersonal to institutional justice and the establishment of some substantive conditions of social justice enshrined in a redistributive role of the state had won the consent of some liberals, a group of economists attacked it openly in the 1970s in an attempt at returning to the original liberal emphasis on personal freedom and the primacy of private property. In particular, libertarians like Friedman (1962), Hayek (1973) and Nozick (1974) seized the opportunity of states unable to deliver on their welfare promises in the wake of the first Oil Crisis and criticized the dominance states had gained in relation to the economy and to collective welfare. For them only the market could best safeguard individual freedom, and social justice for them was a matter of providing opportunities, which individuals should grasp. The gradual adoption in neoliberal politics of Hayek's critique triggered deep political divisions, which unsettled the welfare consensus achieved in Western societies in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

While the neoliberal notion of "equality of opportunity" as the way to social justice includes references to institutional arrangements that protect the most vulnerable members of society, it still contrasts sharply with the socialist insistence on justice being related not to desert but to need. Socialism, the second political strand opposed by conservatism, had emphasized the primacy of equality over liberty in view of its central concern with the plight of those who became dispossessed in the process of industrialization and the development of capitalism and denounced the concern with liberty as the expression of the property-oriented self-interest of the bourgeoisie (Rubel & Crump, 1987). Forged in the battles over the issue that a fair wage should not be measured by the productivity of the individual worker but by the existential needs of the family unit a worker had to sustain through his labor, the call for equality in this tradition centered on the fundamental unfairness of property distribution and property rights from which all other injustices followed, including political injustices.

The philosophical grounding of the socialist version of social justice owes much to Hegel's conception of freedom, which contrasts fundamentally with that of the classical enlightenment philosophers who emphasized freedom primarily as a characteristic of the individual. For Hegel,

freedom can only be conceived in relation to concrete historical conditions, in view of the limitations posed by a specific time and place which have to be addressed and overcome (Hegel, 1977). While in his later work Hegel engaged in metaphysical speculation and came to identify the historical realization of freedom with the Prussian state, Marx turned this notion of freedom from a constraint into a political project yet to be completed in the revolutionary course of history.

For Marx, freedom cannot be achieved by individuals withdrawing into their private spheres where they guard their self-interests against encroachments by others and by the state, but only by a radical transformation of the conditions under which applying one's labor turns from an act of necessity into an act of freedom:

The true realm of freedom, the development of human powers as an end in itself, begins beyond it [the necessity of nature, W.L.], though it can only flourish with this realm of necessity as its basis. The reduction of the working day is the basic prerequisite.

Marx, 1981, p. 959

Social justice, therefore, can only be practiced under radically changed material conditions where the fundamental inequality contained in the opposition between capital and labor has been abolished. The famous statement by Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* (Marx, 1994, p. 315), "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," serves implicitly as the ultimate touchstone of social justice in the radical socialist tradition, although Marx was principally skeptical of the term "justice" because of the bourgeois context in which it was used at the time. The phrase sums up the final state of societal development in communism, which has overcome social-democratic attempts at accommodating socialism to the conditions set by bourgeois notions of equality and where all conflicts over property rights, the core concern of liberal notions of justice, have become meaningless ("*aufgehoben*").

In his critique, Marx points out the fundamental dilemma that remains over "the fair distribution of the proceeds of labor" even when those proceeds have become common property, as demanded by the proponents of the Gotha Program. How can this distribution take account on the one hand the labor of workers they invest in the production of these goods and on the other the fact that not everyone can contribute their labor (like children) and that those who are in the production process contribute unequally according to unequal abilities? These questions continue to underlie debates over social policy in the 21st century.

Equality, concretized in material circumstances and not just limited to being an abstract right, remained the core aspiration of the socialist tradition, albeit as a liminal criterion, an incentive to transform social structures continually but with an orientation to the fulfillment of human needs. Given the material inequalities which have become so pronounced with the advance of industrialization and capitalism and given the "taste of freedom" which drove those changes, socialist programs ultimately came to identify social justice with the redistribution of resources in favor of the disadvantaged, in whatever form they were unequally distributed. This also meant that socialism regarded the state as, at least temporarily, the best instrument for bringing about this redistribution.

The clearest and most comprehensive models of the contemporary welfare state are, therefore, products of social democratic governments, best illustrated by Nordic European countries where social democratic principles entered into a political culture that favors measures for the reduction of inequality. In these nations, social justice describes a quality of society *per se*, achieved and maintained not at the expense of individual freedom as in the case of liberalism, where the financing of the state's distributive operations through taxation is only grudgingly conceded, but



as the foundation for the development of individual freedom. This is expressed for instance in Article 1 of the Swedish Social Welfare Act of 2001, which states:

Public social services are to be established on a basis of democracy and solidarity, with a view to promoting economic and social security, equality of living conditions and active participation in the life of the community. With due consideration for the responsibility of the individual for his own social situation and that of others, social services are to be aimed at liberating and developing the innate resources of individuals and groups.

*Sveriges Riksdag, 2001*

The three archetypical welfare regimes that developed in Europe since the French Revolution, concurrent with the differentiation and consolidation of nation states, reflect the basic normative positions of these philosophical and political traditions (Lorenz, 2006). They are distinguished not just by varying degrees of “decommodification” (Esping Andersen, 1990), i.e., the degree to which welfare measures are based on money transactions or are being offered with no reference to the user’s ability to pay for them, but by a fundamentally different view of the citizen’s relationship with the state. They each represent, therefore, a different solution to the core demands of modern social relations, freedom, and equality, and hence reflect and contain different traditions of social justice.

As discussed above, the social-democratic approach to welfare emphasizes equality by means of a high degree of redistribution of material resources, thereby addressing the varying needs of individuals and promoting their sense of autonomy. By contrast, the liberal tradition reflects a basic skepticism of the state’s role in safeguarding the liberty of the individual and, consequently, permits the state to become active in welfare only as a last resort with a simultaneous emphasis on the duty of each individual to make private arrangements for securing his or her welfare as much as possible. In this version of the welfare state, therefore, social justice manifests itself in the individual’s ability to seize opportunities and to develop a life project autonomously while the state contributes to this principle through playing a “residual” role (Titmuss, 1963).

The conservative-corporatist approach to welfare is wary of the dangers contained in both the other traditions. On the one hand, it is wary of the danger of state authoritarianism suppressing the freedom of the individual and, consequently, the sense of duty individuals have not just for themselves but also for the social units in which they are embedded, such as the family. On the other, it fears the danger of giving individual self-interest too much scope because it would threaten social cohesion. With the principle of subsidiarity conservatism tries to steer a middle course through the realm of social justice, stimulating both the self-help initiatives of the “smaller social units,” which incidentally are thereby encouraged to maintain their cultural identities, and promoting the sense of obligation by the “bigger units,” such as the state, to not abandon those smaller units to their own destiny but to become active in their support whenever their own resources reach a limit.

These distinct but nevertheless interlocking strands of political interpretations and manifestations of the notion of social justice, for which the European welfare states of the post-World War II era were a living laboratory, had lost their contours by the turn of the millennium. Several factors contributed to the demise of the welfare state, such as the increasing discrepancy between the expectations raised by the welfare state projects and the fiscal limitations to their realization, inherent in the contradictions of capitalism, and compounded more recently by the erosion of the steering capacity of the nation state under the growing impact of international trade liberalization (Habermas, 2001). However, ideologically the most decisive incision on the



balance between the three strands was the collapse of the Soviet regime in 1989 which finally discredited the equality claims made under “really existing socialism” together with the never convincing claim that this type of equality promoted freedom. This development eliminated the necessity for capitalism to measure itself competitively against socialist solutions to the problem of inequality.

In essence, the events of 1989 heralded the arrival of a political climate world-wide in which liberalism, in the form of neoliberal reformulations of liberal principles, could be presented as leaving “no alternative.” The promises of participation in the “free market” as the fulfillment of personal freedom appealed particularly to young people in former Communist countries and became the rallying point for new political party constellations (Sunstein, 1997). This meant that differences could assert themselves with ever fewer restrictions imposed by politics geared at promoting equality. Under these “post-socialist” conditions “claims for the recognition of group difference have become intensely salient ... at times eclipsing claims for social equality” (Fraser, 1996, p. 2).

Above all, in recent years the notion of social citizenship has been seriously called into question as a relationship between the individual and society governed not just by a right to belong but also by at least a clutch of rights that guarantee the means of belonging (Mishra, 1998). These rights are now systematically being challenged by neoliberal “welfare” policies that emphasize efforts to promote individual self-help and self-improvement as a pre-condition for full access to equal rights and welfare entitlements. These restrictive policies are not only designed for non-national immigrants but for a whole range of welfare recipients.

Ironically, these neoliberal policies ideologically latch on to the undercurrent of critique which many recent social movements, such as the (second wave) women’s movement, the civil rights movement, the gay/lesbian rights movement, and the disability rights movement, had leveled against welfare state policies. These critiques focused on a tendency within national welfare policies to interpret a concern for equality as an infringement on individual differences. These new social movements (NSMs) had exposed the discriminatory particularisms (in the form of “masculinism,” ethnocentrism, or heterosexism) which lay hidden behind the façade of universal welfare principles of equality and asserted instead the “right to be different,” not in the individualistic sense of traditional liberalism but as a claim for the public recognition of cultural, cognitive, and physiological group differences, a version of recognition, however, that would not make those differences a justification for discrimination (Honneth, 1995). Neoliberal politics exploit the unresolved discrepancy between claims to differentiated identities and to equality contained in the campaigns of these movements to promote the rise of “identity politics” as a means of destroying the last vestiges of class politics and as a means of installing cultural politics as a replacement for social politics (Brodie, 2007).

These recent developments, which erode the notion of social justice as redistributive justice, are accompanied and supported by the privatization of public services in general, including social services, either in the form of a renewed emphasis on the role of non-governmental charitable organizations, in a striking re-run of their role in the early days of industrialization, or of for-profit organizations encroaching on this emergent market. Market principles, introduced and promoted not by traditional welfare professionals but by “social” or “care managers,” come to be the instruments of the allocation of welfare resources. This shift is legitimated by the “old” principle of liberalism that sees in the market a means of doing justice “blindly” and efficiently and of exercising “just desert” to those showing themselves “worthy” through their efforts (if not productivity) (Friedman, 1962).

At the same time, globalization and free market changes impose such demands on people to constantly prove they are active and to succeed through their own efforts that seeking respite

from this competitive climate in taken-for-granted identities presents itself as a tempting alternative, particularly the recourse to national or ethnic identity. Nationalism is being invoked to justify privileges for the “indigenous” population and the exclusion of non-natives from civil rights and social protection. It can even be portrayed as an act of doing justice and preserving the welfare of the nationals. The growing phenomenon of right-wing and neo-Nazi parties and movements gaining influence in European politics bears witness to these essentializing tendencies of defining equality in ethnic and racist terms (Spektorowski, 2000).

In view of this political polarization any attempt at opposing the extreme individualism in the neoliberal conception of social justice by means of the recourse to criteria of justice as the shared values of a social unit are prone to be usurped by the neo-conservative or even nationalist camp. This limited the acceptance of the critique of the more recent liberal position from the perspective of “communitarianism.” According to Walzer’s critique of Rawls (1983), the treatment of justice as grounded in hypothetical, universally valid mental abstractions leads to a situation in which notions of justice always form part of the cultural repertoire of a community whose meanings are, therefore, only hermeneutically accessible. By contrast, for Walzer the distribution of goods is tied to social processes and conventions which correspond to distinct and in that regard autonomous “spheres” whose fairness can only be assessed in relation to the prevailing values within those spheres. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to measure the justice in a particular process of distribution according to universal criteria, because the existence of such spheres and their corresponding social communities imply a plurality of equally valid criteria of justice which members of those communities determine autonomously. Walzer’s theory of “complex equality” represents a version of communitarianism that advocates “decentralized democratic socialism” (Walzer, 1983, p. 318) and highlights the discrepancy between an abstract treatment of issues of justice as the domain of philosophy and the complexities and, above all, the plurality of positions politicians and policymakers have to address. This critique induced Rawls to revise his original approach and take into account practical institutional arrangements such as democratic processes as important factors in the realization of justice (Rawls, 2001).

These contemporary changes in justice discourse also reflect the impact of postmodern critiques of “unified systems of thought” in the area of social philosophy. Plurality and difference have become key reference points which renders the universalism claimed by the classical philosophical traditions on social justice not just obsolete but illegitimate. It is, therefore, not surprising that the term social justice has become so multi-faceted and a carrier of so many ambiguities that it can no longer serve as an effective rallying point for overarching political initiatives, although its appeal as a motor of single-issue campaigns, particularly by non-governmental organizations remains high (e.g., Atkinson & Scurrah, 2009).

The conceptual ambiguity of the concept of social justice has, however, led to an increasing interest in empirical studies on topics related to social justice which stretch from “traditional” poverty studies, to the research inspired by Bourdieu (Bourdieu et al., 1999) to research on primates and their sense of justice (e.g., Price & Brosnan, 2012). Overall, debates on the meaning of social justice seem to have become uncoupled from a more fundamental analysis of the concept and have split, in Sen’s distinction (2009), into a line of practice-oriented projects which are concerned with comparative approaches aimed at “the removal of manifest injustice from the world” (Sen, 2009, p. 7) and one that has a more “transcendental institutional” character, meaning an emphasis on defining institutional rules. The split means that a reference to social justice can be invoked also in relation to those politics which apply legal provisions correctly according to formal criteria without consideration of the actual “fairness” a decision of this kind brings about. Indeed, these arguments deprive those who fall outside

the institutional provisions of a particular law of the possibility of appealing to a higher principle of justice; in effect, these individuals tend to become objects of charity, as in the days before social citizenship was a political goal.

Sen (2009), as a proponent of the “capabilities approach,” represents an attempt to overcome this division with an integrated vision of social justice that combines both rights and resources as the basis for adequate “social functioning.” The recourse to social choice theory permits him to promote a social sense of justice that does not depend on the self-interest of individuals but on the constructive social comparisons members of a society are capable of making in the relative but “good enough” context of a consensus over what constitute common interests. Here the plurality of views and values does not necessitate resignation in view of the impossibility of overcoming relativity, but leaves scope for provisional negotiated agreements on conditions of well-being.

This use of social choice theory underscores a dimension in the thought of Adam Smith in his essay *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1969) which had been largely ignored in the liberal tradition, namely the capacity of individuals to reason beyond their personal interest. The focus on capabilities, which has also been promoted by Nussbaum (2011), allows for an integrated program for the realization of social justice under specific conditions, which takes as a central criterion not the utilitarian calculation of interest and happiness but “a person’s capability to do things he or she has reason to value” (Sen, 2009, p. 231). In Sen’s view this constitutes in reality a person’s concrete freedom or rather freedoms and decides over the degree to which he or she can actually make use of opportunities.

In the 21st century, discourses on social justice in the West are as diverse as ever with the added feature that today they do not seem to follow traditional pathways but are characterized by fragmentation on the one hand and attempts at new combinations on the other. It is particularly significant that while in Sen’s latest reflection he in no way lays claim to having hit on a formula for “global justice,” he nevertheless manages to lift typical elements of Western philosophical and political thought on justice out of their cultural boundaries and relate them to corresponding concepts that developed in the intellectual contexts of other continents, particularly that of Asia. The issue of social justice thereby emerges more and more as a project whose advancement depends on the recognition of a variety of positions and approaches and on the open and democratic communicative exchanges on that diversity which in themselves help to manifest the inherent value of striving for justice as a collective commitment, transcendently contained in authentic forms of communication (Habermas, 1990), and thereby as a core element of human existence (Bankovsky, 2012).

## Bibliography

- Atkinson, J., & Scurrah, M. (2009). *Globalizing social justice: The role of non-governmental organizations in bringing about social change*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bankovsky, M. (2012). *Perfecting justice in Rawls, Habermas and Honneth*. London: Continuum.
- Bourdieu, P. et al. (1999). *The weight of the world: Social suffering in contemporary society*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Brodie, J. (2007). Reforming social justice in neoliberal times. *Studies in Social Justice*, 1(2), 93–107.
- Burke, T.P. (2011). *The concept of justice. Is justice just?* London: Continuum.
- Burns, J.H. (2005). Happiness and utility: Jeremy Bentham’s equation. *Utilitas*, 17(1), 46–61. DOI: 10.1017/S0953820804001396.
- Durkheim, E. (1984, orig. Engl. 1902). *The division of labor in society*. New York: The Free Press.
- Esping Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Fraser, N. (1996). *Justice interruptus—critical reflections on the “postsocialist”, condition*. London: Routledge.
- Friedman, M. (1962). *Capitalism and freedom*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Gaus, G.F. (2003). *Contemporary theories of liberalism: Public reason as a post-Enlightenment project*. London: Sage.
- Gaus, G.F. (2004). The diversity of comprehensive liberalisms. In G. F. Gaus & C. Kukathas (Eds.), *The handbook of political theory* (pp. 100–114). London: Sage.
- Gray, J. (1995). *Liberalism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Habermas, J. (1990). *Moral consciousness and communicative action*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Habermas, J. (2001). *The postnational constellation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hayek, F.A. (1973). *Law, legislation, and liberty*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hegel, G.F.W. (1977). *Phenomenology of spirit*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hennock, E.P. (2007). *The origin of the welfare state in England and Germany, 1850–1914: Social policies compared*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Honneth, A. (1995). *Struggle for recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Huber, E., & Stephens, J. D. (2001). *Development and crisis of the welfare state: Parties and policies in global markets*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Jackson, B. (2005). The conceptual history of social justice. *Political Studies Review*, 3, 356–373.
- Jost, J.T., & Kay, A.C. (2010). Social justice: History, theory, and research. In S. T. Fiske, D. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology*, 5th ed., Vol. 2 (pp. 1122–1165). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Krier Mich, M.L. (1998). *Catholic social teaching and movements*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications.
- Leo XIII. (1981). *Rerum Novarum* (encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on capital and labor, May 15, 1891). In C. Carlen (Ed.), *The Papal encyclicals*. Raleigh, NC: McGrath.
- Locke, J. (1960 [1689]). The second treatise on government. In *Two treatises on government* (pp. 283–446). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lorenz, W. (2006). *Perspectives on European social work—From the birth of the nation state to the impact of globalisation*. Opladen: Barbara Budrich.
- Marshall, T.H. (1992, orig. 1950). Citizenship and social class. In T. H. Marshall/T. Bottomore, *Citizenship and social class*. London: Pluto Press.
- Marx, K. (1981). *Capital*, Vol. 3. Translated by David Fernbach. Introduction by Ernest Mandel. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books.
- Marx, K. (1994, orig. 1871). *Selected writings*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing.
- Miller, D. (1999). *Principles of social justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mishra, R. (1998). Beyond the nation state: Social policy in an age of globalization. *Social Policy and Administration*, 32 (5), 481–500. DOI: 10.1111/1467-9515.00110.
- Novak, M. (2000). *Catholic social thought and liberal institutions: Freedom with justice*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Nozick, R. (1974). *Anarchy, state and utopia*. New York: Basic Books.
- Nussbaum, M. (2011). *Creating capabilities—The human development approach*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Paul, E.F., Miller, F.D. and Paul, J. (Eds.). (2007). *Liberalism: Old and new*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pius XI. (1931). *Encyclical letter (Quadragesimo Anno) on reconstructing the social order and perfecting it comfortably to the precepts of the Gospel in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the encyclical “Rerum Novarum.”* Oxford: Catholic Social Guild.
- Price, S.A., & Brosnan, S.F. (2012). To each according to his need? Variability in the responses to inequity in non-human primates. *Social Justice Research*, 25(2), 140–169.
- Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rawls, J. (2001). *Justice as fairness—A restatement*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Reisch, M. (2007). Social justice and multiculturalism: Persistent tensions in the history of U. S. social welfare and social work. *Studies in Social Justice*, 1(1), 67–92.
- Rubel, M., & Crump, J. (Eds.). (1987). *Non-market socialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. New York: Macmillan.
- Schofield, P. (2006). *Utility and democracy: The political thought of Jeremy Bentham*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sen, A. (2009). *The idea of justice*. London: Penguin.
- Smith, A. (1957, orig. 1776). *The wealth of nations*. London: Dent & Sons.
- Smith, A. (1969, orig. 1759). *The theory of moral sentiments*. New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House.
- Spektorowski, A. (2000). The French new right: Differentialism and the idea of ethnophilian exclusionism. *Polity*, 33(2), 283–303.
- Stedman Jones, D. (2012). *Masters of the universe: Hayek, Friedman, and the birth of neoliberal politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Sunstein, C.R. (1997). *Free markets and social justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sveriges Riksdag (2001). Socialtjänstlag 2001:453 (Social Welfare Act). [http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/DokumentLagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/Socialtjanstlag-2001453\\_sfs-2001-453/#K1](http://www.riksdagen.se/sv/DokumentLagar/Lagar/Svenskforfattningssamling/Socialtjanstlag-2001453_sfs-2001-453/#K1) (accessed 6.9.2012).
- Taparelli d’Azeglio, L. (1845). *Saggio teoretico di dritto naturale appoggiato sul fatto*. Livorno: V. Mansi.
- Titmuss, R.M. (1963). *Essays on the welfare state*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Toulmin, S. (1990). *Cosmopolis: The hidden agenda of modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Walzer, M. (1983). *Spheres of justice: A defense of pluralism and equality*. New York: Basic Books.

## 2

# RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES ON JUSTICE THEORY

*Daniel C. Maguire*

The world's major religions, though infinitely varied in their dogmatic symbols and narratives, meet on the commons of moral concern. All of them are classics, flawed classics to be sure, in the art of cherishing life and in pursuing justice as the only sure route to peace. They are not abstract Rawlsian disquisitions on the theoretic of justice but they are rich in ores that can be mined and refined into experience-based justice theory. This is particularly true in Judaism and it carried through into Christianity and Islam. Similar moral passions and insights can be found, *mutatis mutandis*, in the rich religious traditions of the East.

The prophets of Israel were connoisseurs of *Tsedakah*, the preferred Hebrew word for justice. These fiery leaders would be at one with Aristotle's assertion that it is justice and only justice that holds the city together (Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 1132b). They insisted on the primacy of justice in survivalist terms. "Justice, and justice alone, you shall pursue, so that you may live" (Deut. 16:20). Only "justice shall redeem Zion" (Isa. 1:27). Justice is the single and only route to *Shalom*, peace. Quite simply: "The effect of justice will be peace" (Isa. 32:17). Theists and non-theists should know that god-talk houses the most deeply held convictions of a people. God-talk is always ethics-talk. It always gives signals of a particular moral worldview. Prophetic Judaism used justice to define God, to be almost a synonym for God. God was a "God of justice" (Isa. 32:18). This belief made justice the foundational religious virtue and the prime ethical value.

This message of justice was not just meant for Israel. These bold thinkers saw Israel as an emissary to the world. They were convinced they had made a discovery of universal validity. With undaunted aplomb they said Israel could be "a light to all peoples, a beacon for the nations, to open eyes that are blind" (Isa. 42:67). All three Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, seek universal outreach for their ethical message since Abraham was seen as commissioned to teach "all nations on earth" (Gen. 18:17–19).

Only when the nations of the world see this will they be able to "live in a tranquil country" with all their cities "peaceful" and their "houses full of ease" (Isa. 32:19). No other scheme, political, economic, or military will achieve this effect. This insistence on justice as the understructure of social order continued in Christianity. C. H. Dodd notes that Jesus "seems to have been sparing in his use of the word 'love' [noun or verb]" (Dodd, 1970, p. 64). Muslim theologian Farid Esack (2001) says that Islam "seeks to place justice and compassion at its core" (p. 187).

## Justice with specifics

Prophetic justice did not eschew specificity. It recognized that there are multifaceted requirements for a just society. It addressed the categories of status, power, class, the connections between poverty and wealth, essential needs as generating rights, and the necessity for redistribution and systemic solutions to social problems. In the modern categories of justice described below, biblical justice concentrated on social and distributive justice more than commutative justice.

Bias is ubiquitous in social analysis although rarely acknowledged. The bias in the Abrahamic religions is not hidden. The very word *Tsedaqah* has built into it in its Aramaic roots the idea of compassion and mercy for the poor. And the prime word for “the poor,” *Anawim* is rich in connotation. The *Anawim* were not simply lacking money; they lacked power. The word contains a probe into the heart of poverty; it points to disempowerment. It has implications of exploitation in its etymology and this is supported by its usage in the exuberant language of the prophets. In the Hebraic view, reflected again in Christianity and Islam, poverty was not unrelated to the prevailing power structures of the society. Poverty was not an achievement of the poor, a sensible enough idea since in any society many or most of the poor are children.

The biblical tradition carries a strong suspicion of wealth. Excessive wealth was seen as potentially or even probably violent, linked as it is to the misdistribution of resources. Micah railed at the rich, accusing them of “building Zion in bloodshed” (Mic. 3:10). “The spoils of the poor are in your houses,” said Isaiah (3:14). “Bread is life to the destitute, and it is murder to deprive them of it” (Ecclus. 34:21). From this perspective, wealth bears a burden of proof as to its innocence. Jesus was not out of step with his prophetic predecessors when he announced his reformative mission as “good news for the poor” (Luke 4:18) and correspondingly when he pronounced “woe to you rich” (Luke 6:20).

## The moral challenge of owning

Much of social ethics rests on that morally pregnant word *own*. It is a relational term, replete with justice implications, implying that there are others who cannot lay claim to what you possess. *Owning* is the term that underlies debates between capitalism and socialism and all the permutations of both systems. Owning is the issue in discussions of taxation and how progressive it should be or not. It permeates discussions about how much of the ocean a nation can claim as its domain. It enters into debates on eminent domain where your “private property” claims are trumped by the social need for a road, a railroad, or a canal. It is central to discussion of airwave rights for broadcasting. At root it is active in the very definition of personhood and the relationship of individual persons to the public sphere and the common good. Law books are full of questions of ownership.

And ownership is basic for any discussion of social justice. The three Abrahamic religious traditions insist that there is a social mortgage on possessions. Owning must be tamed. Redistribution and the ending of radical inequality are essential to a just society and a just world. To own is to owe. Ownership has its place but greed is socially disruptive, a corrosive subversion of peace. In the Muslim tradition, *Zakat* is a mandatory poor tax. It is intended for the relief of the needy, for prisoners, to relieve debts, and to assist “wayfarers” or immigrants. *Zakat* requires every adult of sufficient means to pay a certain percentage on their possessions. In Israel, every seventh day and every seventh year was “sabbatical.” Sharing was the Sabbatical mandate, sharing with strangers and kin and even with animals domestic and wild (Lev. 25:5–7). Debts were to be



canceled and slaves were to be freed. All of this would be solemnly enforced and celebrated in every fiftieth year, called the Jubilee Year.

Underlying all of this was the moral premise that owning entails owing, a key insight for modern discussions of social justice, since social justice denotes payment of debts to society, to the common good. Religions did not present this as plaintive idealism but as hard-nosed practicality. An unjust society digs a pit and falls into it; injustice recoils back on you in violent ways (Ps. 7:15–16). It is dumb as well as immoral.

### **Modern discussions of justice**

Modern philosophical justice theory, unlike biblical discourse of justice, moves to abstraction but, sadly, is not an epic of clarity. In the broad literature of philosophy, religion, sociology, and law, definitional pandemonium reigns. The identified forms or species of justice proliferate with names that do more to befuddle than illumine. Among the types of justice we find tongue-twisters like “antipeponthotic,” “synallagmatic,”—terms your computer would immediately and sensibly underline in red. Alongside these one finds retributive, attributive, recognitive, syndical, legal, social, misdistributive, corporative, reparatory, penal, cosmopolitical, and more recently, restorative justice (Del Vecchio, 1952). Obscurantism, which is often mistaken for profundity, does tend to breed an unfriendly nomenclature.

But not all justice theory stumbled. And indeed the multiplicity of names bears witness to the breadth of application that justice has. None of those terms is lacking in all meaning; it is just that they lack rootage in the core and essence of justice theory where clarity can be and has been found. Clarity is essential. You can do a lot of work with electricity without knowing what the essence of electricity is, but that is not the way with justice. If the idea we have of justice is superficial or sidetracked, our conclusions will be correct only by accident. And yet there is a way in which the handling of justice and the handling of electricity are similar. In both cases, mistakes can be lethal. In Bible terms, misdefining justice “recoils” on you to your undoing.

### **Injustice kills**

To illustrate the contemporaneity of biblical insights into justice a case from American life will underline the violence, counter-productivity, and yes, the stupidity of injustice.

Nikki White was described by those who knew her as a bright, feisty, dazzling young woman when she graduated from college full of hope for a good and full life. That was not going to happen because she was born in the richest country in the world. Around the time of her graduation, Nikki was diagnosed with systemic lupus erythematosus, a serious disease but one that modern medicine knows how to manage. She would be alive today if she had been born in any other well-off country such as Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Canada, or Sweden; she could have received the standard treatment for lupus and lived a normal life span. But Nikki White had the fatal misfortune of being born in the richest country in the world, the United States of America.

She had a job and was making too much money for Medicaid (the U.S. program that provides medical assistance to low-income individuals and families and low-income elderly persons), but she did not make enough money to afford the drugs and medical care she needed to live, and so Nikki White died at age 32.

In the United States, the long-standing value of individualism serves as an obstacle to joining the other rich nations in the moral belief that basic health care is a human right that should be available



to rich and poor in a just society. There are many telling ironies in the tragic early death of Nikki. Had she been a member of Congress she would have had the health care she needed since Congress provides government-funded health care for its members. Had she been a veteran of military service, Nikki also could have lived a full life, since veterans are eligible for free national health care. More ironically yet, had she been a convicted felon serving time in prison, she could have had the health care she needed free of charge. Strange to tell, the reigning orthodoxy in the United States is that Congress, veterans, and prisoners deserve national health care just like the people of Sweden, Canada, Japan, France, and most other industrialized nations, but the Nikki Whites of the United States have no such right. This is “justice” American-style and sometimes it kills people.

Nikki White is not the only victim of unjust policies in the United States. A 2009 study conducted by the Harvard Medical School estimated that “as many as 44,789 deaths per year” among Americans are due to a lack of health coverage (Wilper et al., 2009). Most of those who die for lack of medical treatment in the world’s richest country are working Americans who run afoul of the nation’s uncoordinated and complicated health care melange. People who are uninsured are 25 percent more likely to die of treatable diseases than people of the same age cohort who have insurance (Reid, 2010). Because of her preexisting condition of lupus, health care insurance companies driven by profit would not accept her. For insurance companies, health care is a way of making money and they could not make money on Nikki White. As a result, she was of no interest to them.

But note well, the tragic ironies do not stop there. When Nikki lost her job due to illness and was declared “disabled” due to the ravages of untreated lupus, she was belatedly eligible for the kind of free care that Congress provides for itself. Over ten weeks she had a total of twenty-five operations, all of which were free of charge. But by then it was too late to save her and in the spring of 2006 Nikki died. In those final weeks she pleaded: “I don’t want to die!” but it was too late. As one doctor said the real cause of death was not lupus but an unjust health care policy that refused to provide her with the care she needed.

Nikki’s story highlights the anomalies of the American health care system. The treatment that she received too late cost more than it would have cost to give her proper treatment when she was diagnosed and treatable. Unjust systems fall into the pit they themselves have dug. Alongside the unnecessary deaths and disabilities, the current U.S. health care system causes hundreds of thousands of bankruptcies which weaken the nation economically. This bankruptcy epidemic does not happen in nations with a just health care system. Getting justice right is vital, therefore, because it saves lives and is good for the economy.

The reform bill that President Barack Obama signed into law on May 23, 2010, known as “The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,” was a reaction to a national crisis that left nearly 50 million Americans without any health care insurance and millions more with inadequate coverage. The legislation moved the United States a step away from that national disgrace; it provides 32 million people access to some level of health insurance coverage by 2019. Nevertheless, 23 million Americans will remain uninsured by that date. Profit-making insurance companies and their financially primed allies in Congress blocked a full and just reform. Without additional reforms, there will be more Nikki Whites in the future.

But now, to try to do justice-to-justice we need to examine the theory of what justice means.

### *Suum cuique*

The Latin phrase, *suum cuique*, “to each his/her own,” is the persistent core formula for justice that has spanned the literature on justice from Homer through Aristotle, Cicero, Ambrose,