

**Perfectionism, Pessimism, and Perspectivism:  
Justice as a Virtue in the work of MacIntyre and Cohen**

This paper addresses a number of issues raised by virtue ethics for political theory. Virtue ethics often entails a ‘perfectionist’ view of the human good. Character traits are virtues for the reason that they contribute to the good, the flourishing, of the person concerned. Aristotle defined flourishing [*eudaimonia*] as a life of virtue.

! ctpar

‘Human good turns out to be the activity of the soul exhibiting excellence, and if there are more than one excellence, in accordance with the best and most complete’ (EN, I. 7, 1098 a 15).

Similarly, for Philipa Foot, virtues are necessary for human perfection, as ‘virtues are about what is difficult for men’ (1978, p. 8). However, some theorists of virtue ethics argue that the tradition of a community may provide the only justification for perfectionism. The justification given for virtue ethics is tradition-dependent (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 8). MacIntyre is also ‘pessimistic’ about the possibilities for pursuing flourishing in modern culture and mainstream institutions (1985, p. 254; 1988, p. 141). It is often argued that virtue ethics presupposes a moral consensus that is absent in modernity. For liberals, in an era of pluralism, where conceptions of the good are incommensurable, ‘! we must be prepared to accept the fact that only a few such questions [of political justice] can be satisfactorily resolved’ (Rawls, 1987, p. 438).

There is good reason to suggest that virtue ethics relies on a substantive –

perfectionist – view of humanity and the human good. For Alasdair MacIntyre, exercising virtue is necessary to attain goods of excellence, that is, ‘to perform well and to judge well’ about ‘what is good or best unqualifiedly’ (1988, p. 30). However, I shall argue here, while MacIntyre’s position is tradition-dependent and entails pessimism, G.A. Cohen tries to provide a justification for virtue ethics within academic philosophy, and he outlines how the virtue of justice can and should be exercised in modern society, in mainstream institutions and the economy.

MacIntyre’s position is pessimistic. He assumes that in modern mainstream institutions we can pursue external goods (power, wealth, and status) but not goods of excellence. MacIntyre also concludes that practical reasoning is constituted by traditions. MacIntyre explicitly rejects ‘perspectivism’, the assumption ‘that no claim to truth made in the name of any one competing tradition could defeat the claims to truth made in the name of its rivals’ (1988, p. 367). Although he argues that reason ‘constitutes’ tradition, and that we can engage in inter-traditional reasoning (1988, p. p. 361), I argue that MacIntyre does not avoid perspectivism. According to MacIntyre, contemporary moral philosophy is simply one tradition among others, and what is more, a tradition that is fragmented (1985, p. 68). In its place, MacIntyre proposes a moral philosophy based on an Augustinian – Aristotelian shared tradition.

Cohen does not accept that moral philosophy is tradition-dependent. He assumes that moral and political philosophy are ‘ahistorical’ disciplines (1995, p. 1). Simply on the strength of the argument, he can propose his theory of justice within mainstream political philosophy. His argument is that John Rawls assumes the members of a just society also should exercise the virtue of justice. Rawls is therefore logically committed

to the view that they should adhere to the ‘difference principle’ in everyday life, and so, they must only demand unequal rewards that are to the benefit of the least advantaged. They should strive to bring about ‘(virtually) unqualified equality’ (2000, p. 124). Further, the demands that can be made of virtuous individuals can also be imposed by modern mainstream institutions. The system of taxation and welfare should operate in a way that brings about ‘(virtually) unqualified equality’ (1995, p. 240).

Cohen seems to illustrate that virtue ethics need! not be tradition-dependent and need not entail pessimism. However, his position is not fully convincing. Cohen shows that those who care about justice should also exercise the virtue of justice. However, he does not show why humans should care about justice; he does not establish that being just is ‘good’ for those who do exercise the virtue. To make this claim, I argue, one must provide a perfectionist account of the human good. MacIntyre offers a tradition-dependent perfectionism. Cohen discusses, but chooses not to defend, a Marxist account of human development (1995, p. 122 ff.). What is more, Cohen falls back on a quasi-perspectivist position. In the final analysis, he concedes, the reason why he continues to believe in equality is, in large part, due to the fact that the community of his childhood was an inducement to do so (2000, pp. 12-13).

### **1. Alasdair MacIntyre: The Aristotelian Tradition**

For Alasdair MacIntyre, exercising virtues contributes to human perfection. Virtues are the qualities needed to judge and to perform well about what is good or best unqualifiedly. However, according to MacIntyre, this is a conclusion reached only within

the Aristotelian tradition. In general, rationality is tradition constituted, but also tradition constitutive.

Academic philosophy insists on a ‘neutral, impartial, and, in this way, universal point of view’ (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 3). However, not only is it impossible to attain this ideal of rationality. Disinterestedness presupposes one conception of justice, ‘liberal individualism’ (ibid. p. 3). Moreover, the conception of ideal rationality ‘ignores the inescapably historically and socially context-bound character which any substantive set of principles of rationality, theoretical or practical, is bound to have’ (ibid. p. 4). Therefore, academic philosophers are dependent on one perspective, but also ignorant of the fact that all theories of rationality and justice arise from traditions. We could, instead, turn away from academic philosophy, and

‘participate in the life of one of those groups whose thought and action are informed by some *distinctive profession and settled conviction* with regard to justice and practical rationality’ (ibid. pp. 4-5; emphasis added).

MacIntyre wants to reconnect rationality with ‘settled conviction’ about justice. This can be done only within traditions. Tradition is not antithetical to reason, he claims. Rationality is constituted by tradition but it also, in turn, constitutes tradition. ! r

‘[S]tandards of rational justification emerge from and are part of a history in which they are vindicated by the way they transcend the limitations of and provide remedies for the defects of their predecessors within the history of that same tradition’ (ibid. p. 7).

Rationality is tradition-dependent, therefore. MacIntyre’s version of virtue ethics is itself part of the Aristotelian tradition. The Aristotelian is concerned with ‘external

goods' and 'goods of excellence'. A certain kind of reward is attached to winning, namely riches, power, status, and prestige. The 'qualities of body, mind, and character' required to achieve them are 'qualities of effectiveness' (ibid. p. 32). In contrast, we can pursue 'goods of excellence' only if we possess the qualities needed to perform and judge well in regard to what is 'good or best unqualifiedly' (ibid. p. 30). *Agathos* [good] is 'used of all those who are good at doing what is required of each person inhabiting his or her own particular role by excelling at the type of task so required' (ibid. p. 27). We develop the character traits needed to pursue goods of excellence by 'disciplined apprenticeship' in certain types of activity

'which, because initially we lack important qualities of mind, body, and character necessary for both excellent performance and informed and accurate judgement about excellence in performance, we have to put ourselves into the hands of those competent to transform us into the kinds of people who will be able! both to perform and to judge well' (ibid. p. 30).

Goods of 'excellence' are available in, and must be pursued in, 'systematic activities' (ibid. p. 141). This would suggest that standards of evaluation are relativistic in MacIntyre's scheme. However, MacIntyre does distinguish what is 'good relative to us here and now' from what is 'good or best unqualifiedly' (ibid. p. 31). Further, MacIntyre does not equate excellence with the simple dogmatic acceptance of the rules of a practice. There are always maxims used to characterize what, at that stage, is the best practice. However, 'knowing how to apply these maxims is itself a capacity which cannot be specified by further rules' (ibid.). MacIntyre *does not* equate excellence with dogmatic acceptance of the rules that happen to be established in each given systematic activity.

Virtue can refer to qualities needed either to be effective and successful or, instead, to judge and perform well in regard to what is good or best unqualifiedly. The Aristotelian can conceptualise justice and practical reason from the stand point of the goods of excellence. As justice is a disposition

‘whose exercise is necessary to secure not merely the goods of this or that form of activity, but also the overall good of the *polis*, the good and the best, so also practical reasoning becomes ordered to the overall good of the *polis*, to the good and the best’ (ibid. p. 44).

That is, rationality requires that ‘the good and the best’ is our first premise, and justice requires that we secure ‘the overall good’ of the community at large. In contrast, from the point of view of effectiveness, ‘justice’ requires obedience to rules needed merely for effective cooperation, and ‘practical reason’ is the disposition to be moved by no more than desires, wants, and aspirations (ibid. p. 45).

MacIntyre draws a sharp division between qualities needed to excel (whether one wins or not) and those needed to be (merely) effective. He also assumes that external goods must be pursued only ‘for the sake of’ goods of excellence. That is, the Aristotelian assumes there is a hierarchy between goods, and the goods of effectiveness are merely means used to attain goods of excellence. The good and the best should supply ‘an *arche* [first premise] for human beings when they are fully rational’ (ibid. p. 89). Further, the *polis*, or political community, should provide ‘an integrated form of life’, a life in which external goods are pursued for the sake of goods of excellence (ibid. p. 90).

There is good reason to suggest that MacIntyre is unduly pessimistic about the

possibilities for attaining ‘the good and the best’ in modern society (Breen, 2002, pp. 192-9; 2005, pp. 492-7). He assumes we can exercise the virtues only in a certain context, namely the *polis* or a community of its kind: a *polis* is based on moral consensus and also this consensus allows us judge people’s merit on the basis of their contributions to the realization of common goods. Modern political theory represents the complete antithesis to this view. Liberals like John Rawls (1971) and Robert Nozick (1974) envisage

‘entry into social life as – at least ideally – the voluntary act of at least potentially rational individuals with prior interests who have to ask the question “What kind of social contract with others is it reasonable for me to enter into?” Not surprisingly it is a consequence of this that their views exclude any account of human community in which the notion of desert in relation to contributions to the common tasks of that community in pursuing shared goods could provide the basis for judgements about virtue and injustice’ (1985, p. 251).

According to MacIntyre, virtues cannot be properly exercised in mainstream modern society.

‘When ... the relationship of government to the moral community is put in question both by the changed nature of government and the lack of moral consensus in the society, it becomes difficult any longer to have any clear, simple and teachable conception of patriotism. Loyalty to my country, to my community – which remains unalterably a central virtue – becomes detached from obedience to the government which happens to rule me’ (ibid. p. 254).

The *polis* provides ‘a shared view’ of how to judge contributions to this ‘common enterprise’ (1988 pp. 106-7). The individual outside the *polis*, a community based on a ‘moral consensus’, is deprived of justice and *phronesis* [practical wisdom]. ‘Separated

from the *polis*, what would have been a human being becomes instead a wild animal' (ibid. pp. 97-8).

Virtue ethics can only be implemented in a *polis*. However, MacIntyre does not accept Aristotle's view of the *polis*. Aristotle's virtue ethics is 'aristocratic'. First, Aristotle assumes that a hierarchical ordering of activities is necessary. Such a hierarchy is necessary for teaching and learning, MacIntyre accepts. However, MacIntyre argues, we need not accept Aristotle's account of hierarchy: that women, slaves, and artisans are incapable of citizenship (ibid. pp. 105-6). Aristotle also exhibits an aristocratic 'carelessness' about the consequences of actions. '[B]eing just requires caring about and valuing being just, even if it were to lead to no further good' (ibid. p. 113). The exclusion of women and slaves and artisans, and the carelessness about consequences is 'aristocratic'. Nonetheless, MacIntyre's pessimism is such that, for him, virtue ethics cannot be exercised within the modern welfare state, even though it is inclusive and attempts to bring about equitable consequences. In the welfare state, bureaucratic expertise displaces wisdom. Distribution to meet people's mere wants and desires also displaces distributions in praise of, and reward for, excellence. The welfare state undermines the principle of merit.

## **2. MacIntyre's Virtue Ethics: Three Problems**

I want to draw attention to three themes in MacIntyre's work. MacIntyre assumes that all practical reasoning is situated within given contexts and therefore all reasoning is dependent on practical contexts; that a coherent moral theory and a flourishing life are

possible only within the *polis* and communities of the same sort; and finally that theoretical enquiry is constituted within traditions (although it is also constitutive of those traditions).

First, MacIntyre assumes that all reasoning is ‘situated’ within given contexts and therefore all reasoning (including moral theory) is ‘dependent’ on practical contexts. According to David Wiggins, the neo-Aristotelian *cannot* accept egalitarianism or, more importantly, the priority egalitarians give to a single theoretical principle over practice. (Wiggins has G.A. Cohen’s work in mind here when he criticizes egalitarianism, and I return to Cohen below.) For Aristotle, ‘the subject matter of action ... is inexhaustibly indefinite’: ‘the practical cannot be treated with, handled, mastered or managed by means of precepts that are at once general and unrestrictedly correct’ (Wiggins, 2004 p. 481). MacIntyre agrees that practical wisdom is ‘non-rule-governed’. In Wiggins’s terms, MacIntyre rejects a top-down, theory-led approach. A moral philosopher should instead engage in a bottom-up process, so as to ‘refine ... an *enumeration* of concerns, and expectations into the beginnings ... of an account of the *various forms* of justice’ (ibid. p. 486; emphasis added).

Second, for MacIntyre, a coherent moral theory and a flourishing life are not possible in modern mainstream institutions (the state and the capitalist market in particular). They are possible only within the *polis* and communities of the same sort.

‘The person whose actions are formed by both *arête* [virtue] and *phronesis* [practical wisdom] has ... developed originally, biologically given capacities, which could, however, have been developed instead so that they were put to the service of injustice. And this is how they would have been developed in a human being deprived of the law and justice which only the *polis* affords. Hence the *polis*

is required for *arête* and for *phronesis*, as well as for *dikaiosune* [justice]. Separated from the *polis*, what would have been a human being becomes instead a wild animal. ! ... The rules of justice cannot be understood as the expression of, nor will they serve to fulfill, the desires of those not yet educated into the justice of the *polis*' (MacIntyre, 1988, pp. 97-8).

Therefore, MacIntyre is pessimistic about the possibilities for Aristotelian politics now. We have already seen that the *polis* has two important features in MacIntyre's view. It involves a moral consensus. This moral consensus is then the basis judging people more or less deserving with respect to their contributions to the realization of common goods.

Finally, for MacIntyre theoretical enquiry is constituted within traditions. According to Marc Stears, G.A. Cohen and MacIntyre offer diametrically opposed views on the assessment of moral principles. Cohen's view is that 'the "principles" towards which we strive are not in any sense to be dependent upon our understanding of the "factual" universe that makes up up-close empirical enquiry' (Stears, 2005, p. 331). In contrast, MacIntyre assumes that 'doctrines, theses and arguments ... can only be appreciated in terms of their social or historical context' (ibid. p. 337). MacIntyre rejects the claim that tradition and reason are antithetical: that tradition involves the silencing of reason for the sake of authority and dogma.

'For all reasoning takes place within the context of some traditional mode of thought, transcending through criticism and invention the limitations of what had hitherto been reasoned in that tradition' (MacIntyre, 1985, p. 222).

! idctlpar

So, all theory is constituted within traditions. However, theory itself is constitutive of traditions.

‘A tradition is an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflict: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least key parts of those fundamental agreements, and those internal interpretative debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreement come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted’ (1988, p. 12).

! 0In the next two sections I say a little bit more about these three themes: context-dependent practical reasoning, political pessimism, and tradition-constituted theory. I will defend the following position on MacIntyre. First, despite his claims to the contrary, MacIntyre is guilty of assuming the ‘perspectivist’ view ‘that no claim to truth made in the name of any one competing tradition could defeat the claims to truth made in the name of its rivals’ (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 376). Second, this in turn explains his ‘normatively questionable endorsement’ (Keat, 2000, p. 123) of certain aspects of pre-modern society: MacIntyre rejects modern pluralism and individualism because they are antithetical to the requirements for a coherent moral discourse and a good life: in contrast, the *polis* provides a ‘shared view’ of how to assess contributions to the ‘common enterprise’ that is a community (MacIntyre, 1988, pp. 106-7). Finally, MacIntyre is pessimistic about ! the possibilities for virtue ethics, in large part, because his (pre-modern) view of community is no longer feasible in modern mainstream institutions.

### **3. The Problem of Perspectivism in MacIntyre**

I want to argue that MacIntyre is pessimistic about the possibilities for political action based on virtue ethics. This is, in part, the result of his perspectivism, which itself results from the assumption that rational endeavour is tradition-constitutive and tradition-constituted. Finally, MacIntyre endorses a normatively questionable view of community in part because the perspectivist view of reasoning can seem plausible only within such a community.

MacIntyre is aware that tradition-based reasoning can be! charged with ‘arbitrariness’ (1988, p. 5). Nonetheless, he insists that to judge and act rationally, one must aim at the good, which requires ‘experience’ of right judgement and action. This is ‘only an apparent paradox’. This is the case as

‘Retrospectively surveyed, the judgements and actions of the *phronimos* [the wise person, the ‘educated man’] ... will turn out to be such as would be required by an adequate conception of the good and the best’ (ibid. p. 118).

Theory has a goal (*telos*). Moral theory must discover the first conceptions and principles (*archai*) from which the good person should act. On the one hand, all theory starts from a particular context or setting. For this reason, ‘Justice-as-it-ought-to-be-understood’, according to MacIntyre, is implicit in the practice! of ‘justice-as-it-is’. On the other hand, ‘The method of moving from a set of particulars to a universal, to the concept of the form which those particulars to different degrees exemplify, Aristotle called *epagoge*’ (ibid. p. 91). Taking justice-as-it-is and the virtue of the wise person as our starting points, we can, and we must, move towards universal truths and gain knowledge of the first conceptions and principles from which the good person should act:

‘if someone is judging rightly, although only on the basis of experience, then the principles of right action will be implicit in what he does. ... Just because this is so we can by *epagoge* from the judgement and actions of such persons move toward the formulation of true *archai*, supplementing that *epagoge* by a dialectical enquiry in which we! evaluate the best-supported opinions as to the relevant *archai* advanced so far’ (ibid. p. 92).

In MacIntyre’s defence it has been argued that he does accept ‘moral particularism’, namely ‘the claim that each particular moral theory principally and ultimately originates out of a *particular* community’s *moral* imagination, beliefs, practices, and institutions’ (Kuna, 2005, p. 253). This does *not* entail ‘moral relativism’, however, ‘the denial of the claim that ‘there are universal standards of moral value true for all human beings or universal principles of moral duty and obligation binding on all’ (ibid.). In turn, ‘MacIntyre’s particularism does not necessarily contradict Thomist universalism’ (ibid. p. 271). Thomas Aquinas shows that ! e the *particularity* of our standpoint does not imply that we cannot arrive, *via* dialectical argument, at conclusions which are necessarily and *universally true*’ (ibid.) So, MacIntyre’s point is that as theory is to provide the most ‘adequate conception of the good and the best’, then, theory provides a standpoint from which to judge the thoughts and actions of the wise person thinking and acting in practice. However, MacIntyre also assumes that theory and practical reason are mutually dependent. This would seem to be a vicious, rather than a virtuous, circle, to the extent that there are no grounds outside to judge what goes on inside the circle.

I think the viciousness of this practice-theory circle is evident when MacIntyre discusses how someone can derive rational beliefs about specific goods by exercising the

following abilities: (1) the ability to characterize a 'situation'; (2) the ability to reason (by dialectical methods) from knowledge of what are 'goods for him' to a 'more or less adequate conception of the good as such'; (3) an ability to understand his 'good qua participant in a variety of activities'; (4) the ability to reason from his understanding of the good in general, 'the unqualifiedly good', to a conclusion about which of the specific goods which it is immediately possible for him to achieve he should in fact set himself to achieve as 'what is immediately best for him'; (5) an ability to deploy the other four abilities in conjunction, which 'is exhibited in the exercise of the virtue *phronesis*' (ibid. p. 126). MacIntyre does nothing here to dispel the suspicion that his account of theory is caught in a vicious circle with practical reason. Theory is to provide an independent standard of assessment. However, practical wisdom is the virtue needed to engage in theory (point 5 above), as well as to deliberate about practical matters (points 3, 4) and perceive the salient facts of a situation (point 1). Practical wisdom is arrived at through training in specific contexts (e.g. the household, the *polis*), where one learns how to exercise this ability and also exhibit the dispositions that are evidence of possessing it.

MacIntyre assumes that theory and practice are mutually dependent. He also assumes that theory is tradition-dependent. According to MacIntyre, Aristotle is attempting to complete a Platonic tradition, one that Aquinas will attempt to extend and also to reconcile with Augustinianism. Despite adopting a tradition-based approach, MacIntyre rejects 'relativism' and 'perspectivism'. He rejects the relativist position that a claim 'can be rational relative to the standards of some particular tradition, but not rational as such' (ibid. p. 352). He also rejects the perspectivist position 'that no claim to truth made in the name of any one competing tradition could defeat the claims to truth

made in the name of its rivals' (ibid. p. 367). For MacIntyre, Aquinas's work is tradition-constituted. However, Aquinas was able to 'confront the apparently incompatible and conflicting demands of two distinct and rival traditions', Aristotelianism and Christian Augustinianism (ibid. ?? ). Inquiry is tradition-constituted and yet Aquinas engaged in inter-traditional dialogue. However, 'MacIntyre considers traditions of rationality incommensurable, yet at the same time allows for conversation and rational dialogue between them' (Kuna, 2005, p. 262). There are no tradition-independent, a-historical grounds of analysis:

'a central feature of the problem of deciding between their [traditions'] claims is characteristically that there is no neutral way of characterizing either the subject matter about which they give rival accounts or the standards by which their claims are to be evaluated' (ibid. p. 166).

To avoid the charge of perspectivism, MacIntyre needs to show that claims made within one tradition can be analysed (and rationally defeated) from within another. According to MacIntyre, such an analysis can proceed as follows:

'the protagonists of each tradition, having considered in what ways their own tradition has by its own standards ... found it difficult to develop its enquiries beyond a certain point, ... ask whether the alternative and rival tradition may not be able to provide resources to characterize and to explain the failings and defects of their own tradition more adequately than they, using the resources of that tradition, have been able to do so' (MacIntyre, 1988, pp. 166-7).

The inability to find rational solutions to moral issues is seen as a crisis of a particular kind, a crisis of tradition. A solution is sought within an alternative tradition, not on

tradition-independent grounds. Rare qualities are required by those engaged in inter-traditional dialogue. They need gifts of

‘empathy as well as of intellectual insight ... to view themselves from such an alien standpoint and to recharacterize their own beliefs in an appropriate manner from the alien perspective of the rival tradition’ ( ).

! MacIntyre rejects perspectivism, arguing that inter-tradition dialogue and debate is possible. However, MacIntyre in fact only shows how rational agreement is possible *within* social and cultural boundaries. This is the case with his account of ‘systematic activities’.

‘A hockey player in the closing seconds of a crucial game has an opportunity to pass to another member of his or her team better placed to score a needed goal. Necessarily, we may say, if he or she has perceived and judged the situation accurately, he or she must immediately pass. ... It exhibits the connection between the good of that person qua hockey player and member of that particular team and the action of passing, ... *It is thus only within those systematic forms of activity within which goods are unambiguous! ly ordered and within which individuals occupy and move between well-defined roles that the standards of rational action directed toward the good and the best can be embodied.* To be a rational individual is to participate in such a form of social life and to *conform*, so far as is possible, to those standards’ (ibid. pp. 140-1; emphasis added).

In the italicized text, MacIntyre clearly shows that agreement about the good is possible only within social and cultural boundaries. The charge of perspectivism is ‘that no claim to truth made in the name of any one competing tradition could defeat the claims to truth made in the name of its rivals’. MacIntyre seems to be open to the charge.

He shows that ‘passing’ is the good thing to do at a certain point in a game of hockey. We could also conclude that within a political community, playing hockey may be one ‘unambiguously ordered’ good; and that within the Aristotelian tradition, the goods of various activities are to be ordered within the *polis*, and that they are to contribute to a higher end. However, MacIntyre must provide good reasons to entertain Aristotelian-Thomism, and then to accept its view of the *polis* (and similar communities), and its view of goods and activities. But the people addressed by MacIntyre’s arguments already occupy a tradition, and they may not be Aristotelian-Thomists or they may belong to one of the many opposing interpretations of the Aristotelian and Thomist traditions. If the arguments made to defend one conception of justice are justified only within a tradition, then how can MacIntyre offer a rational justification for Aristotelian-Thomist justice to the non-Aristotelian and non-Thomist?

Why accept the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition? That tradition entails, MacIntyre claims, a specific vision of the political community. A genuine community must be a *polis* or something similar. Citizens of each *polis* have rational resources to judge their own city, but only in regard to what a *polis* at its best does and is.

‘But it does not follow that there is nothing more to the norms of justice than what they are taken to be in each particular *polis* at some particular time. Just because the *polis* is defined functionally as that form of human association whose peculiar *telos* is the realization of good as such, a form of association therefore inclusive of all forms of association whose *telos* is the realization of this or that particular good, the citizens of each *polis* have the rational resources to judge their own city as succeeding or failing in doing and being what a *polis* at its best does and is’ (ibid. p. 122).

Belonging to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition provides one with critical tools of moral analysis, but only if one first accepts its tradition-derived first premises. As we saw above, ‘the citizens of each *polis* have the rational resources to judge their own city as succeeding or failing in doing and being what a *polis* at its best does and is’. MacIntyre does show that if you are a member of a *polis* you must help contribute to the realization of its common good or goods. We may want to know whether these goods are worthy of pursuit. On MacIntyre’s account, we can answer ‘yes’ to this question only if we also agree that such goods does contribute to the human good. The justification for this assertion is provided by a single tradition or, in times of crisis, inter-traditional dialogue. However, I want to argue that serious moral disagreements cannot be overcome through inter-tradition dialogue. This is the case as MacIntyre does not ! show why inter-traditional dialogue itself is good. There can be no tradition-based justification for inter-traditional dialogue. If tradition constitutes rationality, then rationality cannot provide reasons to leave that tradition behind. Motivations for doing so may be found elsewhere (in a will to survive, in short term self interest, and so on) but these motivations, by MacIntyre’s definition, are not rational. After we establish a new tradition, then we will have (traditional) rational reasons to act and think (to help contribute to the realization of its common goods). But there are no reasons for adopting this new traditional perspective.

According to his critics, MacIntyre relies on ‘a normatively questionable endorsement of certain aspects of pre-modern society as against their modern counterparts’ (Keat, 2000, p. 123). MacIntyre assumes that (modern) pluralism and individualism are incompatible with a coherent moral discourse and living a good life.

This results from MacIntyre's 'community requirement for productive practices'. Modern differentiation is problematic as 'different forms of social activity are conducted without any overall sense of their respective positions either in the shared life of the community or in the individual lives of its members' (Keat, 2000, p. 126). MacIntyre also assumes, 'the purpose of [modern] morality is seen as being to deal with egoism' (Keat, 2000, p. 127). Finally, MacIntyre equates justice with the criterion of merit (rather than equality, need, or right), and he conceptualizes merit with respect to the contribution to already-established common goals.

'There must be some common enterprise to the achievement of whose goals those who are taken to be more deserving have contributed more than those who are taken to be less deserving; and there must be a shared view of how such contributions are to be measured and of how rewards are to be ranked' (MacIntyre, 1988, pp. 106-7).

MacIntyre's conception of community cannot provide satisfactory answers to questions of distributive justice, for instance, with respect to hockey. Should the state compel the able and wealthy to finance the construction and maintenance of hockey pitches in deprived neighbourhoods? On MacIntyre's account, there is no reason why the advantaged should give resources to the disadvantaged except out a sense of 'just generosity' when faced with extreme dependence (such as mental and physical disability). The virtue of just generosity requires that we give to the needy, that we give unconditionally, and that we give in proportion to need rather than the recipient's past contributions (1999). MacIntyre defines neediness with respect to human flourishing, and he defines 'just generosity' as a virtue required for flourishing. However, he defines

flourishing in a way that is conceptually dependent on the contribution to the pursuit of the common goods of a community. The theoretical conception of virtue, and exercising virtue itself, does not provide a standpoint from which to critically analyse a tradition and its practices:

‘and to learn how to become an independent practical reasoner is to learn how to cooperate with others in forming and sustaining those same relationships that make possible the achievement of common goods by independent practical reasoners’ (1999)

Finally, I want to argue that MacIntyre’s pessimism is a direct consequence of his perspectivism. Because MacIntyre defends virtue ethics as! part of a tradition (Aristotelian and Thomistic) it is not surprising that he assumes virtue ethics *cannot* be pursued in modern, mainstream institutions. MacIntyre assumes that each specific *polis* can be challenged with critical concepts derived from the ideal of what a *polis* is and should be, but he does not provide a more fundamental basis on which to stand so as to judge the (ideal of the) *polis*. For instance, we cannot challenge the *polis* on the grounds provided by Enlightenment (utilitarian and Kantian) morality and in particular its commitment to moral equality. Moreover, MacIntyre is right to assume that (his account of) virtue ethics cannot be plausible in modern society as there are grounds in modern society for rejecting such an approach. While MacIntyre assumes that modern pluralism and individualism makes virtue ethics unattainable, it could be argued instead that there is a plural of objectively good lives and that individualism is at least a prerequisite of

autonomy and critical reflection (Keat, 2000).

## **2. G.A. Cohen: The Difference Principle Revised**

Cohen also defends virtue ethics. He argues that Rawls is, in his defence of the difference principle, logically committed to the view that individuals must adhere to that rationally justified principle. Unlike MacIntyre, however, Cohen assumes that he can construct a tradition-independent argument through academic philosophy. Cohen also wishes to implement virtue ethics within modern society and mainstream institutions.

Cohen agrees with Rawls that we never overcome the 'circumstances of justice'. As there will always be both scarcity of goods and limited generosity, principles of justice will always be needed (Hume, 1739-40, III, 2, ii). In contrast, classical Marxists assume that, under socialism, the satisfaction of each person's needs occurs spontaneously and, as a result, no one is obliged to give aid to the needy (Cohen, 1995, p. 126). Like Rawls, Cohen rejects the Marxist view that a socialist society need not implement decisions about the just distribution of benefits and burdens. However, while Cohen sees justice as an individual virtue, for Rawls, 'justice is the first virtue of social institutions' (1971). Rawls argues that as 'rational persons concerned to advance their interests', it is rational to choose principles of justice that distribute 'primary goods' to everyone through society's 'basic structure' (ibid. pp. 118-9). Primary goods 'normally have a use whatever a man's rational plan of life' (ibid. p. 62). Moreover, the 'difference principle' should govern the distribution of income and wealth. It states, 'the higher expectations of those better situated are just if and only if they work as part of a scheme

which improves the expectations of the least advantaged members of society' (ibid. p. 75). That is, inequalities in income and wealth are justified if they are 'incentives' for those whose productivity benefits the worst off.

Cohen defends the idea that justice is an individual virtue. His first line of argument rejects Rawls's social contract approach.

For Rawls, as neither social nor natural advantages are chosen, we can regard 'the distribution of natural talents as a common asset' (ibid. p. 101). According to Cohen, Rawls does not acknowledge the reasonableness of a sense of 'self-ownership'. Cohen argues, 'If I am the moral owner of myself, and, therefore, of this right arm, ... no one is entitled, without my consent, to press it into their own or anybody else's service ...' (1995, p. 68). If 'self-ownership' generates entitlements over one's person and powers, they may be violated by the Rawlsian distribution of natural talents. Further, Rawls's social ideal is 'cooperation among equals for mutual advantage' (1971, p. 14). However, Cohen notes, there will always be some, for instance the 'radically disabled', who are, because of misfortune, 'radically unproductive' (1995, p. 224). We cannot think of society as, basically, a system of mutual advantage. It follows that Rawls is asking the wrong 'question of justice'. He asks *how should the fruits of cooperation, a process in which everyone benefits everyone, be distributed?* For Cohen, as only some need give, and a sense of self-ownership is reasonable, principles of justice must justify the demands made of the 'able'. The question is, *who should (unilaterally) help whom?* (1995, p. 224)

Cohen's second line of argument is to show that Rawls is rationally committed to the idea that justice is an individual virtue. Further, the difference principle, adhered to by individuals exercising the virtue of justice, requires (virtually) unqualified equality

itself.

Rawls's difference principle states that inequalities are justified if and only if they are necessary to improve the position of the worst off. Rawls accepts that incentives may result in 'deep inequalities' in initial life chances (1971, p. 7). Material incentives are necessary therefore only if in their absence the 'talented' would neither work productively nor take up vacant positions. However, Rawls argues that a society is just if and only if its members adhere to the principles of justice instituted in its basic structure. 'Human beings have a desire to express their nature as free and equal moral persons, and this they do most adequately by acting from the principles they would acknowledge in the original position ... In a well-ordered society each person understands the first principles that govern the whole scheme as it is to be carried out over many generations; and all have a settled intention to adhere to these principles in their plan of life' (1971, p. 528). According to Cohen, Rawls is, therefore, rationally committed to the idea that the talented must adhere to the difference principle. If they do, they will only demand rewards necessary to improve the position of the worst off. Therefore, if choices are informed by the difference principle, material incentives will *not* result in 'deep inequalities' in initial life chances.

Cohen does not reject the difference principle. Rather, his argument is that if virtuous persons adhere to the difference principle, then, it will not justify deep inequalities. Cohen argues that inequalities are justified (i) to compensate special 'labour burdens', (ii) to motivate 'productive labour', (iii) to compensate for 'unlucky circumstances', and also (iv) as the right to pursue one's 'own self-interest to some reasonable extent'. For the sake of consistency, Rawls must insist that individuals adhere

to the difference principle as individuals. Further, to *affirm* the difference principle ‘...implies that justice requires (virtually) unqualified equality itself’ (2000, p. 124). Moreover, Cohen is not pessimistic about the possibility of implementing virtue ethics in mainstream society. What can be demanded of the virtuous individual is in fact the standard to be enforced in mainstream social institutions, that is, the rules of the ‘basic structure’: ‘that able-bodied people have a duty, which the state should enforce through taxation, to produce a surplus over what they need to support themselves, to sustain disabled people who would otherwise die’ (1995, p. 240).

To recap, I have made the following points on Cohen’s position. Like MacIntyre, he ! assumes that a society is just only if its members exercise the virtue of justice. Unlike MacIntyre, he engages in mainstream academic philosophy, arguing that Rawls is rationally committed to the idea that justice is an individual virtue. Again unlike MacIntyre, he is confident that virtue ethics can be implemented in mainstream modern society. In contrast to Cohen, MacIntyre’s virtue ethics is pessimistic and it is situated within the boundary of a specific tradition, Aristotelian Thomism. How can these differences in approach be explained?

## **5. Cohen’s Failure to Justify a Socialist Ethos**

MacIntyre is pessimistic about the possibility of pursuing virtue ethics in modern, mainstream institutions, and MacIntyre defends a normatively questionable conception of community. This may be the result of his assumption that rational endeavour is tradition-dependent. I will argue now that Cohen attempts to provide a tradition-independent

justification for virtue ethics, but also that he falls back on ! a quasi-perspectivist argument, namely, that he believes in equality in part at least because he was brought up to do so.

Cohen wants to give to the virtue of justice the same significance as rules of justice. As we have already seen, he argues that, on Rawls's own account, rules of justice apply directly to individual choice. He also argues that rules of justice are enforced by 'social sanction'. If citizens 'willingly submit' to the standard of justice they will sustain an 'ethos' of justice, 'a structure of response lodged in the motivations that inform everyday life' (Cohen, 2000, p. 128). Neo-Aristotelians like MacIntyre also argue that justice is a virtue and that it is sustained by a community's norms. However, MacIntyre assumes character traits are virtues because they contribute to the attainment of common goods. Instead! , Cohen seems to agree with Marx that community is 'a *means* to the independently specified goal of the development of each person's powers' (1995, n. 16, p. 123). Individuals must adhere to principles of justice *if* society is to be just, but it is not in

'*general* true that the point of the rules governing an activity must be aimed at when agents pursue that activity in good faith. Every competitive sport represents a counterexample to that generalization' (2000, p. 128).

Cohen's argument seems to be that exercise of the virtue of justice is a means to, and an element of, the human good, but also that the human good is defined independently of any given community. Cohen remains sympathetic to the classical Marxist view of the human good: with the ending of the division of labour and the private! ownership of property, liberated labour will become life's prime want (Cohen,

1995, p. 122). However, Cohen criticizes the Marxist view that, in a good society, cooperation arises spontaneously without moral exhortation or coercion. Cohen argues that the 'able' must exercise the virtue of justice for the sake of the 'infirm'. But Cohen does not provide an account of how exercising virtue contributes to the good (the human good) of the able. He only shows that exercising virtue is necessary for *his*, Cohen's, sense of identity. Cohen describes how his upbringing in a communist (and secular-Jewish) community instilled in him a belief in equality. This is a 'paradox' because, while membership of a community may explain the *genesis* of a belief, cultural and social facts do not determine our *assessment* of principles (Stears, 2005, p. 337). The title of Cohen's book provides an hypothesis to ! consider: if you are an egalitarian, how come you're so rich? However, Cohen's argument does not provide a reason to be an egalitarian. In particular, he does not show why commitment to egalitarian justice is a virtue trait necessary for the human good.

I want to return again to MacIntyre's position. Followers of MacIntyre feel Cohen is wrong to look for an account of justice that is context-independent. Wiggins argues that, as the exercise of virtue requires practical wisdom, and as the practical realm is 'inexhaustibly indefinite', then there is no call for, and no hope of attaining, 'principles or precepts that are at once general and unrestrictedly correct' (2004, p. 481). While Wiggins accepts that some moral principles 'impinge *independently of any context* on those who are possessed of the ethical virtues', none the less, 'it takes *phronesis* ... to! shape, determine and validate their application in this, that or the other set of circumstances' (ibid. p. 481). Similarly, with respect to justice, the thing the just person [B] sees in just acts [A] 'is a sum of obligations, concerns, expectations ... *only*

*comprehensible as such to one with justice [B]* (ibid. p. 489; emphasis added). On Wiggins's account, practical wisdom has priority over theoretical rules of reasoning, and the virtue of justice has priority over rules of justice. No general theoretical principles can be used to 'master' the practical. It follows, however, a person is wise (or just) not because he or she adheres to the right principles in the right situation. Principles are right only in so far as the wise (or just) person sees them to be right.

Wiggins gives practice, in all its indefiniteness! , priority over theory. There is no room left to argue that, on the basis of principles that 'impinge independently of any context', the practice of that context itself is unjust, and what wise people (people thought to be wise) take to be right is in fact false. This is just the sort of charge that Wiggins wanted to avoid, however. Although Wiggins states that justice in 'sense [B] was explained in terms of sense [A]' (ibid. p. 491), it seems the opposite is true: only the just person [B] 'sees' what just acts [A] involve. Similarly, he hopes that 'sense [C] is explained in terms of senses [A] and [B]' (ibid.), and again the opposite seems to be true: "that which is due to them", or just acts [A],

'is a place holder for something which can only be determined within the larger picture that will be revealed when we broach the questions that come into view with the justice of the *polis*' (ibid. p. 488).

According to Wiggins, to give due weight to virtue (both wisdom and justice), we must also accept that the practical is indefinite. A philosophy of justice must be a bottom-up exercise, 'an enumeration of concerns, and expectations', and it must do justice to 'the

various forms of justice'. However, this context-dependent approach faces a real danger of perspectivism, and the resulting fate of pessimism, and a morally objectionable view of community. Moreover, Cohen's theory-driven egalitarianism need not be inimical to the exercise of practical wisdom. The just person has the wisdom needed to apply the correct principle of action in the appropriate manner given a specific context. However, as Rawls argues, the just person also willingly conforms to the demands of justice, even when to do so is not in his! or her immediate short-term interests (Rawls, 1997, p. 578). Cohen's defence of the difference principle also need not be insensitive to contextual specificity. To decide who is in fact worse off (and what would make that person better off) requires attention to detail, what MacIntyre calls a 'perception' of salient facts. Cohen does not assume the difference principle is the only relevant moral principle either. A 'relational' principle of equality would locate value in the 'relation between what different people get' and remain indifferent about how much they get (Cohen, 2000, p. 162). However, the difference principle assigns 'priority to improving the condition of the worst off' (ibid.). The 'plight of the badly off' should arouse our 'sense of justice' (ibid. p. 163).

### **! 0Conclusion: Virtue and Practical Rationality**

What justificatory basis can be found for a theory of justice? Two solutions present themselves. Followers of Rawls argue that virtue ethics *cannot* be justified. For Rawls, a society is 'well-ordered' if 'regulated by a conception of justice that is both public and stable' (Williams, 1998, p. 244). Rules of justice must be fair but also seen to be fair.

Cohen's 'ethos of justice' cannot be made public, according to Williams. It cannot 'guide the allegiance of individuals who profoundly disagree about other issues' (ibid.). It calls for judgements where there *is* profound, but reasonable, disagreement. Note that this Rawlsian critique does not directly challenge the conclusion that justice is an individual virtue: it merely argues that a socialist 'ethos' cannot be installed as the 'public' rules of justice. However, it does point to just how difficult it is to treat justice as a virtue. The difficulty concerns finding grounds to rationally justify conclusions about such things as arduous and productive labour, unlucky circumstances, and reasonable self-interestedness. I want to argue that a non-relativistic Aristotelian theory can be employed in these deliberations.

For non-relativistic Aristotelians, dispositions are virtues if they contribute to, and are constitutive parts of, what is 'good without qualification for humans' (Fives, 2005; 2006). Now MacIntyre agrees that virtues contribute to the human good, but he goes on to define virtues as character traits that contribute to the realization of common goods. A non-relativistic theory provides a conception of virtue that is not conceptually dependent on the pursuit of common goods within specific communities. As Philippa Foot argues, following Aristotle, virtues are related 'only to good ends' and 'to human life in general', rather than to the ends of particular activities (Foot, 1978, p. 5). Virtues enable us reason well about one's good as a human, not just one's good as participant in an activity or member of a community. The exercise of the virtue of practical wisdom brings about success with reference to, not the goal of any practice, but what is 'an end in the unqualified sense' (Aristotle, EN, VI. 9, 1142 b 29).

Virtues are beneficial character traits. They benefit us in large part because they

ensure we pursue what has genuine value and worth.

‘So we may say that a man who lacks wisdom “has false values”, and that vices such as vanity and worldliness and avarice are contrary to wisdom in a special way’ (Foot, 1978, pp 6-7).

Virtues are a constitutive part of the human good because they bring benefits to us, and in particular, benefits with respect to our practical wisdom. However, it is not the case that exercising virtue simply makes life easier. Virtues are about ‘what is difficult for man’. This is the case with justice (as well as charity, courage, moderation, and so on). Passions, or emotions and desires, cannot be relied on themselves to provide reasons for action: ‘if people cared about the rights of others as they care about their own rights no virtue of justice would be needed to look after the matter...’ (ibid. pp. 9-10).

I think Foot is right to argue that virtues name characteristics of human beings in respect of a certain power: the power of ‘producing good actions ! and desires’ (ibid. p. 16). Avarice is a vice, then, because it produces bad actions and desires (the desire for more than one is due, and acting on that desire). However, in earlier work, Foot could not explain why we benefit *qua* humans from exercising the virtue of justice. This was the case as she assumed, following Hume, that a reason for action must be traced to the desires of the person, and that the desire to be just can only be sustained within specific communities: ‘the reasons men have for acting justly and charitably depend on contingent human attitudes, and the identification of one man with another in society ...’ (1958, pp. 130-1). Now, Foot’s line of argument here has some similarities with Cohen’s: Cohen concludes that his upbringing in a socialist community is an inducement to believe in equality.

It should be noted that Foot now judges that her position on justice, as outlined above, was mistaken. ! She now argues ‘that there is no criterion for practical rationality that is not *derived from* that of goodness of the will’ (2001, p. 11). It is the case that desires (and self-interest) provide reasons for action in ways that may conflict with the demands of morality, but morality is overriding in terms of ‘the overall judgement of what, all things considered, should be done’ (ibid.). Therefore, either economic self interest or the desires we share with other members of a community may, on occasion, give us reasons to act contrary to virtue. However, a person is just precisely because for him or her ‘certain considerations count as reasons for action, and as reasons of a given weight’ (ibid. p. 12). It is a mistake to think that reasoning based on self-interest and desires is *the* correct form of rationality; they are different parts of practical rationality, and reasoning based on virtue is overriding.

! jAristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans D. Ross, revised by J.L. Ackrill & J.O. Urmson, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Aristotle, *Politics*, translated by Ernest Barker, revised by R.F. Stalley, Oxford: Oxford University Press (1985).

Keith Breen (2002) ‘Alasdair MacIntyre and the Hope for a Politics of Virtuous Acknowledged dependence’, *Contemporary Political Theory*, 1: 181-201.

Keith Breen (2005) ‘The State, Compartmentalization and the Turn to local Community: A Critique of the Political Thought of Alasdair MacIntyre’, *The European Legacy*, Vol. 10, No. 5: 485-501.

G.A. Cohen (1978) *Karl Marx’s Theory of History. A Defence*, Ch. VI, Oxford: Clarendon Press;

G.A. Cohen (1992) ‘Incentives, Inequality, and Community’, pp. 261-329, in G.P. Peterson, ed., *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, Vol. 13, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press;

G. A. Cohen (1995) *Self-ownership, freedom, and equality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press;

G.A. Cohen (1996), ‘Self-Ownership, History, and Socialism: An Interview with G.A. Cohen’, *Imprints*, 1 (1).

G.A. Cohen (1997) ‘Commitment without Reverence: Reflections on Analytical Marxism’, *Imprints*, 1 (3): 23-36.

G.A. Cohen (2000), *If You're an Egalitarian, How Come You're So Rich?* London: Harvard University Press;

G.A. Cohen (2003) 'Facts and Principles', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 31 (3): 211-245.

Ronald Dworkin (2000) *Sovereign Virtue. The Theory and Practice of Equality*, London: Harvard University Press.

Ronald Dworkin (2003) 'Equality, Luck, and Hierarchy', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, vol. 31, no. 2: 190-198.

John Elster (1985) *Making Sense of Marx*, Ch. 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Allyn Fives (2005) 'Virtue, Justice, and the Human Good: Non-relative communitarian ethics and the life of religious commitment', *Contemporary Politics*, 11 (2-3): 117-131.

Allyn Fives (2006) 'Aristotle's Ethics and Contemporary Political Philosophy: Virtue and the Human Good', *21<sup>st</sup> Century Society*, Vol. 1, 2: 1-15.

Philippa Foot (1958) 'Moral Beliefs', pp. 110-129, in *Virtues and Vices*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Philippa Foot (1978) 'Virtues and Vices', pp. 1-18, in *Virtues and Vices*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Philippa Foot (2001) *Natural Goodness*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Robert E. Goodin (1995) *Utilitarianism as a Public Philosophy*, p. 42, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

John Haldane (1994) 'MacIntyre's Thomist Revival: What Next?', pp. 91-107, in John Horton & Susan Mendus eds., *After MacIntyre*, pp. 95, 98, Cambridge: Polity.

David Hume (1739-40) *A Treatise of Human Nature*, edited by Ernest C. Mosner, London: Penguin (1969).

Russell Keat (2000) *Cultural Goods and the Limits of the Market*, Houndmills: Macmillan

Marian Kuna (2005) 'MacIntyre on Tradition, Rationality, and Relativism', *Res Publica*, 11: 251-273.

I. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans., H.J. Paton, London: Hutchinson, (1948).

Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory*, second edition, London: Duckworth, 1985;

Alasdair MacIntyre (1988) *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, London: Duckworth.

Karl Marx (1846) *The German Ideology*, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

Karl Marx (1875) *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (1968) *Selected Works in One Volume*, London.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (1848) *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels (1975) *Collected Works*, Vol. VI, London.

John Stuart Mill (1861) *Utilitarianism*, in John Gray ed., (1991) *On Liberty and Other Essays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

David Miller (1999) *Principles of Social Justice*, p. 26 ff., London: Harvard University Press.

L. Murphy (1998) 'Institutions and the Demands of Distributive Justice', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 27 (4): 251-291, p. 266.

Raymond Plant (1980) 'The Moral Basis for Welfare Provision', pp. 52-96, in R. Plant, H. Lesser, P. Taylor-Gooby, *Political Philosophy and Social Welfare*, p. 68, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Robert Nozick (1974) *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

John Rawls (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, p. 137, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

John Rawls, [1987] 'The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus', pp. 421-448, in S. Freeman ed., *John Rawls. Collected Papers*, London: Harvard University Press, 2001.

John Rawls (1993), *Political Liberalism*, Chichester: Columbia University Press.

John Rawls, [1997] 'The Idea of Public Reason Revisited', pp. 573-615, in S. Freeman ed., *John Rawls. Collected Papers*, London: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Joseph Raz (1986), *The Morality of Freedom*, p. 204, quoted in Cohen (n. 1) (1995), p. 238.

Marc Stears (2005) 'The Vocation of Politics. Principles, Empirical Inquiry and the Politics of Opportunity', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 4 (4): 325-350;

Hillel Steiner (1987) "Capitalism, Justice, and Equal Starts", *Social Philosophy and Policy* 5, in Cohen (n. 1) (1995), p. 106.

Amartya Sen (2004) 'Elements of a Theory of Human Rights', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 32 (4): 315-356, p. 341.

David Wiggins (2004), 'Neo-Aristotelian Reflections on Justice', *Mind*, vol. 113, 451: 477-512.

A. Williams (1998), 'Incentives, Inequality, and Publicity', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 3: 225-247.

!