The evolution of human [primitive] cooperation is a complex story, and there is

The most expressive of human emotions, deep affection;

The Platonic (Framed) Future

Sen’s The Idea of Justice: Back to

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The Meaning of Philosophy

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The idea of justice: Back to the (procrustean) future

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In the Idea of Justice offers a novel and innovative approach to the discussion of justice and inequality.

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2. The Idea of Justice

Inequality and injustice are central concerns of modern life. In the Idea of Justice, Rawls expands on the position that the principles of justice should be derived from a hypothetical original position, where individuals are not aware of their position in society. This is the "original position" in which Rawls argues that people would choose principles of justice that are fair and just, regardless of their position in society. This approach allows for a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, which Rawls sees as necessary to achieve a just society.

Rawls' theory of justice is based on the concept of "fair equality of opportunity," which is the idea that everyone should have an equal chance to achieve success in life. This concept is important because it acknowledges that individuals are not born with equal advantages, and that these advantages can affect their opportunities for success. By ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities, Rawls argues that society can achieve a more just and equitable distribution of resources.

The Idea of Justice is a groundbreaking work that has had a significant impact on the field of political philosophy. It has been widely debated and discussed, and has influenced many other works on justice and inequality. Rawls' ideas continue to be relevant today, as we continue to grapple with questions of justice and inequality in our society.

Brian Butler
underlying issues should be seen.\textsuperscript{19} But, once again, using Smith's "impartial spectator model" as opposed to the Rawlsian original position model allows a much broader inclusion of perspectives and reasons and therefore avoids the potential of "local parochialism."

Further, not only are the ideas of objectivity and impartiality liberated from the contract model, but so also is the idea of obligation, which Sen instead sees arising directly from capability. Sen references here the example of the Buddha, who found that human moral responsibilities in relationship to animals simply because of our greater power to help (or hurt) them, and not because of any type of reciprocity of interests. Simply put, obligation is based upon "the argument that if someone has the power to make a difference that he or she can see will reduce injustice in the world, then there is a strong and reasoned argument for doing just that."\textsuperscript{20} So even more simply put: if there is capability then there are obligations. This is opposed to the perceived need to generate obligations from a hypothetical meta-contract. What really is argued here, it seems, is that by not accepting the implicit assumption that motivates the social contract tradition, which is that an obligation-free human existence is the default and obligations must be generated through some procedural or social device, then obligations can be thought of as inherent in relationships from the beginning. From this, Sen argues that this ability to infer obligations from ability shows the capabilities approach's superiority to other proposed theories.\textsuperscript{21}

Another important aspect of Sen's theory is his explanation of democracy. Sen redefines democracy as "government by discussion" and "public reasoning" instead of as a set of specific institutions. That democracy is best seen as government by discussion not just public ballot is argued for the following manner. First, Sen claims that "the central issues in a broader understanding of democracy are political participation, dialogue and public interaction."\textsuperscript{22} Once allowed their central place, these factors are seen to be essential in order to properly evaluate whetherballoting, or any other formal or institutional arrangement, is really democratic as opposed to only formally so. This is an important and significant conclusion that accords well with the fact that formally democratic balloting procedures can result in plainly undemocratic results due to contextual conditions. Sen argues that if these claims are accepted, then democracy is not a peculiarly Western phenomenon, or for that matter is democracy such a rare form of government. Instead what is Western, and possibly quite parochial, is the assumption that a particular institutional structure of specifiable type is foundationally necessary in order for a government, or any other social process, to qualify as a democracy. Once again, the tradition of institutional fundamentalism is critiqued in favor of a more direct investigation into the substantive and constitutive factors that are to test how democratic any formal procedure actually is.

This shift in the strategy of conceptualizing democracy brings with it a great extension of democratic possibilities. So, for example, Sen can claim that, "If democracy is seen in terms of public reasoning, then the practice of global democracy need not be put in indefinite cold storage. Voices that can make a difference come from several sources, including global institutions as well as less formal communications and exchanges."\textsuperscript{23}

The above claims both point toward how Sen will undercut the tendencies for theories of justice to look for one-dimensional grand formula solutions to the issue of justice. This is because much of the transcendental institutionalism framework as well as the contractarian qualities of Rawls' system can be attributed to the generic aim for a one-dimensional grand formula solution to the issue of justice. But, according to Sen, such an aim cannot help but ignore the complex and plural issues involved. To support this conclusion, Sen looks to another influential and popular grand formula solution to justice and social organization. Sen's other major example is welfare economics.

Welfare economics, as Sen characterizes it, is the area in economics that specializes in appraising the "goodness" of policies and affairs. Further, welfare economics most often equates a thin conception of happiness with goodness as sole guide for normative choice. In addition, because of a disciplinary agreement that interpersonal comparisons of utility are impossible, market based solutions are preferred where choices are publicly "revealed" thereby avoiding this difficulty (in turn incurring many other theoretical difficulties that Sen has mercilessly exposed in other writings). In response, Sen argues that we should see "welfarism" in economics as a very narrow and "special approach to social ethics."\textsuperscript{24} One attached, importantly, just as much as the Rawlsian system to the hope for a one-dimensional grand formula solution (as well as to the contractarian tradition). Seen in this light, the main question to be asked is not how to work with revealed preferences, but why everything but happiness is treated as insignificant. Happiness, as narrowly defined in welfare economics, seems much too restricted to fulfill the claim to be the only value worthy of note for a theory of justice.

In place of welfare economics and philosophical analysis, Sen offers social choice theory and the capabilities approach. Social choice theory analyzes collective decision making. It attempts to derive or aggregate collective decisions from the articulated opinions or values of the individual members of a community. As an academic discipline it places heavy emphasis upon mathematical modeling and might even be seen as attempting to create a mathematics of choice procedure. This is certainly true of the works of the most famous of social choice theorists, Kenneth Arrow. It is also true of much of Sen's writings in the field. Sen argues that though social choice theory is formalistic, it is still more of practical relevance for justice than "philosophical analysis" because it is concerned with comparative analysis and rankings from "a social point of view."\textsuperscript{25} The social choice framework from "a social point of view" includes a focus on the comparative, recognition of the inescapable plurality of competing principles, the permissibility of partial resolutions, and a diversity of interpretations and inputs. Importantly, the impossibility results as offered by Arrow and Sen, thought to be one of the great achievements of public
From the Flat World Theory of Justice

According to the Flat World Theory of Justice, the concept of justice is grounded in the idea that all individuals should have equal access to resources and opportunities. This theory emphasizes the importance of fair and equitable distribution of resources, recognizing that inequalities in wealth and power can lead to injustices.

The Flat World Theory of Justice proposes that a just society should aim to eliminate social hierarchies and promote equality of opportunity. It suggests that governments and societies should work to reduce disparities in income, education, and health outcomes, ensuring that all members of society have equal access to resources and opportunities.

This theory has implications for policy-making, as it calls for the implementation of measures that promote equality and reduce social disparities. It also highlights the need for a more inclusive approach to economic development, where growth is pursued with the goal of benefiting all members of society, rather than just a select few.

In conclusion, the Flat World Theory of Justice provides a framework for understanding the complex interplay between social structures and individual rights, offering a basis for developing strategies to create more just and equitable societies.
of Rawls

dominated by many of Rawls' followers, as well as much of the legal
literature, the idea of justice as fairness is the notion that the
structure of society should be designed in a way that gives
everyone an equal opportunity to pursue their goals and
prosper. Rawls' idea of justice as fairness is in contrast to
the traditional idea of justice as enforceable rules, where
the law is seen as a set of commands that must be
followed. Instead, Rawls' idea of justice as fairness is
based on the idea that the law should be designed to
maximize the welfare of the least advantaged members of society.

Rawls' theory of justice as fairness is based on the idea that the
law should be designed to maximize the welfare of the least
advantaged members of society. This is achieved through the
notion of a "difference principle," where the law is designed to
maximize the welfare of the least advantaged, even if this
means sacrificing the welfare of more advantaged members of
society. This is in contrast to the traditional idea of justice as
enforceable rules, where the law is seen as a set of commands
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