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## **JOHN RAWLS FIRST PRINCIPLE**

John Rawls first principle guarantees the right of each person to have the most extensive basic liberty compatible with the liberty of others. His first principle is centred on “equal basic liberties” , he highlighted on the fact that every individual citizen has two fundamental capacities and correspondingly two higher- order interest. Rawls refers basic liberties as “civil rights”. The first principle affirms that all citizens should have the familiar basic rights and liberties: liberty of conscience and freedom of association, freedom of speech and liberty of the person, the rights to vote, to hold public office, to be treated in accordance with the rule of law, and so on. The first principle accords these rights and liberties to all citizens equally. Unequal rights would not benefit those who would get a lesser share of the rights, so justice requires equal rights for all, in all normal circumstances. He uses the idea of two powers and the corresponding interests to explain and also give a concrete elaboration on equal basic liberties among citizens. In conclusion John Rawls first principle lays emphasis on the fact that “Each person has an equal right to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic liberties which is compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for all.”

## **THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: DISTRIBUTIVE ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

The second principle has to do with two aspects which are :

- Fair equality of opportunity
- The distribution of wealth and income

For the first aspect which is fair equality of opportunity, requires that citizens with the same talents and willingness should be given the same economic opportunities regardless of there social class. Basically what John Rawls is talking about in the first aspect is that each citizen should be treated the same way regardless of whether they were born rich or poor. He also gave an example of natural endowments being one of the major sources of economic inequality in the society. The second aspect which is the distribution of wealth and income basically talks about the unequal distribution

of wealth and income in the society which is controlled by a certain group of people in the society. In conclusion John Rawls second principle lays emphasis on social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions. First, they must be attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second, they must be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society”.

## **THE ORIGINAL POSITION**

The original position is a central feature of John Rawls’s social contract account of justice.

John Rawls explains the original position as an arena for deliberation and decision about principles of justice. He also lays emphasis on the two main roles for the original position which are:

- To serve as a screening device for the candidate principle.
- Ranking of the competing candidate principles that remain eligible after screening.

One of the most striking feature of the original position is “the veil of ignorance”

In conclusion the original position is a fair situation in which each citizen is represented as only a free and equal citizen: each representative wants only what free and equal citizens want, and each tries to agree to principles for the basic structure while situated fairly with respect to the other representatives.

## **SUMMARY OF JOHN RAWLS IDEA OF JUSTICE**

Rawls theory of justice revolves around the adaptation of two fundamental principles of justice which would, in turn, guarantee a just and morally acceptable society. The first principle guarantees the right of each person to have the most extensive basic liberty compatible with the liberty of others. The second principle states that social and economic positions are to be a) to everyone’s advantage and b) open to all. He also introduces a theoretical “veil of ignorance” in

which all “parties” in the social game would be placed in a situation which is called the “original position”.



