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**ASSIGNMENT**

**JOHN RAWLS IN**

**1. JOHN RAWLS FIRST PRINCIPLE**

**2. THE SECOND PRINCIPLE: DISTRIBUTIVE, ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

**3. THE ORIGINAL POSITION**

**4. JOHN RAWLS IDEA OF JUSTICE**

**ANSWER**

**BRIEF BACKGROUND OF JOHN RAWLS**

JOHN BORDLEY RAWLS was born on (February 21, 1921-november24, 2002) he was an American moral and political philosopher in the liberal tradition .RAWLS received both the shock prize for logic and philosophy and the national humanities medal in 1999, the latter presented by president bill Clinton, in recognition of how RAWLS work helped a whole generation of learned Americans revive their faith in democracy itself.

**JOHN RAWL’S FIRST PRINCIPLE: EQUAL BASIC LIBERTIES**

JOHN RAWLS first principle is to embodied in the political constitution. Rawls intension in his Theory of Justiceisto provide a convincing account of basic rights and liberties, and of their priority although he did not successfully achieve this objective Until ten or so years later, where he draw on Rawls's 1980 Dewey Lectures and his 1982 Tanner Lecture as providing the best account of, and arguments for, his First principle of justice, which is the principle of equal basic liberties. Rawls claims in his 3 lecture, that for every individual citizen there are two fundamental Capacities or powers and, correspondingly, two 'higher-order interests' in the realization of those capacities. Thus, each person has, over that person's entire life, (i) an interest in being Able to formulate and live according to some particular conception of the good and (ii) an interest in exercising one's 'sense of justice' and being motivated by it, providing others do so

as well. He explain this second point that each person has, over that person's entire life,

An interest in living cooperatively with fellow citizens, on terms of mutual respect and reciprocal

Benefit under a unified and stable scheme of basic political and economic institutions Organized by a shared set of principles of justice which each citizen can affirm.

The notion of the two powers of the citizen is understood to include the idea that in a democratic society citizens are both equal and free. Here each person is conceived as having the two powers at a sufficient level to be able to be a fully contributing member of society over that Person’s entire adult life (or, at least, the working years). In having these powers at some such

Level, all the citizens are on the same footing. This, then, is the grounding idea behind Rawls's

Notion that the citizens are equal: they are equal in having reached what might be called this

Same

Rawls uses the idea of the two powers and the corresponding interests of the citizen to

Ground his elaboration of the concrete basic liberties that each citizen is to have equally. He

Identifies which 'liberties'-which ways of acting or of not being injured-should be among

The basic constitutional rights, or among the most weighty such rights, by considering what he Calls two fundamental cases'.

**Conclusion**

RAWLS first principle simply confirms and identify widespread conviction about the importance of equal basic right and liberties .the further features make this principle distinctive .first is its priority: the basic right and liberties must not be traded off against other social goods.

**JOHN RAWLS SECOND PRINCIPLE: DISTRIBUTIVE ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

Unlike the case with his first principle, Rawls thought that the account and formulation of his

Secondprinciple of justice, as found in *A Theory* of Justice(1971), was substantially, Rawls's account begins with the fact that people have different natural endowments and are born into and grow up in different social circumstances. No one can be said to be responsible for these factors in their *own* case. Nonetheless, factors such as natural endowment and initial Social circumstance are not negligible; they powerfully affect a person's life prospects, advantageously for some and disadvantageously for others. Indeed, they may be the main sources of Inequality between people.

In the this principle Rawls describes four interpretations (Natural Aristocracy, Natural Liberty, Liberal Equality, and Democratic Equality) . Rawls mainly focuses on the merits of Natural Liberty, Liberal Equality, and Democratic Equality. The interpretations are formulated from the principle where “social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone’s advantage and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all”. The position behind “to everyone’s advantage” is dependent on whether an interpretation follows the principle of efficiency or the difference principle. The position behind “positions and offices open to all” is dependent on whether the interpretations uses career open to talents or fair opportunity.

Under a system of Natural Liberty, “to everyone’s advantage” is defined to require satisfaction of the principle of efficiency, while “positions open to all” is defined to require that careers are open to talents (57). Natural endowments, such as intelligence, are to be distributed in a manner where “a configuration is efficient whenever it is impossible to change it so as to make some persons (at least one) better off without at the same time making other persons (at least one) worse off” (58). The method described fulfills the principle of efficiency in the interpretation by adapting the Pareto principle. As a result, the principle of efficiency takes natural endowments as given. Offices and positions under the interpretation aim to prevent overt discrimination on factors such as race. The standard for offices and positions under Natural Liberty represents careers open to talents.

## Conclusion

Rawls’s Second Principle of Justice intends to eliminate the influence of social endowments in determining one’s life chances. Rawls doesn’t believe that the distribution of natural endowments is unjust. Instead, the injustice occurs only if life’s chances are determined by the natural endowments itself. The significance of Rawls’s work is that it offers a method or procedure to attain a just distribution of goods in society that rivals methods from other major fields such as Utilitarianism. A Theory of Justice provides an in-depth account of how two principles of justice, based on the concepts of liberty and equality, can shape the underpinnings of society.

**THE ORIGINAL POSITION**

One feature that is often emphasized-and that Rawls continued to include even in his later writings-is that the 'parties' to the contract are placed (in what he calls the 'original position') behind a thick veil of ignorance. Here they are instructed in their subsequent reasoning to ignore their own *particular* traits (traits that distinguish them from most or, at least, many other people), to be unaware of (or to ignore) their actual place in society, to be unaware of their society's place in history or in institutional evolution, and so on. The point of the metaphor of the veil is to indicate that the parties should remove sources of bias and irrelevancy from their deliberations.

Other features are important as well. The parties understand that they are deciding about

Principles of justice (principles for distributing certain primary goods-such goods as liberties,

Opportunities, income, and wealth-to individuals) and that they will have to live, for

Their entire lives, under the principles they have selected. Accordingly, they would want the

Principles selected to be clear and intelligible to all, with nothing hidden from view and everything up front and accounted for. (This Rawls calls the 'publicity requirement'.) Such principles, when looked at from a variety of perspectives, ought to be acceptable to persons in *each* of those perspectives-this Rawls calls the 'unanimity requirement'. (Rawls's main discussion

Of the original position is found in *A* Theory *of Justice,* chapter 3, and a very helpful summary

Of its main features is found in.

In simplest terms the original position is an arena for deliberation and decision about principles

Of justice; its various features are meant to frame and constrain the debate about such Principles. 'The idea of the original position is to set up a fair procedure so that any principles

Agreed to will be just.

Rawls envisions two main roles for the original position. In its first role the original position

Is to serve as a screening device for the candidate principles, that is, principles taken from

a short list of main, historically available theories of justice-such as Plato's republic, various Versions of utilitarianism, and so on. Here the features of the original position serve as a checklist against which the candidate principles are to be measured and to be assessed.

Let me illustrate the force of this first role (screening) with an example, admittedly a rather Extreme one. An avowedly racist principle would probably not pass through the filter afforded by the features of the original position. Thus, if people contemplated living in a multiracial

Society under that principle, it is clear that some of them would be seriously disadvantaged,

Indeed deeply harmed, by its operation. Everyone who took on, by hypothesis, the role of

These injured parties would have to veto the racist principle; thus, it could not meet the Unanimity requirement. Since anyone (given the veil of ignorance) could be in such a role, the

Racist principle would be decisively ruled out.

**Conclusion**

In the original position, the parties select principles that will determine the basic structure of the society they will live in. This choice is made from behind a veil of ignorance, which would deprive participants of information about their particular characteristics: their ethnicity, social status, gender and, crucially, Conception of the Good (an individual's idea of how to lead a good life). This forces participants to select principles impartially and rationally.

**JOHN RAWLS IDEA OF JUSTICE**

They are principles that free and rational persons concerned to further their own interest would accept in an initial position of equality as defining the fundamental terms of their association

He argues that the concepts of freedom and equality are not mutually exclusive.

Rawls’ theory of justice consists of “certain distributive principles for the basic structure of society”. In the light of this analysis John Rawls defines justice in the following words. “The concept of justice I take to be defined by the role of its principles in assuming rights and duties in defining the appropriate division of social advantages. A conception of justice is an interpretation of this role”. Justice is, thus, an interpretation of principles that are suggested for the distribution of rights and duties and at the same time division of social advantages among all the members of body politic.

### Justice as Fairness:

The main theme of Rawls’ theory of justice is it is interpreted as fairness. The dictionary meaning of fairness is appropriateness or just: In Rawls’ conception that arrangement can be called just or appropriate which does not create any scope of partiality or inappropriate. The principles for the distribution of rights, duties and advantages will be applied in such manner as will give no controversy.

**Rawls explains the term fairness in the following way:**

He explains this principle to account for all requirements that are obligations as distinct from natural duties. This principle holds that a person is required to do his part as defined by the rules of an institution when two conditions are met, first the institution is just (or fair) that is it satisfies the two principles of justice and second, one has voluntarily accepted the benefits of the arrangement”.

According to John Rawls fairness denotes obligations. Obligation means an act which a person morally or legally is bound to do. Obligations are different from natural duties. When a person is legally or morally bound to do an act or perform a duty his liberty will be restricted. Fairness also implies that the members of the society are engaged in advantageous cooperative venture. Here two things are important. Individuals cooperate with each other. This co­operation places all the individuals participating in the act creates an atmosphere of mutual advantages for them all. This means that cooperation will create no disadvantage to anybody .Rawls further says that the institutions must be fair or just. They must keep themselves above parochial interests. In many societies there are such institutions which have been created to serve group’s interests and such institutions cannot serve the interests of justice General public will accept the arrangements of the institutions ungrudgingly. They will have no reservations or objections. While discussing the nature of obligation one point is required to be mentioned here. Obligations give rise to the performance of duties which are not moral duties. The institutional or constitutional obligations impose duties upon individuals.

The constitutional or institutional obligations induce a man to perform some duties which ensure the realization of justice. The performance of institutional duties enables an individual to manage a democratic society and furtherance of general welfare. We, therefore, conclude that the obligations with a strong emphasis on its nature, institutional arrangement and to actively cooperate with the duties made by the institution or any other official declaration are included into the fairness principle.

**KEY IDEAS JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS**

**REFERENCE: DAVID BOUCHER, PAUL KELLY POLITICAL THINKER FROM SOCRATES TO THE PRESENT** OXFORD **UNIVERSITY PRESS U S A (2003)**