

There exists a frequently unhelpful and rigidly formulated theoretical dichotomy in the intergenerational literature, which can confine our intellectual thinking and restrict the efficacy of our policy: the separation of intra- and intergenerational justice. Intergenerational justice deals with justice between the generations. Intragenerational justice focuses on lines of cleavage between contemporaries, such as economic disparities between states in the international system.

On the one hand, the maxim that each generation has the right to act in a self-determining way has led to a political culture in which present generations pursue short-sighted and generationally specific objectives. By the same token, as Hans Jonas has argued, mankind's realisation that his ability to transform nature for his own purposes may lead to irreversible environmental damage has led to the call for a new ethics for future generations. It is important to emphasise the pertinence this separation has outside the academic world: political decisions are often informed by only one type of justice, ignoring the consequences for other types of justices. On the other hand, proponents of the sustainability concept frequently take all types of justice into account and, by often implicitly assuming that they are complementary, ignore possible trade-offs. Hence one can find a lack of intellectual endeavour focused on bridging the theoretical gap between the more traditional demands of social and international justice and intergenerational justice with real implications for policy.

We therefore present readers with contributions that confront the pressing theoretical challenge of combining intra- and intergenerational justice as well as papers that seek to investigate the interdependencies in case-specific contexts.

In their paper, Prof. Stefan Baumgärtner et al. delimit the extent to which economics can enhance our understanding of the interdependencies between the two justices in question. They develop an argument that economics should be brought to bear on the interdependency question by delimiting the so-called "opportunity-set" of politics: the set of outcomes which are possible for

policy-makers in a given context. In an earlier paper, Baumgärtner et al. developed three hypotheses that can be made with regard to the relationship between intra- and intergenerational justice: 1) independency: there is no discernible link between the achievement of intra- and intergenerational justice; 2) facilitation: the achievement of intra- will improve our chances of achieving intergenerational justice; and 3) rivalry: the exigencies of intergenerational justice clash with those of intragenerational justice – by achieving one the other becomes more elusive.

These hypotheses were used as a basis for some of the following papers, including that of Baumgärtner et al. themselves, who explore the distinction.

In his ambitious paper, Prof. Christoph Lumer evolves a prioritarian criterion for the realisation of universal ethics. Reasoning from philosophical justification to implications for policy, his contribution provides the intellectual basis for an appraisal of our current international and intergenerational political and economic projects. The paper is both spatially and temporally global in scope: Prof. Lumer demonstrates how a just balance could be struck between currently-living generations in all countries at different stages of development and future people. Intriguingly, Lumer concludes that, in practice, conflicts between international and intergenerational justice are almost non-existent.

In a more case-specific paper, Dr. Bruce E. Auerbach and Michelle Reinhart challenge the controversial textualist approach to interpreting the US constitution, as practised by Justice Antonin Scalia. Contra Scalia's belief that the role of the Supreme Court should be to interpret the constitution according to its original meaning, the authors point out that Scalia's approach is not only inconsistent with the language of the constitution and the intent of the framers, but intergenerationally unjust. Although dealing with the US context, the implications of the analysis are of relevance to other countries that have democratic constitutions and therefore of great interest to national debates, especially in countries with a US-style codified constitution.

Juliana Bidadanure's article is constructively critical of the denial of the national guaranteed minimum income support (RSA) to the younger generation in France. She sets out the deontological and consequentialist arguments implicitly and explicitly put forward by the French government for denying RSA. Her article points to the fact that intragenerational justice can be best achieved through the promotion of "real autonomy" for young French citizens. She concludes that the fulfilment of intragenerational justice facilitates the attainment of intergenerational justice. Ms. Bidadanure warns against extrapolating too much from her results, but her research findings could also have relevance for other countries which are cutting social spending in a period of austerity.

In addition to the peer-reviewed articles, this edition contains an Interview with Prof. Dieter Birnbacher as well as book reviews of Ed Howker and Shiv Malik's *Jilted Generation*, Eric Posner and David Weisbach's *Climate Change Justice*, Janna Thompson's *Intergenerational Justice*, and *Ageing Populations in Post-industrial Democracies*, edited by Pieter Vanhuyse and Achim Goerres.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all reviewers who made invaluable recommendations on articles appearing in this issue. We hope it will serve as a step towards bridging the intellectual divide between intra- and intergenerational justice in the realm of theory, and be helpful for decision-making in the non-ideal world of politics.

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