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John Agnew, Virginie Mamadouh, Anna J. Secor, and Joanne Sharp

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Chapter 11

Justice

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Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Notions of rightness, fairness and justice are so firmly entrenched in our vocabularies, that we seem powerless to make any political decision without appealing to them. (Harvey 1996: 332)

Justice is an ideal, a contested term, and a fluid and open concept. Justice invokes notions of fairness, of equity, and of doing the "right" thing. Justice also evokes principles by which the benefits and burdens of society should be distributed among people. Social justice crusaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi are well known for their tireless efforts to bring justice to oppressed groups in their respective countries. Both also have global appeal to social justice advocates across the world. Numerous disciplines have approached theorizing and discussing justice, ranging from philosophical debates to activist-oriented work. Justice is an interdisciplinary topic and scholars from across the spectrum have contributed to debating and enriching it ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically in recent years. The goals and definitions of equality and a just life have thus been critically debated across academic disciplines (Kymlicka 1990). While justice is often associated with the criminal justice system, most social sciences tend to focus on social justice.

Generally viewed as a universalized notion that is supposed to exist above the fray, justice is expected to be a guiding principle for a just social order and a humane society. However, the word is more a signifier than an absolute concept. Justice risks being an all-encompassing term for progressive politics without clear content or meaning. As a normative ideal, justice is not placeless or timeless, but is rather produced through social processes, historical legacies, and political overtures. Distributive justice is often invoked to underscore the spatial, political, and social distribution of resources, rights, and opportunities. Processes that produce unfairness, inequities, and injustices are often identified and deconstructed in an attempt to produce more meaningful understandings of justice that are contextual and realizable. Human sameness in needs and rights is seen as central to overcoming the unequal, arbitrary distribution of

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the earth's resources as well as socially constructed enactments of difference that create inequities (Smith 2000). Social and political imaginaries of a universalized ideal of justice thus can drive research and the framing of analysis as well as expose contradictions in different contexts. Issues of power, democracy, political subjectivity, citizenship, role of the state and other institutions, and social struggles are all thus opened up for further critique.

This chapter will engage with the various notions and theorizations of justice across disciplines and with how geographers have contributed to existing debates and can continue to do so. After an overview of the scope and definitional challenges of the notion of social justice, the ways in which rights and democracy are linked to justice are presented. Historical legacies of colonialism and current politics of international development and geopolitics are explored to globalize, spatialize, and temporalize justice. Geography's relevance and contributions to justice are further investigated through the debates around space, place, scale, neoliberalism, and capitalism, whereby the tensions between universalities and particularities become evident. Environmental justice and climate justice are then examined as key advances that geographers have made. Similarly, gender justice and race justice are explored, through which feminist and critical scholars have been paving the way to understanding justice in more nuanced and intersectional ways. The chapter concludes with possible avenues of further engagement by geographers in theory and practice.

Scope and definitional challenges

John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (1971) is generally considered to be the foundational text on liberal notions of justice. Rawls argued that rational people would have a common understanding of a "sense of justice," even if it is difficult to define precisely how just institutions and systems are configured. He posited that justice basically means fairness in a society, whereby rules and regulations are agreed on to enact fair treatment and redress injustices in that society. Principles that guide such a social contract are based on criteria that Rawls identified as important for a just society, such as the "original position," where a distanced view of justice is used to define parameters such that, since no one knows how they individually will benefit from the rules (i.e., as they are operating under a "veil of ignorance"), people are more inclined to set a system in place that maximizes fairness and equality. The notion of equal rights to a system of liberties is central to Rawls's idea of justice as fairness. This is supposed to lead to the greatest benefits to the most disadvantaged. Often, liberal discourses of justice tend to focus on the distribution of income and class inequalities within a society. However, what is to be distributed and how it should be done, and whether it should be viewed individually or not, remain contentious in liberal notions of justice.

The emphasis on distribution of income and equality as espoused by liberal discourses of justice has been demonstrated to be inadequate by scholars who focus on a broader range of issues that encompass justice, as well as a more comprehensive set of social differences (e.g., class, gender, race, sexuality, environment). Such scholars generally argue that simple redistribution is insufficient to address justice. Marxist scholars point to structural inequities created by the class system, whereby class is seen to be a source of injustice in society (Peffer 1990; Smith 1994). Oppression is not viewed as merely a problem of redistribution but rather as a symptom of capitalistic logic and a market economy that exploits labor. In contrast, Iris Marion Young (1990) advances a conceptualization of justice as plural and respecting of difference and multiplicity, contrasting with Rawls's ideas of justice that focus more on redistribution. She places a greater emphasis on social structures, institutions, and relations that systemically create and perpetuate injustices, and social justice is theorized and understood more pragmatically and less ideationally. Young stressed the importance of deconstructing and heeding complex issues around exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. More recently, she focused further on responsibility and social processes that lead to collective action and shared responsibility to address social justice beyond a politics of difference (Young 2011). Understanding processes of marginalization becomes important for excavating the causes of injustice along a range of intersecting social positions (e.g., children, the elderly, disabled, racial groups). Similarly to Young, Nancy Fraser (1997) has also argued that a focus on the misdistribution of benefits and burdens needs to be viewed simultaneously with "recognition" (i.e., redressing the imposition of the norms of dominant groups on others. By engaging with insights from a range of philosophical debates, such articulations of justice open up the possibility of exploring the meanings and practices of in/justice more broadly and in more nuanced ways.

Justice is often understood as equal status or a recognition of equality, so that different groups can expect the same opportunities and treatment as any other group. A sense of justice or feeling of justice is a prevalent way to describe the goals of achieving solidarity and equality around a common humanity (Barnett 2010). It would be a morally appropriate action to treat groups in the right or ethical way. Differential treatment can thus raise calls for addressing injustice, both under the law and in society (e.g., rights to same-sex marriage). However, since notions of what is "right" or "ethical" are often derived from socially held norms (e.g., religious belief) and not merely an abstract notion of justice, such calls often conflict with different notions of morality and ethics, which are also then claimed to disallow equal status. Justice as a process can thus become conflictual and contradictory. Scholars have further posited that injustice may be necessary for justice to be imagined and acted on (Nagel 2005).

Since there is no real metric for justice, it is more comprehensible in its negation; that is, then we are able to identify and measure injustice more readily and widely (e.g., systemic ostracization of groups of people, violation of rights of individuals, structural violence that deprives some groups based on race; Barnett 2010). The multitudinous ways in which justice could be achieved in each instance is far more difficult to agree on, let alone enact. While a reduction in overall cases of injustice or inequality can be viewed as an accomplishment, there will always be complexities and challenges to any articulation of having achieved social justice, as other axes of injustice may exist simultaneously. The complexities contained in any definition of justice thus require critical theoretical analysis as well as grounded empirical work (Hay 1995).

Fears of absolutism or authoritarianism make it nearly impossible to have one concretized definition of justice. Justice must always be held in a constant state of flux, with a general embeddedness in ideals and desires of fairness and rightness. An example of a universalized sense of social processes of justice is enshrined in the United Nations (UN) charter on human rights. However, any notion of justice must be understood and enacted within particular contexts where the universal signifiers come to bear meaning. Even then such meanings of justice may be partial, contested, and heterogeneous. The broader political economy, historical legacies, cultural practices, and social processes are all imbricated in formulating any understanding of justice, especially social justice. The roles of place and scale are equally important, especially for geographers, as justice operates across places and scales in different ways and can bear different meanings and outcomes (Harvey 1996; Waterstone 2010).

Harvey (1996: 330) defines justice as:

> a socially constituted set of beliefs, discourses, and institutionalizations expressive of social relations and contested configurations of power that have everything to do with regulating and ordering material social practices within places for a time. Once constituted, the trace of a particular discursive conception of justice across all moments of the social process becomes an objective fact that embraces everyone within its compass. Once institutionalized, a system of justice becomes a "permanence" with which all facts of the social process have to contend.

Since justice must thus be seen to be contextual and situated, rather than only universal and abstract, tension between particularities and universalism creates challenges for the way in which justice as a concept is defined, interpreted, and contested (Waterstone 2010). Justice thus often remains a vague ideal that should shape political and social society, but is difficult to articulate in specifics outside of its context and relational meaning to other discourses (e.g., rights). The fluidity and malleability of this esoteric term can propel political mobilization and action as much as it can confound them. While universal notions of justice can drive goals of seeking fairness and equality, they can also be challenged by multiple interpretations and practices of what constitutes such normative goals in each location and society. Given a general lack of what could count as a universal metric for measuring justice, it becomes imperative to focus on the processes and structures that create injustice and to configure what could be considered to redress such situations.

The dialectical relationship between universality and particularity is mediated through institutions and practices. Harvey (2000: 242) argues that

> the notion of justice ... acquires universality through a process of abstraction from particular instances and circumstances, but becomes particular again as it is actualized in the real world through social practices.

Struggles for social justice in a range of places can inform broader notions of justice. Justice is very much a social process and thus this social and context contingency necessitates that the meanings and practices of justice anywhere must be open and flexible (Waterstone 2010). Given this, cultural differences and political variances must be accounted for without falling into relativism, which can be counter-productive. The uneven geographies of injustice must be seen not only in relation to universal norms but also within its socio-historical geography, and this tension – the balancing act between universals and particulars – remains a challenge in geography. Smith (2000: 1157) thus argues:

> if the definition is grounded in a particular culture, or "thick" conception of the good, this undermines its universality and the possibility of considering justice in distribution at a broad, even global, scale.

While the core content of justice is simultaneously contextual and controversial, a common theme has emerged in geographical debates about justice. The capitalist system's inherent production of uneven geographies of development and equity has become a topic of exploration and analysis since Harvey's groundbreaking work in *Social Justice and the City* (1973). An understanding of the scalar and spatial processes that produce and reproduce injustices and difference through the logic of capital has influenced geographers to advance conceptualizations on a range of issues, from the urban sphere to broader political geographies. Smith's

seminal work *Geography and Social Justice* (1994) further elaborated on how Marxian geography can inform different theories of justice. Marxian notions of class inequality, in arguing for justice as a way to address issues of poverty and discrimination, have been profound in geography. However, as further theoretical work emerged on the various axes of difference across scales and spaces (e.g., critiques of sexism, racism, heteronormativity, ableism), the field of inquiry expanded to account for and accommodate a range of philosophical positionings and empirical analyses (as detailed later in this chapter).

Rights and democracy

Advances in legal and political rights are often seen to be foundational to social justice, but they do not necessarily lead to more progress toward just societies. Individual rights may enable certain claims, but can exist in tension with collective rights and claims. Social justice may be thwarted by competing claims and goals. Moreover, rights discourses can be instrumentalist, utilitarian, technocratic, and limiting (Arendt 1994). They can also be coopted into neoliberal discourses and politics. The constraints of rights discourses are important to heed, while at the same time exploring their liberating opportunities. Rights discourses can enable legal instruments to be used to protect the vulnerable and pursue social justice. Furthermore, rights can be morally claimed, and are not necessarily enforceable or legal (Chatterjee 2004). The following insight captures this conundrum (Smith 2000: 1154):

> If certain things are needed to live a human life, it might be argued that all people everywhere should have them by right. If social justice is to prevail, the moral imperative often associated with rights can give strength to particular entitlements. However, the notion of rights raises difficult issues, with respect to what they are, how they should be prioritised, who bears them (and where), and who have the consequent obligations to ensure that the rights are fulfilled.

Another aspect of rights in justice debates is the role of actors with various agendas. The role of the state in its policies and approaches is critical in enabling or disabling rights, but so are the roles of private corporations, civil society, and international agencies. When neoliberal policies allow accumulation by dispossession, social justice narratives can be used to challenge such processes through exposure of the denial of basic rights. Given that poverty and violence have increased globally with a concomitant growth in extreme wealth and power, such contradictions often give rise to greater calls for social justice. Such pleas open possibilities for the repudiation or examination of political control and disenfranchisement, as well as economic policies that foster injustices that are social, economic, political, and ecological. Thus, while a desire to focus on rights and democracy may lead to a broad-based consensus, it does not necessarily produce social justice (see also Merrett 2004).

International development and global politics

Thinking about justice internationally raises a host of interrelated concerns. Justice is desired by almost all global institutions and nation-states, even if these very entities are often implicated historically and spatially in various forms of injustice. Frequently, addressing justice via alleviating poverty is seen as a critical component of achieving development goals in the global South. However, the specifics are always bound to be contentious, as various stakeholders will vie to define what the best form of development is, how to achieve it, how to

measure it, and how to ensure its sustainability. While a vast percentage of humanity lives in dire conditions and faces chronic starvation and political strife, the global consensus on the need to pull people out of suffering and thereby achieve social justice remains trapped in contradictory actions and policies. The rise of poverty and homelessness in the global North and the increasing impoverishment and marginalization of people in the global South are subject to similar but different sets of political and economic factors that make achieving social justice a complex and controversial task, which is not only context based but also subject to a range of political posturing and policy-making internationally (Escobar 1995). Given the political implications of economic globalization, and uneven geographies of distribution of gain and loss, increasingly rapid globalization can exacerbate social inequality and injustice across the globe through a combination of the policies and practices of a range of actors and institutions (Fraser 2008; Kerner 2010). Instances of corporate control, labor rights violations, unfair trade practices, and state-sanctioned violence abound in the news and in academic literature, highlighting the infractions of notions of justice through processes of economic globalization. Demands for justice, reparation, and due process are becoming increasingly common. Similarly, historical injustices are often invoked to highlight current social conditions (e.g., the African slave trade and its legacy in racial discrimination and structural violence in the contemporary Americas and Europe). Colonial legacies of persecution, expropriation, genocide, and war continue to affect postcolonial societies to this day.

One of the most important arenas of international justice is perhaps connected to the relations of power between nation-states and the international development industry (Pogge 2008). Current postcolonial nation-states that are "developing nations," historically colonies of European imperial control, are now subject to international development policies and aid politics. International institutions such as the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization, which were established in the post–Second World War era, are enormously powerful players in global aid, trade, and the policies of developing nations. While development assistance can be seen as morally imperative and ethically correct to make reparations for colonial exploitation, existing practices of international development have been the subject of much debate (Corbridge 1998). The goal of achieving social justice through loans and interventions may seem laudable, but such control is often critiqued as unfair and even deemed to be neocolonial. More importantly, threats to territorial control and the sovereignty of the nation-state are brought to the fore, thereby raising concerns about whether international interventions in the name of development can undermine international social justice or fracture it in unknown ways. While some scholars have argued for a focus on enhanced capabilities and rights to ensure socially just development processes, these remain controversial (Sen 1999; Nussbaum 2003).

To political geographers and related scholars, global injustices also occur through discourses of terrorism, whereby some countries/peoples are marked as threats to specific interests and emergent problematic discourses of global democracy and peace, and by which military intervention is deemed to be justified (Flint & Radil 2009). Post–9/11, the United States and its allies have carried out extensive assaults and warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the War on Terror. Similarly, a rise in Islamophobia globally has resulted in discrimination, violence, and death among Muslims who are tainted as "Other" and thereby deemed to be a threat (Esposito & Kalin 2011). Hegemonic constructions of who is worthy or valid or who counts in global politics thus place many communities and individuals in perpetual harm through the rhetoric and tactics of "liberation" or "democracy" on the part of countries and entities that claim political and moral superiority. However, the broader linkages

to colonialism and Cold War geopolitics are often erased in such discourses, thereby posing grave injustices to the lives and voices of people as violence is enacted materially and discursively. As such, these historical conjunctures must be seen against a broader canvas of Orientalism and colonial anxiety (Said 1978; Chatterjee 2004). Ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and parts of Africa are closely linked to these concerns. Injustices of never-ending wars, warfare, and occupation thus continue to confound international deliberations about fairer adjudications and resolutions.

Time, space, scale

Other philosophies of justice that are relevant for geographers and social theorists investigate and explore not only institutions and social structures, but also the processes of achieving justice over time and space. Amartya Sen (2009) argues that justice has to be achieved incrementally, that it is not absolute or dichotomous (i.e., there is never a binary whereby there is the full presence or full absence of justice). Rather, he points out that the gradual decrease of injustice is significant to achieving social justice over time, and that a comparative approach is important. For geographers, this insistence on time may seem to overlook the importance of space (discussed later in this section), but the salience of the assertion that justice "takes time" cannot be overlooked, especially given ever-increasing complex political-economic conditions. Barnett (2010) argues that such a notion of justice also unties it from certain normative containments of achieving a perfect theory of justice (see also Nussbaum 2006). In a similar vein, temporal aspects of justice are captured in concerns about intergenerational equity and justice across generations (Meyer 2004).

For geographers, spatial justice has recently emerged as a body of scholarship that focuses on links between social justice and space. Geographers have focused on the spatiality or spatial formation of various injustices. The spatiality of injustices and justice movements is often the key focus of such research and conceptualizations (Soja 2010). Bringing a spatial perspective to understanding and conceptualizing social justice and political life is central to this, as are recent counter-mapping and participatory projects that seek to highlight spatial injustices. Spatial justice is often linked to broad bodies of scholarship on the right to the city as well as radical justice movements in particular places (e.g., Harvey 1973; Dikec 2001; Marcuse et al. 2009; Fincher & Iveson 2012). The focus of spatial justice is related to debates around territorial justice and geographies of injustice, but it focuses more on the importance of the production of space and spatiality in theorizing justice, whereby political objectives are not merely to address spatial fixes for injustices but to think about social justice differently vis-à-vis conflict, difference, and politics. Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2010) argues that spatial justice should not be seen as "add space and stir" in relation to distributive justice, but rather as a more radically informed notion of emplacement and justice. Geographers have thus also studied the relationship between law and space in the spatiality of social justice (e.g., Blomley, Delaney, & Ford 2001). It has been stressed that legal and juridical justice is different from social justice, and that procedural justice is therefore not the same as the various notions of social justice. While the two are related, it becomes imperative to engage with and understand the ways in which social justice is imbricated with the complexities of social systems across scales and sites. While advances may be made in official political and legal rights, there may not be a commensurate enhancement of social justice across all places.

More recently, postcolonial and feminist scholars have broadened the field of analysis to address issues of identity politics, culture, and various forms of difference (e.g., Young 2011;

Fraser 2001). Greater intersectional understandings of oppression and injustice are brought into the discussion on justice, rather than territorially bound or class-based analyses (both of which are dominant and important modes of analysis in political geography, but can also thwart more nuanced comprehensive analysis). Social justice is more broadly debated now and more specifically considered in issues related to gender, race, sexuality, and environment. Ideologically divergent groups have rallied around the vague concept of justice in order to rescue it from relativism by grounding it in a non-oppressive and inclusive dialogue. This is most developed in the fields of environmental justice and gender justice, which are discussed in turn in the following.

Environmental justice and ethics

Environmental justice has emerged as a way to bring nature and society under the rubric of social justice. The distribution of environmental harm has historically been skewed, such that poor and minority communities have been disproportionately exposed to toxic dumps and environmental pollution (Cutter 1995, 2006). Tactics such as NIMBY (not in my backyard), which enabled communities with class and race privilege (i.e., wealthy white neighborhoods) to shift pollution on to more marginalized groups (by class and race), led to a systematic process of discrimination across the United States and Canada. Such geographical and social inequities gave rise to environmental justice as a movement and as a conceptual framework to assess and understand environmental inequities and the spatiality of harm (Pulido 2000). The production of vulnerability, exacerbation of health impacts, and inequities of decision-making processes that unevenly distribute harm are central concerns for environmental justice advocates (Gleeson 1996; Holifield, Porter, & Walker 2010). Scholars have advanced a multiplicity of notions of environmental justice and environmental racism, from scalar politics to urbanization and the splintering of environmental harm (e.g., Low & Gleeson 1998; Swyngedouw & Heynen 2003; Forsyth 2008; Schroeder et al. 2008). Increasing attention is now being given to environmental justice at a global scale and to the differences connecting scales of analysis and the issues at stake, as well as to impacts for future generations (e.g., Clark 2010).

Linked to, but separate from, the discussion above is the increasing attention being paid to an environmental ethic that heeds the needs of non-human others (Whatmore 2002). The impacts of human actions on species and ecosystems are becoming important to scholars and policy-makers concerned with sustainability. Declining biodiversity and species loss raise important questions of social justice, in that the uneven distribution of the globe's resources means that different places face different impacts. For instance, the demand for monocultures of cash crops can displace people from agricultural communities and reduce the growth of food crops, thereby increasing food insecurity and poverty in the area. This form of affecting "distant others" is increasingly being considered with "others" that are animals and plants in accounting for interspecies justice (Low & Gleeson 1998). Calls for engaging in a discourse of justice invoke the need to recognize and address such spatial destruction of habitats (of humans and non-humans), as well as to link these to the broader injustices of rapacious capitalism. Similarly, given the unequal allocation of important natural resources, the increasing neoliberalization of the governance of such critical nature is a growing concern and area of study for geographers. While some places have different endowments of different critical resources (oil, forests, water bodies), the entire globe is increasingly governed through a capitalist logic that seeks to capture and commoditize resources for global consumption. The privatization and capture of water constitute perhaps the most glaring injustice that exists, as

the poor are pushed out of the market when water becomes a commodity for market purchase linked to private gain. Given water's non-substitutable and life-giving nature, growing conflicts have arisen as a result of injustices resulting from its being transformed from a public good to a private commodity (Bakker 2010). As a result, to reverse such trends to inequity, a global call for the right to water emerged, articulating that water should be held in the commons as it is necessary for survival. Global water justice movements have been demanding more just and equitable governance of this necessary resource (Sultana & Loftus 2012).

Related to such global efforts, climate justice is a recent development, and is related to environmental justice more broadly. Whereas environmental justice discourses and activism focus on environmental racism and injustices in the ways in which pollution and ecological degradation affect communities of color and other disenfranchised groups, emergent climate justice discourses and activism highlight environmental harm across the globe and the unevenness of the benefits and burdens of climate change. Countries of the global South (or developing nations) have pointed out the historical responsibility in regard to greenhouse gas emissions of countries of the global North (or developed nations) stemming from industrialization and economic growth, whereas the deleterious impacts of climate change are largely experienced in the countries of the global South. Climate justice thus draws attention not only to spatial injustice, but also to historical injustice in the production of wealth in the global North, often at the expense of the global South through colonialism, imperialism, and exploitation for centuries. Ironically, the dramatic impacts of global climate change make geographical areas of the global South particularly vulnerable, through more intense and uncertain weather-related events (violent storms, sea surges, erratic rainfall, etc.) as well as the worsening of agriculture, food security, water availability, territorial integrity (i.e., loss of land to the sea with sea level rises), migration, loss of biodiversity, disease outbreaks, and a host of interrelated socio-ecological concerns (Adger 2001; Burnham et al. 2013). As a result, discourses of climate justice have entered policy debates and no longer remain only in the realm of academic activist work. Geographical and historical injustices are exacerbated through climate impacts that affect different groups of people differentially and thereby worsen social justice and sustainability concerns across and within countries. While concrete actions and efforts are harder to delineate, the overarching point of climate justice remains to highlight inequities and differences that exist socio-spatially and are likely to worsen over time on a global scale (Clark, Chhotray, & Few 2013). Climate justice scholarship has also investigated various scalar, social, and place-based differences to enhance debates that often get reduced to North–South frameworks. For instance, gendering the impacts of climate change demonstrates the connection between gender justice and climate justice, whereby an intersectional understanding of gender informs the variegations of climate injustices on the ground (e.g., Sultana 2014).

Gender justice

Drawing from a broad range of feminist scholarship, gender justice has become common parlance among feminist scholars and activists who highlight the inequities and inequalities that exist across genders around the world. Thus, feminist scholars have sought to interpret and explain justice through a gender framework (e.g., Okin 2004; Fraser 2007; Young 2011; Seguino 2013). Young (1990) argued for two important interrelated dimensions of gender justice: first, a distribution dimension that involved equal access to material distribution of resources, goods, and services; second, an institutional dimension that focused on equal access

to participation in decision-making institutions that define and deliver this distribution. The roles of the state, law-making institutions, and judicial processes are brought into the picture, as are cultural practices, social organizations, and international influence. Building on Young's work, Mukhopadhyay and Singh (2007, 4) posit the following:

> Seeing gender justice as outcome and as process helps differentiate between what is to be achieved and how it is to be achieved. Gender justice, as an outcome, implies access to and control over resources, combined with agency (the ability to make choices). Gender justice as a process brings an additional essential element: accountability, which implies the responsibility and answerability of precisely those social institutions set up to dispense justice.

Scholars have also pointed out that while recognition and identity politics are important in drawing attention to injustices, it is critical to include more complex and intersectional understandings of gender as it operates in relation to other social axes of difference (e.g., race, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality). Differently located men and women face various injustices that are mediated through a complex system of interlocking inequities. For instance, concerns about safety, violence, and mobility may be direr for poor women of color working in urban spaces, who are exposed to street violence, unreliable public transportation, and work in insecure low-paying jobs, in comparison to wealthy white women who may have access to personal vehicles and higher-paying employment options in safer locations. Poor women are often made more vulnerable due to their lack of secure housing, low income, and the general urban blight in many cities across the world. This is not to undermine patriarchal concerns that exist across social categories and the manifestations of various forms of gender oppression in the household, economy, and polity. Nevertheless, an understanding of gender injustice complicates any facile notions of female solidarity that do not account for difference across space, scale, and place. It underscores the need to understand and address gender justice through a simultaneous accounting for common gender oppression and systems of marginalization in patriarchal societies as well as the specificities of each context (Mohanty 2003). Feminist geographers have expounded on a range of issues in which the interpretation and understanding of justice are complicated and various emancipatory options and transformative goals are pursued (e.g., Peake & Rieker 2013). Thus, the goal is not simply to identify injustices and expose them, but also to take normative stances on the transformations and justices that are necessary in a politicized notion of justice (Wright 2010). Scholars have demonstrated myriad ways in which it is important to address gender justice across a wide range of issues, such as city planning, transportation, workplace conditions, wages, reproductive rights, political participation, educational opportunities, environmental hazards and exposure, sexual slavery, and the care economy.

Patriarchal systems can be seen as entrenched forms of injustice, in that there is a skewing of power and control over labor, resources, and decision-making in favor of men over women. Addressing the specific and context-based norms, stereotypes, and practices of patriarchal injustices can be a starting point to addressing broader social justice issues. Inequitable relations of power manifest themselves across numerous aspects of life. For instance, gender-biased inheritance rights, limited financial opportunities and restricted property ownership, discriminatory wages, curtailed access to education and health care, and a diminished voice and input in decision-making forums are some of the many ways in which women face inequities around the world. Incidences of normalization of domestic violence, rape culture, and denial of "place" can also be attributed to patriarchal practices that perpetuate violence on

women and girls. Indeed, an international collaborative effort around gender injustice resulted in the UN-sponsored CEDAW (Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women). A range of issues have thus become important to scholar activists who are interested in addressing concerns of gender justice not only locally but also globally, especially in relation to capitalist patriarchy (Seguino 2013).

Differences across places and spaces are particularly poignant in the context of developing countries, where gender-based discrimination, exploitation, and violence continue to defy the overarching goals of human rights and equality as espoused in development discourses (Molyneux & Razavi 2002). This is not to be reductionist in reifying injustices in postcolonial societies, or to trivialize gender injustices in developed societies, but to bring to the fore the commonalities and differences that exist across places, as well as to highlight the gendered impacts of colonialism, capitalist neoliberal globalization, power politics at international scales, and the impacts of various development interventions (e.g., structural adjustment programs, SAPs). Insofar as these factors play forceful roles in the lives and livelihoods of women and men in marginal places, it becomes important not to analyze gender justice in isolation or in contained ways, but to trace and identify the ways in which local issues are incredibly connected to global issues, both temporally and spatially (O'Neill 1990). Simultaneously, engagement with issues of representation, sexuality, difference, identity, and belonging has been significant in broadening and nuancing debates around gender justice. Given the proliferation of lip service to gender issues globally, feminist scholarship thus also attempts to expose the normative concepts and meanings attached to any reification of gender justice and its appropriation in neoliberal discourses (Mukhopadhyay & Singh 2007). Bell and O'Rourke (2007: 44) argue for more "substantive and material justice for women" as a way to approach transnational justice that takes into account various forms of feminist struggles and unequal power relations. Thus, the debates around gender justice have embodied greater concerns about citizenship and belonging, and the various ways (formal and informal) in which these come to have a bearing on gendered well-being (e.g., Sultana, Mohanty, & Miraglia 2013).

Conclusion

This discussion has highlighted some important strands in the plurality of theorizations and practices of justice. Overall, the notion of justice has to be grounded in knowledge and experience and to develop out of context. No idealized definition is truly possible. This vague yet alluring term has been used in a variety of ways (as noted in the chapter) and has been subject to theorizing from a range of perspectives. Thus, the debates around the meaning and content of an abstract term such as justice are multistranded and complex. Perhaps the growing calls for social justice can be interpreted as a shorthand way of critiquing neoliberal globalization, rapacious capitalism, and the unjust use of power. The injustices and inequities arising from social, cultural, and environmental degradation that are linked to a global economy are increasingly receiving attention from scholars within and outside of geography. Making connections across places and scales, and engaging with a range of theorizations of justice, thus make for more robust critiques of existing realities and gesture at possible alternatives that are more just and fair. Invocations of social justice can also be seen as a call for action and solidarity. In exposing the roots of oppression and marginalization, and articulating the ways in which a range of injustices are linked or related, geographers are able to expound on different responsibilities and options for profound political and social change. Appeals to justice thus can be political moments that foster the envisioning and acting on of democratic and radical

alternatives. This is increasingly so in political and social movements that are fighting for democracy and rights in countries across the world. Calls for justice are galvanizing those who are marginalized and oppressed, whether it is related to voter suppression in the United States, dictator rule in the Middle East, or gender-based violence anywhere.

Geographers thus have enormous opportunities to enrich and advance existing debates and scholarship on social justice as well as to contribute to ongoing struggles and praxis. In the age of the Anthropocene, when humans control the fate of the earth unlike any other time in history, it behooves geographers to engage in this area diligently and meaningfully. Emerging research topics can address persistent challenges regarding the ongoing exclusion and marginalization of most of the world's poor, transnational injustices in global geopolitics, existing injustices across gender, race, and class in local landscapes, and scalar connections across ecological injustices. Geographers can thereby continue to contribute to spatializing and placing justice debates, and to demonstrate the connectivities across universalities and particularities. Scholarship and activism on the various forms of environmental injustice and the politics of climate justice, across sites and scales, are also arenas that can benefit from greater geographical analysis. Critical race geographers and feminist geographers can further advance nuanced understandings of how intersectionalities and power operate across injustices and spaces. The ever-increasing complexities of geopolitical crises globally, with links to neoliberalism, capitalism, and notions of development, continue to be topics with which political geographers need to engage to reach better explanations of the ways in which justice is challenged and reconfigured. Geographers can thus make great contributions to the existing debates around justice, both theoretically and empirically.

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Chapter 12

Power

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Politics is about power and power lies at the heart of political geography. Indeed, Mark Haugaard and Stewart Clegg identify power as *the* central concept of all the social sciences (2009: 1). At first glance, power seems straightforward – in everyday language someone is powerful if they can achieve their goals despite opposition. Yet, dig a little deeper and power turns out to be rather more difficult to grasp. Is it a thing, a substance, a quality, an idea, or a relationship? Can it be won and lost? Does it exist when it is not being used? Is it only a negative force, or can it do good? And how does it affect, and how is it affected by, geography? Power certainly shapes political geographies, and yet, while political geographers have long studied in depth the geographical basis and effects of power on their subject matter, their discussions of the nature of power itself have been much rarer (Low 2005). Indeed, for most of the history of the discipline power has been an unexamined concept, whose meaning has been assumed to be sufficiently obvious not to warrant detailed investigation. There are already numerous books surveying theories of power in the social sciences in general (e.g., Clegg 1989; Clegg & Haugaard 2009; Scott 2001), so rather than rehearse the wider debate on power, this chapter will focus on how the concept has been understood in political geography, broadly conceived.

Taking power seriously

It is often said that power is the stuff of politics and that political geography originated in the study of the power-laden conflicts between the most powerful states of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such talk contains an implicit theory of power; namely, that power is a substance ("stuff"), which is present in political conflicts and of which states can be full or, by implication, empty. Until relatively recently, political geography has been resolutely state-centric, and power meant state power, and in particular the control of territory. State, power, and territory formed a kind of Holy Trinity for political geography. The state was

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