

Poverty, Charity and Justice

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Introduction

- Concern the poor is essential
- Charity and Justice must be ordered by reason
- Charity without truth becomes sentimentality
- Imprudent charity can increase injustice
- Heart for the Poor—Mind for the Poor

Part I: The Dominant Framework of Social Justice and the Response to Poverty

A Global Poverty Industry: “The Social Fact”

End of WWII, break-up of colonialism: Social Engineering was dominant model

- planned the war, now let us plan the peace

Foreign Aid : Government to Government Transfers of Public Money

Can be positive in specific situations but also has a number of serious problems

- Delay development of Business
- Crony Capitalism
- Politicizes Development (P.T. Bauer)
- Subsidize Corruption
- Agriculture
- Uses Emergency situation as model for development which distracts from larger questions
- Neo-Colonialist—“Ideological Colonization”

Example : Population Control

- Mistake of Intuition (Daniel Kahneman)



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- Zero-Sum Game
- Anthropological Fallacy
- Gendercide
- “Naïve Intervensionism” (Nassim Nicholas Taleb)

NGO’s (Non-Governmental Organizations)

- Non-governmental or Para-State?
 - Government financed private organizations?
- NGOs can crowd out local business: Enersa Example
- Haiti: “Republic of NGOs”

Other Examples I may discuss:

Charity

- Eggs
- Haiti and Orphans

Social Entrepreneurship

- New approach with possibilities
- Entrepreneurship is social
- TOMS Shoes

Too often our aid and assistance misses the **Key Question:**

How do people in the developing world, in poverty, create prosperity for their families and communities?

Part II: Underlying Philosophical and Theological Problems

Charity v. Humanitarianism

- Charity—*Caritas, Agape*
- Seeking the good of the other.
- Keeping eternal destiny in focus

Subjects vs. Objects

- Human Persons are not “objects” of our charity
- Persons are “subjects,” the protagonists of their own development

Social Engineering

- Limited, Reductionist way of looking at the world
- Industrialist model of planning



PART III: Inclusion and Justice for the Poor: Poverty and the Institutions of Justice

Infrastructure, Healthcare and Education

- These are important, but they are a result of wealth before they become a cause of wealth
- The fallacy of Correlation

Inclusion and the Institutions of Justice

- **Clear Property Title**
- **Justice in the Courts and Rule of Law**
- **Freedom of Association**
- **Open Exchange**

When economies become heavily regulated they become dominated by big business, powerful interest groups, and entrenched bureaucracy, the poor get locked out because they lack the political, economic, and social contacts to navigate a bureaucracy dominated by powerful players

Moral Ecology

- Institutions of Justice do not arise in Vacuum
- Acemoglu and Robinson recognize the importance of institutions but limit and neglect culture
- Christianity has large role to play in helping to build the moral ecology of justice

Conclusions

There will always be poverty and suffering that will require human love. We will always have the need for almsgiving— Economic development alone will not solve all our problems. There will always be poor people who cannot help themselves and need our care. We must care for the widow and the orphan in their distress.

Yet, for majority of the world's poor—the problem is not one of charity or lack of goods, the problem is the poor lack the institutions of justice that enable them to create prosperity for their families and their communities.



Recommended Reading

Economics and Development

Peter Bauer: Equality, Third World and Economic Delusion
Angus Deaton: The Great Escape
William Easterly: White Man's Burden
Hernando de Soto: Mystery of Capital
Acemoglu and Robinson: Why Nations Fail
Michael Fairbanks: Plowing the Sea
Victor Claar: Fair Trade

Philosophy and Political Theory

Karol Wojtyla: Love and Responsibility
Max Scheler: Ressentiment—especially the chapter on Humanitarian Love
Nassim Nicholas Taleb: Anti-Fragile
Robert Nisbet: The Quest for Community
Joseph Ratzinger: Values in a time of Upheaval
C.S. Lewis: The Abolition of Man

Documentary: *Poverty, Inc.*
DVD Series: *PovetyCure*



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