Missing non-Western Voices on Social Justice for Education: A Postcolonial Perspective on Traditions of Humanistic Marginalized Communities

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Abstract

This chapter reviews the theories and development of a number of non-Western philosophical and legal social justice traditions that have been marginalized in the literature, adopting primarily a post-colonial perspective on how they can contribute to education, according to Hickling-Hudson (2006) transcending colonizer distortions of knowledge to present and draw implications from bodies of knowledge that have been removed from the dominating international literature. This approach is accompanied by a critique of globalization that has, according to many authors, created a hegemonic position for primarily Anglo-American systems in this respect (see Adams, 2014) including the view of "epistemicide" (Hall & Tandon, 2017), imperialism (Sidu, 2008), "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu, 1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), and neocolonization (Ritzer, 2007), particularly in relation to the right to culture as a social justice principle (Rees, 2014). Various forms of colonization, including that under the current 'globalization' period, produce cultural hierarchies of values and knowledge (Loomba, 2007), or even expunge cultural and knowledge traditions (Hall & Tandon, 2017).

This chapter examines selected humanistic traditions of social justice that have existed for centuries, long pre-dating the modern period, focusing on those that have suffered an injustice in their suppression and distortion through a Bourdieuian "symbolic" violence applying not only to the knowledge that is suppressed, expunged or lost through colonization and globalization and the cultural and intellectual capital they carry, but also the identities, values, and traditional social institutions from which they are derived. The first section examines the conceptions and practices of social justice established in ancient Mesopotamia that provides the historical foundation to many later systems. The second presents the Confucian system of social justice as a foundation to the just society that has informed

administration, education and the principles of justice of a number of countries consisting of equitable distribution, equal opportunities, the rights of individuals and the principle of equity. The next section examines the Islamic social justice tradition consisting of distributive, retributive, and fairness and equity and the aim of piety to correct injustices, individually and collectively and establish equal rights for women and men in many spheres and the role of education in emphasizing the role of mind in its critical and reasoning capacities and reason in the formation of character, morality, and the human community with a strong emphasis on education and becoming learned. Finally, a representative selection of indigenous systems of social justice are examined where principles of individual rights and obligations to others and nature carried with them obligations in how others are treated and cared for due to stronger collective rather than individualistic values.

Introduction

Generally texts on social justice in education examine Western traditions, and of that, mostly the Anglo-American, connecting it causally to democratic countries (Saltman, 2009), and its history often truncated to that of developments in the United States (Ayers et al., 2009), or assumes a superiority of Western democracy as the only form of system producing valid laws and principles of governance (Tawhai, 2016). The impression one can get is that social justice is a new phenomenon that could not form without recent Western political history (Jackson, 2005), a bias that itself constitutes a postcolonial view and epistemic violence (Stein & Andreotti, 2016). The discussion also tends to not include the relationship between social justice and humanism, the latter often presented as a secular alternative philosophy although major religions have humanistic traditions within them. Both of these assumptions are historically inaccurate, and marginalize important developments in human societies and those who are inheritors of these traditions. Many sources examining its history associate it narrowly with the classical Greco-Roman tradition of searching for humane values (Mann 1996), its revival in the European Renaissance, and latterly in Western countries as a set of principles that are non-religious, theistic or Christian focused on valuing human beings and human culture (Copson, 2015; Hoveyda, 2011).

The main constitutive components of social justice are distributive and retributive practices that ensure a fair distribution and access to resources and righting of wrongs in relation to unfair practices, interpreted differently in societies depending on societal structures and

institutions and belief systems. Social justice as a concept includes the societal context, consisting of ethical ideas, laws, claims made, collective claim-making politics, and institutional policies and practices related to rights and entitlements, the responsibilities of rulers, and the conditions in which justice takes place (Balibar et al., 2012). These guide the construction of social institutions and the values by which individuals develop their responsibilities in interaction with others to produce equitable, just and respectful societies (Zajda, 2010). This means that political, social and cultural contexts need to be taken into account in interpreting its formulation and implementation. Balibar et al. (2012), for example, give voice to those not usually represented – multicultural, postcolonial and subaltern views and experiences – falling outside the boundaries most often inscribed into the discussion.

Ironically the study of social justice itself has not been justly presented as it excludes and marginalizes non-Western systems, a critique of many NGOs made by Atkinson et al. (2009) for not providing alternative perspectives and not legitimating voices from outside the Western North. For example, social justice varies with cultural context – in many Western societies oriented more individualistically while in many others more collectivist in character (Fischer, 2016). It is the differences in conceptions and practices that Stein and Andreotti (2016) argue is central to postcolonial studies, on one hand giving legitimacy to non-Western and ancient traditions, and on the other deconstructing colonial hierarchies and hegemonies that currently privilege some Western 'grand narratives,' values and practices enforced through globalization requiring a change conceptually and analytically in theorizing from other traditions' perspectives and conditions.

In an educational context, social justice is an equitable education providing fair access (e.g., encoded in OECD documents), but it also can refer to the content of education – the equitable and fair representation nationally and internationally of knowledge and value traditions. The pursuit of social justice in education requires a critique of market-models and priorization of economic values that define what learning and teaching is requisite for the "knowledge economy" (Zajda, 2010). Here, the emphasis is on the inequitable representation of social justice concepts and practices and how they apply to education in marginalized traditions, of critical importance to culture's role in maintaining values and identity in societies globally and historically. Gewirtz (1998) includes in her discussion of conceptualizing social justice for education, the injustices consisting of "exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness,

cultural imperialism and violence" (p. 470) derived from Young (1990) who advocates an approach that includes social interactions, policies and procedures that encompass "cultural" justice in autonomy, recognition and respect while addressing Foucault's concerns about the ethics of otherness that exclude other traditions' values and practices like those in Aboriginal communities.

Humanism is an ages-old attempt to find significance in life, associate personality and character to a set of values and aims, and use governing principles – many of which are associated with social justice - in finding solutions to individual and social problems while giving rise to intellectual disciplines. It is most often associated with classical Greco-Roman traditions, Marxism, existentialism, and critical theory expressing 'a conception of the common kinship and unity of mankind; the adoption of the ancient classics as an educational and cultural ideal in the formation of mind and character (*paideia*); and humaneness, or love of mankind (*philanthrōpia*)' (Kraemer, 1984, p. 136). However, humanism also has forms that arose in other parts of the world including ancient societies (Kirloskar-Steinbach, 2011; Kresse 2011). Whether religious or secular, it is the core importance of human welfare, capabilities and constructions that denote forms of humanism, establishing and fulfilling meaning in life that has re-emerged contemporary fields related to educational administration like business (Spitzeck et al., 2009), management (Amann & Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2013; Dierksmeier et al., 2011), and organization studies (Khan & Amann, 2013). Humanism of any kind is also closely associated with social justice, providing necessary foundational concepts and goals for a society in which everyone is able to enjoy a good life and the benefits of a social order that provides freedom, welfare, human rights and the rule of law (Aljami, 2015; Copson, 2015), evident in postcolonial forms (Said, 1978) where human welfare, dignity, integrity, ethics and social responsibility are dominant values and motivations, with its history extending into ancient societies.

This chapter aims not only at a cosmopolitan and transcultural conception of social justice, but a broad historical approach intended to break through contemporary boundaries set by hegemonic perspectives to examine selected humanistic traditions of social justice that have existed for centuries, long pre-dating the modern period but some of which have perpetuated to the present day. The subject of this chapter itself requires social justice - while much social justice in education literature examines material impacts such as economic and social disadvantage, equal access to education, distribution of goods and services, and full

participation in all aspects of educational activities and its benefits derived from Western systems (Stein & Andreotti, 2016), this chapter focusses more on those traditions that have suffered injustice (Reagan, 2005) through a Bourdieuian (1991) "symbolic" violence and harm that carries equal disadvantage for those not certified in what is regarded as the appropriate "Western" knowledge and skills and conforming to its notion of professionally identity and worldview. This includes not only the knowledge that is suppressed or lost through colonization and globalization, but also the identities, values, and traditional social institutions in which they are embodied. Implicit here is a critique of globalization that has created a dominating position for Anglo-American educational systems (Adams, 2014), a critique grounded in several perspectives including "epistemicide" (Hall & Tandon, 2017), imperialism (Sidu, 2008), "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu, 1991; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), and neocolonization (Memmi, 2003) in relation to the right to culture as a social justice principle (Rees, 2014). Their contention is that the current globalized education is a colonizing force that produces cultural hierarchies of values and knowledge (Loomba, 2007), or even expunges cultural and knowledge traditions (Hall & Tandon, 2017).

The concept of social justice itself, as Sears and Herriot (2016) point out, is a social construction of the tradition in which it arises. However, even with such differences, some humanistic values upon which social justice is conceived (Sackey, 2012) transcend cultural and temporal boundaries like dignity, social welfare, respect for individuals and the intellectual and cultural traditions they come from. This is evident in the shared foundation of classical Islamic scholarship with some European traditions (Daiber, 2013; Makdisi, 1990; Tibi, 2009). What unites humanism historically and globally is a profound interest in the values that are grounded in the human condition, whether religious or secular, in the character of the individual, in community relations, and a harmonious and supportive social system. Its approach involves examining the belief systems, cultural customs or rituals, and social institutions that are predicated upon human welfare (Fowler, 2015). Its ethic is generally oriented towards the moral and dignified development of self, particularly of character and mind with a central role for reason, of one's social relations and society at large, in fact, for humankind in general (Nussbaum, 1997).

In the sections that follow, four traditions of social justice will be examined. The first will examine the conceptions and practices of social justice that were established in ancient Mesopotamian history and which provide the historical foundation to many later systems

(Doak, 2006). The second will present the Confucian system of social justice that has informed and informs administration, education and the principles of justice of a number of countries. The next examines the Islamic social justice tradition (Hourani, 1985; Thompson, 2014), grounded in humanism (Makdisi, 1990) and is part of the Judeo-Christian monotheistic tradition, informed to some extent by their values and practices (Waardenburg, 2003). Finally, the fourth section presents a representative selection of indigenous systems of social justice that have been receiving recent attention in the education literature (Benham & Murakami-Ramalho, 2010; Hendry et al., 2018) relevant to educational administration and including more just and fair forms of research methodology.

The Historical Origins of Social Justice: Revisiting Mesopotamia

Although concepts of justice as legal principles are generally understood to originate in Roman law in the language of rights, the principles of remedial action (restorative justice) to right violations and deprivations, they were widely understood and practiced in pre-classical parts of the world through judicial authority and the use of contracts, often established in religious values, conceptions of natural law grounded in the divine, and ideas about mutual dependence in social structures (Frankfort et al., 1977; Irani, 1995). Social justice is an ancient concept, established in the earliest civilizations as moral and legal codes in ancient Mesopotamia and arising shortly thereafter in other parts of the world, producing what Westbrook (2003) calls a "remarkable continuity in fundamental juridical concepts over the course of three millennia" (p. 4), evident in thousands of documents in the forms of codes, decrees, edicts, royal instructions, trial records, lexical texts, economic transactions, letters and mythical literature. Justice (in Sumerian *níg-si-sá* and Akkadian *mīšarum*) in Mesopotamia entails both the alleviation of suffering for the poor, mistreated and marginalized, and the conviction and punishment of oppressors (Doak, 2006, pp. 1-2). Thus, the concept of "social justice" in Mesopotamia can refer broadly to any aspect of crime or punishment for anyone who is considered "wronged" in any circumstance. It applied especially to the poor or marginalized (vulnerable individuals such as widows and orphans), as the most susceptible to abuse and therefore most in need of protection. Its main aim was to protect weaker strata of society from being deprived of their legal status, property rights and economic sustenance to which their position entitled them (Westbrook, 1995).

In Mesopotamia, religion and politics were initially closely entwined, where kingship owed obedience to divinity by enacting laws, edicts and peace accords that served the gods of justice (Doak, 2006). The major gods represented social justice, the divine understood to bring order to society and punish the unjust, in Sumer and Akkad the sun god Utu and in Babylonia, the sun god Shamash (Charpin, 2010), who embodied the concepts of social justice along with a complex bureaucracy of officials to administer it (Bottéro, 1992). Their values and responsibilities were initially recorded in hymns and later incorporated into legal codes that protected the helpless and those who were subjects of theft and cheating (Bertman, 2003, p. 26). This protective and retributive role is clear in the prologue to Hammurabi's code: 'in order to make justice arise in the country, to eliminate the bad and the perverse, to prevent the powerful from oppressing the weak' (Charpin, 2010, p. 81). Throughout the three millennia of the Mesopotamian period, the ruler was regarded as a "good shepherd" protecting the oppressed by ensuring two aspects of justice, *kittum*, the stability of a societal order that protected ownership rights and the repayment of debts, and *misarum*, to set right or correct injustices.

The development of laws and social justice were also closely entwined with the formation of formal education in its earliest periods. As Schott (2000) notes in his exploration of the origins of bureaucracy in the earliest civilizations, the city-states of Mesopotamia, and shortly thereafter in Egypt, India and China, are distinguished by a high level of organization politically, economically, and religiously including a multi-functionally and hierarchically organized bureaucracy, the development of legal codes, and formal educational systems to support the professional administrative cadres. The rapid complexity and sophistication of administration is attributed to the development of writing in the 4th millennium BCE in Sumer that allowed for creating a specialized system of records necessary to organizational and governance development. The rationale for record keeping was to protect the rights of individuals and groups; with the advent of writing, laws became instruments of implementing justice through "establishing rights, authorities and punishments" (Schott, 2000, p. 70) by making its principles permanent and public, displayed on large steles erected in public venues and requiring education to administer.

Ideas and practices of social justice are clearly evident in the 4th millennium BCE beginning with the first city, Uruk (Liverani, 2014) when public bureaucracies arose to a level of complex government administration to plan and control food production, the manufacture of

goods by a number of craft specializations, irrigation systems, trade, construction projects, military, and diplomatic and emissary services. Bureaucracies arose in both temple and palace administration (Schott, 2000) as well as administrative staff in private homes of the wealthy, reflecting the views at the time of the structure of social institutions and their various activities and interactions in economic, political and religious spheres (Seri, 2013). Officials in hierarchical ranking with distinguishable administrative titles (including male and female forms) were assigned functionally to a number of public functions such as the distribution of flour, the assignment of slave labourers, the house of weavers, a poultry house, and a centre for the manufacturing of bows and arrows, emissaries, archivists, distribution centres for raw materials and manufactured goods, and military and diplomatic staff. This included keeping detailed records (Seri, 2013). An important related feature of documents at this time were the lists of professions, ranging from important crafts (e.g., food preparation, brewing, weaving, musician) to state functions like tax collector. These required schools for bureaucrats and scribes, over time separating education into primary and more advanced schools and a widespread literacy (Veldhuis, 2011).

The states of Sumer and Akkad provide evidence in written tablets of conceptions of social justice and social criticism provided by the Gods (administered through the justice system) (Gadd, 1971; Oppenheim, 1977), for example, in the city of Ebla (2400-1600 BCE) to regulate and manage the marketplace, building projects, agriculture, the production of goods, defence, education, religious buildings and festivals and the administration of justice (Kitchen, 1977). It is important to not underestimate the development of administration; as early as 2500 BCE most sites have yielded hundreds if not thousands of clay tablets often organized into official libraries consisting of "tax records, official correspondence, records of materials issued and finished goods received, and legal records" (McIntosh, 2005, p. 288), in addition to private libraries of professionals and at least some rulers. It is clear that the capacity for a complex bureaucracy with trained administrators and staff and the professionalization of judges (Charpin, 2010) were established by this time, keeping records of adoptions, marriages, loans records, rental documents and sale deeds as well as law codes, court cases and legal proceedings, international treaties and agreements, and thousands of letters both official and personal (McIntosh, 2005).

The primary purpose of schools for children and for scribes (male and female) (Lion, 2011) was to staff the bureaucracy working in temples, merchant houses, palaces, and private

establishments and for scholars. The forty-eight year reign of King Shulgi of Ur (2029-1982 BCE) (McIntosh, 2005) saw political stability with a unified bureaucracy, a well-established judicial system, economic prosperity, considerable infrastructure development, and great strides in cultural development including schools for administrative training (Klein, 1995). His personal reputation centered on wisdom and the implementation of justice, defined as both preventing the strong from oppressing the weak and in enacting retributive justice. In addition to economic, administrative, legal and financial documents, as well as religious texts, there was already a rapidly growing collection of literature in a variety of genres as well as scientific texts for medicine, mathematics and astronomy. It is during this period that educational policy as part of educational administration is clearly evident (Michalowski, 1991).

While the codes of Hammurabi (1750 BCE) are best known, they were predated by several other codified concepts of justice that compiled many of these into the most complete form with an increasing secularization (Schott, 2000): those of Urukagima (2355 BCE) in Lagash (Foster, 1995), followed by Ur-Nammu (2100 BCE) in Ur who gave equal legal status to women (Roth, 1995), the codes of Shulgi, and Lipit-Ishtar (1930 BCE), and the laws of the Akkadian city of Eshnunna (1900s BCE) (Yoffee, 2004). Hammurabi's were primarily oriented towards ending abuses and maltreatment of the population by officials and reforming unjust laws, extended by some of his successors (Foster, 1995; Westbrook, 1995), an administered by people's assemblies and judges of the King. These laws laid the foundation for later codes in the Hittite empire of the 12th and 13th centuries BCE (in which a complex system of arbitration formed), in Assyria in the 6th and 7th centuries BCE, and neo-Babylonian codes of the 5th century BCE in which the king was to be dedicated to truth and justice, charged with standardizing legal practices and correcting abuses in pricing, property rights, inheritance, and indebtedness. One feature that is interesting from a social justice perspective is that penalties rose in harshness with social class (Bertman, 2003). The major implications for education are in the rights of various professions and trades (which later became guilds) and in the education of officials in their proper duties. Even though evidence is scant, it is by the time of Hammurabi that evidence is found that demonstrates protections under law for apprentices through contract and under which schools operated (Cohen & Kedar, 2011).

Schott (2000) emphasizes the importance of the scribal schools, essentially specialized academies for public administration from which aspirants had to graduate to qualify for many public and private positions producing an administrative status group in society. The requirements of literacy were high in order to maintain records, but also provided the sites for scholarship and literary production. Part of the curriculum and pedagogy was also oriented towards instilling in students appropriate conduct and behavior which one can interpret as including the values of justice prevalent in society (Kramer, 1963), including law as part of the curriculum beginning in the elementary phases (Démare-Lafont, 2011). Principles of social justice were carried not only in legal codes but in satirical fables, tales, and fictional letters reinforcing in cultural expression injustices, inequities and retribution (Bertel, 2003, pp. 179-180). The instructional purpose is evident in Babylonian administrative schools focused primarily on literature, which carried social values derived from the gods (Foster 1995) and languages of Mesopotamia, aimed primarily at being 'an ideological molder of minds, the place where future members of the bureaucracy were socialized, where they received a common stock of ideas and attitude which bound them together as a class and in many ways separated them from their original backgrounds' (Michalowski, 1991, p. 52).

The relationship between education and social justice is that the former served the latter - it was through education that the judicial and administrative systems of social justice were instilled, implemented and recorded, reformed, and promoted requiring also that many rulers become educated. This relationship changed by the time of the Hittites where kings and the elite participated less in the education system, devoting their time to training in warfare, diplomacy and hunting (Griffith, 2015), however, there is ample evidence that the Queen shared in judicial duties hearing cases in court sometimes dominating the judicial sphere and a portion of the scribal class rose to the most senior administrative positions drafting treaties in addition to other duties (Bryce, 2011) that are closer to cabinet and permanent secretary positions in contemporary government. The role of education in social justice was in developing and maintaining the laws, and at times, in ensuring that new rulers without education, especially during the Old Babylonian period, learned to "conform to the traditional values of Mesopotamian kingship, to respect its traditions and behave 'like a Sargon'" (Leick, 2003, p. 94).

The Confucian Social Justice Tradition

The foundational principles of Confucianism are located in the *Analects* of Confucius (551-479 BCE), which grounds the Confucian tradition as it developed through a number of authors as well as its strong associations with Taoist principles of the morality of the social order and the harmonious interplay of yin and yang, and Buddhist principles of the noble path that includes learning (Fowler, 2015). For example, these are reflected in the philosophy of Mencius (ca. 379-289 BCE) which combines justice, personal responsibility and individual merit and in Xunzi (ca. 340-245 BCE) for its adherence to the good life, duties to others and moral commitment (Kirloskar-Steinbach, 2011) as a molder of mind and character in the pursuit of a just society. It is also in Mencius that one finds a social ideal and justice interpreted more strongly than in Confucius in maintaining a good social order in which government, family and community play strong roles (Chan, 2012). It also evolved in response to political need producing different forms or sub-traditions like Han and Song-Ming Confucianism, the former oriented towards rigid social hierarchies with the latter to the mind and individuals (Chan,2012).

Although having spiritual roots and more religious branches, Confucianism is primarily a non-religious humanistic tradition focused on people's beliefs, rituals and social institutions as they affect the growth of the individual, family relationships and achieving social harmony aiming at pursuing an ideal ethical social living (Fowler, 2015). Its humanism is grounded in an observation and elevation of man and society through a concept of the 'noble man' consisting of eight qualities: manifesting virtues that benefit others; gaining respect through a respectful attitude; a disciplined observance of social form that governs common life; kindliness, generosity and forbearance; confidence and trust in social and interpersonal relations; reasonableness in demands on others taking into account circumstances; and having a zeal for learning and being ready to take responsibility for the education of others (de Bary, 1996).

The main social justice concepts in this tradition are equitable distribution, equal opportunities, the rights of individuals and the principle of equity that form the model of a morally just and good society dominated by the state in achieving social order and control (Lee, 1995). Originally a religious humanism it aimed to improve society and its human lives, embodied in human action that contributes to the benefit of others and evolves over time with changing conditions, held together by a shared set of values, beliefs and concerns about the human condition grounded in justice, personal responsibility and merit of the

individual (Chan, 2012). This later evolved into a humanistic ritualized system independent of the nature of a supernatural being (Lee, 1995). Leaders in the political realm were conceived of as those who cared for their people, acted as moral exemplars, and devoted themselves to education in order to construct the good society (Chan, 2012).

The virtues that constitute the core values for producing a just society consist of 'constants' that one strives for through education: right attitude, procedure, knowledge, moral courage, and persistence that produce the "good man" abiding by benevolence and propriety, conceived by Confucius as a solution to the socio-political and economic unrest and uncertainty in China in his time (Reagan, 2005). Education, therefore, is seen as a primary means by which to shape good people and build a good society which also requires a deep respect for education and learning (Chan, 2012) and training in the social rituals that were believed to produce social harmony in preference to coded laws (Lee, 1995).

The role of education and being learned is significant in this tradition, oriented towards Confucius as a 'sage-teacher' and role model (Fowler, 2015), combined with a deep respect for intellectual traditions of the sages who came before (Chan, 2012). It also created a class structure produced through education rather than birth – producing a cadre of the learned, with qualifying criteria for government (Fowler, 2015) and morally upright officials who were believed to be able to influence common people to act morally (Lee, 1995). The main values of Confucianism are social stability, personal integrity, and altruism guided by learning and a sense of propriety in life with humanity and righteousness necessary for ideal government in which those with authority and power should act as moral exemplars. Values had to be embodied and expressed in action (Chan, 2012), although the emphasis was on good political authority properly ensuring equitable distribution in society. Within this societal structural view of justice, the principle of equality of morality, privilege and material reward is predicated upon an equal opportunity to education through merit that provides for success in the social order where 'equal opportunity' means 'equal moral potential' (Lee, 1995: 136). However, it is important to point out that social justice was much less interpreted in terms of material goods than many modern systems where a capitalistic consumer-type society is dominant, understood more in terms of what is sufficient for each person to have a 'good' life (Chan, 2012).

While there is some debated about the utilitarian nature of morality and justice, the Confucian tradition does maintain some belief in a supernatural force but focusses on the usefulness of justice in producing good government and a good society (Lee, 1995) through a concept of public and community benevolence and mutual aid to ensure the reasonable maintenance of all. Some of its fundamental principles are not unknown to some Western traditions, like Kantianism. The Confucian notion of the autonomous moral person is similar to Kant's concept of the "autonomous will", which is the main source for social justice (Lee, 1995), and the necessary role of education (in German, *Bildung*) necessary to produce it. The difference lies in Kant's postulation that the autonomous will allows one to determine what universal moral principles exist, whereas in the Confucian system, the stronger utilitarian character did not see that step being necessary to a just society (Lee, 1995).

In its evolution, Confucian scholars have taken into account changing social and intellectual trends, for example, the contemporary Confucian philosopher Jiang, who advocates market economics as consistent with Confucianism as long as it is not unfettered and does not disrupt the harmony and balance in society created by a concern for others through moral education by producing the alienation that comes from a domination by economic values (Angle, 2012).

What is immediately apparent, in contrast to many Western conceptions of social justice is a strong collectivist orientation in roles and responsibilities even though individual capabilities were cultivated, an orientation shared by many non-Western systems (and adopted by some political and religious Western systems of thought). Apparent here also, is the way in which education is seen to serve administration, social order and a balanced society rather than individual ends and a domination of economic values found in neoliberalism.

The Islamic Tradition of Social Justice

The Islamic tradition of social justice is a combination of Islamic principles and cultural constructions for justice that were carried from ancient Mesopotamia through to modern times, reflected in a fundamental idea of the Circle of Justice adopting an interdependent reciprocal relationship between state and society carried in many social institutions, which Darling (2013) describes as follows:

No power without troops,

No troops without money,

No money without prosperity,

No prosperity without justice and good administration. (p. 2)

As a concept of societal balance and equilibrium arising from agrarian societies, its principles were easily adopted into empires in the Islamic medieval period in the political, economic, legal and agricultural sectors and evident in modern societies. The Circle of Justice was dependent not only upon the proper functioning of social institutions but also in the public's access to the ruler through which petitions could be made, and seen today in the modern *majlis* meetings, usually on a weekly basis, during which anyone should be able to approach a ruler to register a complaint or make a request. However, the principles and practice of the Circle of Justice were undermined to a large extent by the introduction of modern capitalism which produced an association of capitalism with injustice (Darling, 2013) although some forms of modernisation like the adoption of constitutions was argued to be consistent with circles of justice (Darling, 2013).

The principles of justice are at the core of Islam, in both its texts and in the life and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (the Qur'an and Sunna), and his period of rule in Medina as a model of the just society departed significantly from local tribal customs. It inspired its later imperial forms to provide protection to the vulnerable and operate by rule of law in moderation, although empires like that of the Safavids in Iran became more aggressively orthodox (Thompson, 2014). One of the main purposes of Islam, central in the Qur'an, is to provide rules to govern moral standards and cure social illnesses, essentially, social justice and to forbid injustice (Timani, 2012). During this period, the Constitution of Medina was adopted, intended to be a model of good governance promoting cooperation and tolerance, bring peace to warring factions, and to replace tribalism with a unified community of Islam introducing mutual aid and granting women the legal rights of persons where they had been regarded as chattel (Thompson, 2014). The main concept of justice ('adl') consists of four principles: fairness, moderation, equality and balance that should be carried out in the public interest – with social justice conceived to be the "glue" binding the ruled to the ruler and producing the prosperity of the community and carried out through the rule of law and the elimination of corruption (Thompson, 2014). Principles of social justice in Islam are seen to be religious duties in distributing wealth, righting wrongs, practicing self-sacrifice, working

for social cooperation, and subordinating personal interests to the collective good, many of these codified into obligations, including within one's trade and profession (Hoveyda, 1995). Piety cannot be achieved through individuality, but by working collectively to eliminate injustice and contributing to a balanced society characterised by moderation necessary for social justice to exist (Timani, 2012).

The justice practices of the Prophet Muhammad clearly established a strong orientation towards social justice, not only on a social level but in creation of social institutions to further these values: creating a taxation system to provide pensions to the needy and cover other welfare expenses; providing solidarity and help to non-Muslims; and providing the foundation for a long tradition of public ownership (Hoveyda, 1995). Justice was defined as governing all realms – the family, social structures, the economy and politics including those in leadership roles, and, contrary to many practices at the time, specifically dealt with the rights of women (full rights to education, economic activity, property and inheritance, equality and the right to divorce to get out of bad marriages), corruption, self-interest, expressing favouritism, using nepotism, undermining others, et cetera.

In later periods, as empires formed requiring a more complex and sophisticated bureaucracy responsible for maintaining and ensuring these values, with the "ideal" senior administrator or governor, embodied the virtues of dedication to justice, "interest in study in the past, moderate in his acts and manners … [and is] a merciful friend of the poor" (Tietze, 1975, p. 72), although as empires like that of the Umayyad formed, society became structured into unequal social classes, and social and political interests often came into conflict with religious principles of social justice (Hoveyda, 1995). The values of Islam are ideal principles, like any other ideal system, which are not always observed and can be misused and exploited. Custom, egoism and politics are among the strongest forces that affected and still affect a deviation from the ideals and practice of Islam, evident throughout periods in Islamic empires, and argued by many to be disrupted under Western colonization and currently under some forms of globalization.

There is a humanistic character to Islam embedded in its primary texts, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, its development into an extensive philosophical and intellectual tradition, finding its flowering in the Abbasid Empire beginning in the 9th century when many branches of Islamic scholarship built on top of the Greco-Roman *humanitas* literature and scientific study

(Kraemer, 1984). This was, in part, due to an integration of many ethnic groups, cultural legacies and religious traditions into the fabric of a complex empire that operated through high levels of tolerance, receptiveness and cosmopolitanism (Kraemer, 1984) as well as traditions of interpretation that analysed how Islamic law can change to meet new conditions while retaining the essential concepts and values (Stiles, 2012) , exemplified in the social welfare Muhammadiyah movement in Indonesia working in education and healthcare (Pohl, 2012). Humanitas also characterised many of the educational philosophies and schools that developed during this period emphasising not only mathematics, the study of history and society, but also valuational and moral ideals and virtues of character, particularly from Plato and Aristotle seen to be consistent with Islamic principles, seeing the use of reason and wisdom as paths to happiness and human perfection (Kraemer, 1984) and resulting in one of the first university systems and a large and complex system of schools (Makdisi, 1981).

One of the major influence on the European tradition is that of Islamic humanism through authors like Averroes (ibn Rushd) whose dialectic method derived from Aristotle greatly influenced figures like Thomas Aquinas (Dossett, 2014), contributing to the preservation and development of knowledge grounded in classical Greek philosophy translated into Latin from Arabic starting in the 11th century CE, as well as the development of universities in Europe, partially derived from Islamic universities and major research libraries established a few hundred years earlier (Makdisi, 1981).

While the main definition of 'humanism' as an approach is a concern with primarily the literary and other texts of the ancient world, usually the Greco-Roman, over the last few decades far more material preceding this period has been found, translated and published. As a substantive definition, humanism aims at educating people in rational thought, a broad knowledge of the disciplines, and a moral development for both the individual and the good of society (Dossett, 2014). Humanism initially arose in the Islamic context as a scholarly philological concern for the purity of the Arabic language, but also extended into a broad range of disciplines that we associate with the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and mathematics and applied sciences like medicine and engineering that were received into the Christian West including the adoption of many Arabic terms, including those for classical Arabic humanism (Makdisi, 1990). What characterizes Islamic humanism, such as that of al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, ibn Rushd and many others is the emphasis on the role of mind in its critical and reasoning capacities and reason in the formation of character, morality, and the

human community with a strong emphasis on education and becoming learned (Ljamai, 2015).) through language, literature, oratory, history and moral philosophy although understood in much broader terms than today, for example, history also encompassing much of what we would call sociology, psychology, anthropology and geography. The purpose of these subjects was not only intrinsic, but were associated with higher human development, the dignity of humankind (Makdisi, 1997) and the creation of a just society in all facets of social, cultural, political and economic life. These principles of justice also deeply informed leadership ethics in Islam (Elkaleh & Samier, 2013) and an extensive Mirrors of Princes literature on good governance and leadership among rulers and administrators (Samier, 2017).

Foundational to Islamic social justice is the exhortation at the beginning of Qur'an for all to read and become educated, for it is through these that people understand their religion and their moral, social and political responsibilities. It is also in Islamic territories that systems of education were established or expanded, and many principles related to education were instituted derived directly from the Qur'an and Sunna (Ali, 1938; Hejazi, 2010; von Grunebaum, 1953; Tan, 2015) as sources as well as commentary by major philosophical figures in the early Islamic period such as al-Farabi, al Kindi, ibn Sina, and ibn Rushd (Butterworth, 2006), who influenced the principles established in law and policy in Muslim polities (e.g., 'Umar Farooq) (Waardenburg, 2003), and contemporary theorists (Hasan, 2007; Kamali, 2002; Mehmet, 1990).

Justice, including social justice as distributive, retributive, and fairness and equity (Hasan, 2007; Kamali, 2002), is central to an Islamic worldview and the aim of piety, to correct injustices, individually and collectively (Goodman, 2003; Timani, 2012) which imposes upon the believer many duties in combating social injustice (Hoveyda, 1995). For example, the full range of social, economic and educational rights were intended to be equally extended to women (Timani, 2012), introducing a broad range of rights and expectations of women's roles in society that were revolutionary in the societies in which Islam arose.

The ages-long traditions and institutions of social justice in the Islamic Middle East were heavily affected negatively by European colonization which both disrupted organizations and sets of codes and laws, and encouraged many state elites to contract with European powers to profiteer seen today in competing models of justice throughout the region (Thompson, 2014).

In management, and I would argue education, colonization and subsequent modernization that is foreign dominated have produced a disengagement in local managers from traditional and Islamic values that Ali and Al-Shakhis (1989) identify as the avoidance of responsibility and risk, a high concern with job security and stability, a reluctance to delegate authority, a preservation of centralization, and the priorization of personal considerations and friends over organizational goals and performance. However, the adoption of some Western systems, like constitutions and parliaments was not successful in preventing the rise of privileges for a minority and uneven economic growth, an ongoing challenge for Muslim populations.

First Nations Social Justice Traditions

Another set of valuable knowledge traditions that inform social justice concepts and practices are those evident in a number of national reconciliation discussions in Australia, New Zealand and Canada with indigenous communities about cultural rights, even though the educational goals of the wider community have not yet been successful (Gunstone, 2016). Australian aboriginal communities are one of the oldest on earth with approximately 60,000 years of continuous societies, and while internally highly diverse were united by a number of common values and practices associated with kinship, gift exchange, and religious concepts (Tonkinson, 2012). The discussion here focusses on social justice concepts among aboriginal groups in Australia (Tonkinson, 2012), New Zealand (Higgins 2012), and some tribal groups in Canada (Gagnon 2012; Reagan 2005) where principles of individual rights and obligations to others and nature carried with them obligations for how others are treated and cared for with stronger collective than individualistic values (Milward, 2012). A further dimension of indigenous sensibilities, values and identity is a close relationship with nature and the land, necessary elements of socio-cultural and spiritual traditions in addition to language and traditional practices, largely destroyed or impeded through colonisation and still not fully recognised by the UN (Tawhia, 2016).

Aboriginal justice systems also blend justice with healing and community (Ross, 2009) in a more integrated model of society where the separation of social institutions is not that of post-medieval Western societies where law is not separated from custom, but legitimize important justice concepts and codes (Proulx, 2003). A socially just education is one that is community-based, where communication is open and respected, which prepares people for full participation in helping create social just communities, where significant sites related to

indigenous values can be visited that connect students to the stories of tradition and the land, and curriculum has a strong First-Nations or aboriginal content (Tawhai, 2016).

In Canada, the discussion of aboriginal or First Nations justice is embedded in alternative systems drawing on traditions as part of self-determination and self-governance (Andersen, 1999) and the use of cultural creativity and peace-making as a foundation for justice and law (Proulx, 2005). Social justice is conceptualized as the healing of an individual in order to restore individual and collective order and harmony using such sentencing practices as circles, community panels, advisory committees and mediation committees, sometimes conceptualized as 'peace-making' that is run by a community member elected and trained to manage a process with the assistance of an Elder through which a cycle of presentations by participants resulting in a variety of decisions including restitution, counselling, community service, etc. (Proulx, 2003). An example of aboriginal mediation practices for restorative justice is the use of the Medicine Wheel that provides a process of healing and self-knowledge from which justice arises (Proulx, 2005). Central to this view is an opposition of community and state, where the latter is associated with a bureaucratic-technical system with which aboriginal community is inconsistent, and it is only through community, tailored to the needs of each, that restorative justice is possible contributing to its health and healing breaches between community members (Andersen, 1999). Its essence is to return individuals to their responsibility to community and its individual members.

Australian aboriginal communities are similar in their cultural and community approach to justice, consisting still of strong kinship-based communities in the form of bands where shared leadership is practiced, a highly egalitarian distribution of resources is practiced, and fundamental spiritual principles unite people with the land in which concepts of justice, punishment and retribution are embedded – all carried out through community rituals and restorative ceremonies in a unifying reciprocity (Tonkinson, 2012). Similar to many other traditional societies, individuals are expected to self-regulate, but where they fail, the kin system exerts values to maintain social balance. In this manner social justice is practiced as an intrinsic part of social and individual life in harmony with the environment. Central to many of these traditions is a much closer relationship to nature, for many groups personhood is extended to animals, vegetation and land formations considered to be of equal worth and respect, and therefore entitled to social justice as in traditional Ojibway society (Gagnon, 2012). Among the Maori in New Zealand, land also plays an embodied role in identity, the

construction of social and spiritual values, and the shaping of customs to preserve the primacy of community in which justice and social order resides (Higgins, 2012).

While these traditions vary considerably across indigenous peoples, there are commonalities that are also shared and which are at odds with modernized Western-style societies: a spiritual dimension to reality, a unified view of humanity with the natural world, strong kinship groups that perform the same roles as many Western legalistic and policy systems, and socio-cultural systems that restore harmony (Fredericks et al., 2014; Gagnon, 2012), and often with consensus- and mediation-structured processes in maintaining social justice. Education in these communities is much closer to what is regarded as apprenticeship in earlier historical periods in the West rather than "schooling."

Conclusion

What a postcolonial perspective brings to social justice for education is a more diversified view of the philosophical traditions, conceptions and practices that extend beyond those globally dominant from the West – liberal-humanism, market-individualism, and the social democratic (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), their emphasis on individuality exacerbated by neoliberal managerialism (Blackmore, 2006). Given the traditions discussed above, this means conceptualizing social justice in broader terms that include a stronger role for community, distribution of resources and benefits that are not embedded in capitalism, and accepting that cultural norms may play a stronger role than bureaucratic-style policies and procedures and objectified standardized accountability regimes. All of them have had their worldviews, values, legal and social structures subordinated through colonisation while imposing on them labels of uncivilized, inferior, etc. (Fredericks et al., 2014), including many views about ancient societies reflecting a progressivist fallacy in history.

However, not only does social justice have to play a stronger role in how minorities are treated, and the laws, policies and practices in ensuring a stronger diversity and inclusion, but the very traditions from which many of these groups come need to be recognized as legitimate forms of knowledge. Social justice in education itself needs to be decolonized. The implications for educational administration and leadership is to acquire a greater multicultural and transcultural competence in scholarship and practice. This requires adopting primarily a post-colonial perspective on how they can contribute to education,

according to Hickling-Hudson (2006) transcending colonizer distortions of knowledge to the present and draw implications from bodies of knowledge that have been removed from the dominating international literature. Social justice is, like other core concepts and values, a construction of the socio-cultural and political context in which it arises (Fischer, 2016). In other words, it is embedded in the context, social institutional arrangements, organizational context, and values of a community. This means expanding how 'context' is understood to include societal arrangements and social institutions that are different from the Anglo-American conceptions that dominate the field, conceptualized in Anglo-American practice as centred on the school (and university) reflecting the conditions of a highly differentiated modernized society. However, if one is living in a more integrated traditional style culture, education is a more dispersed and embedded set of relationships that include formal, informal and nonformal practices.

A false assumption that needs to be disposed of is that social justice did not arise with modern democracy. Fischer (2016), for example, argues that justice is an implicit and ever present part of human social relationships, evident in ancient codes of early cities having provisions for fairness – in other words it is a necessary condition of human culture. A more historically accurate explanation is that democracy grew out of social justice humanistic and legal traditions that long preceded contemporary forms. To meaningfully engage in social justice means to overcome the barriers and suppressions, if not attempted eradications, of traditions that have become marginalized by incorporating other "frames of thinking" and how they "can help us to recognise, explore and disrupt entrenched preconceptions" that can be viewed as intellectual "violence" (Hickling-Hudson, 2006, pp. 201, 204).

Many social justice traditions themselves require a more just recognition of their existence and value. This is a logical extension of Young's (1990) and Fraser's (1997) justice critique of cultural imperialism. There are two aspects to such an inclusion: the social justice values embedded in some non-Western traditions need to be protected under law and which require that others be educated in non-negative stereotyped versions or devalue them entirely; and the educational right to one's cultural and intellectual traditions, such as that of indigenous communities (Tawhai, 2016).

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