



## **Intergenerational justice in the time of rising inequality**

*Edited by Alberto Pirni and Fausto Corvino*

We live in an era of unprecedented opportunities. Many scientific and social problems that until recently seemed insurmountable have now been addressed, and it will probably continue to be so in the next future. Yet, if we widen the scope of our analysis we cannot help but notice that growing possibilities for humanity correspond to social, economic and environmental risks that are just as unprecedented.

What distinguishes the majority of the risks associated with both industrial and post-industrial society is the fact that they can be easily unloaded to future generations. In other words, current individuals stand in a position to decide which percentage of the costs related to economic growth they want to retain and which percentage they want to pass on to their descendants – e.g. climate change, public debts, and so on. Practice-dependent theories of justice do usually fail to provide a clear philosophical guidance for current society to allocate the costs of negative externalities across time. Moreover, national governments are normally under moral pressure to tackle both domestic and world poverty, two objectives that might be at odds with a fair intergenerational allocation of costs and opportunities.

The purpose of this call for papers of *Lessico di Etica Pubblica* (X, n. 2, 2019) is to approach the multifaceted ethical issues related to intergenerational justice from a three-sided perspective that encompasses also present-time duties of domestic and global justice. Shall we seek to reconcile the three perspectives? If it were the case, how shall we make sense of duties of justice toward future individuals in the light of the fact that we are falling short of the distributive provisos recommended within intragenerational theories of justice? In addressing

these philosophical conundrums we invite the submission of papers that fall within - at least - one of the following clusters:

- Environmental damages and climate change: scientists keep on warning us that current models of production and consumption will bring irreparable damages to the environment in the next future, with disastrous consequences for humans as well. Yet, current generations hesitate to undergo the economic sacrifices needed to preserve pre-industrial equilibria. How shall we interpret our duties of environmental justice toward posterity within the broader picture of current inequality and world poverty?
- Public debt and financial stability: current generations may happen to shoulder the costs of past economic looseness, hence they may have no alternative but to reduce the inherited public debt through cuts in social spending. How shall we distribute the costs of fiscal prudence, that have been unloaded by past individuals, between present and future generations?
- A fair access to adaptive technologies: if unfettered growth and development are likely to pose increasing problems, especially in terms of environmental sustainability, we should also take into account that they may provide future individuals with the technological knowledge needed to come up with adaptive strategies that might reduce the negative impact – at least on humans – of climate change and environmental threats. How can we make sense of this empirical element within a credible theory of intergenerational justice?
- The moral motivation for fulfilling our obligations toward posterity: implementing intergenerational justice means to undergo some sacrifices now in order to make future individuals better off than they would be otherwise. We welcome articles which seek to ground this motivation for safeguarding the wellbeing of posterity within moral theory. In particular, we are interested in philosophical contributions concerned with the normative and emotional justifications of our obligations toward future generations and with the more general issue regarding whether and how intergenerational justice can be reconciled with our intragenerational moral ties.

**Deadline for essays:** 02<sup>nd</sup> September 2019

**Communication of acceptance:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Publication:** within the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

All articles must be submitted no later than **02<sup>nd</sup> September 2019**, in a form already prepared for blind review procedures. Both Italian and English texts are accepted (the latter will be translated into Italian); they must conform to the editorial guidelines that can be found at the following address <http://www.eticapubblica.it>; the maximum allowed length is 35.000 characters (including spaces and footnotes and an abstract of max. 150 words to be written both in English and Italian – if the language of the article is Italian).

**Please submit your essay here:** [a.pirni@santannapisa.it](mailto:a.pirni@santannapisa.it) and [f.corvino@santannapisa.it](mailto:f.corvino@santannapisa.it)