

The social forms challenge to just dependency care provision, or
“I care about justice, but who will bring me tea?”¹

Asha Bhandary
Assistant Professor
Department of Philosophy
University of Iowa

Introduction

Dependency care is direct, hands-on care for people who cannot care for themselves, which includes infants, those suffering from debilitating conditions at the end of life such as Alzheimer’s disease and Parkinson’s disease, anyone who experiences a major illness or injury, and the severely disabled.² In spite of the necessity of dependency care, traditional theories of philosophical liberalism have excluded dependency care from the domain of justice. More specifically, the need to receive care is excluded from the circumstances of justice that characterize liberalism, is an obstacle to gender justice because care is traditionally provided by women in the private sphere. In my book project *Liberalism and Dependency Care*, I propose a principle for just dependency care provision called *strong proceduralism*. *Strong proceduralism* requires public educational efforts to teach the generalizable care-giving skills of attentiveness and responsiveness to men. I argue that women should not be assigned a de facto role as dependency care providers, and that men should be appropriately socialized to be able to consider a life in which care-giving plays a substantial role to be one viable option among others. The baseline skills needed to be able to consider this are attentiveness, which is the ability to notice the needs of others – this includes facility at reading facial cues, for example, and

¹ This paper is based on Chapter 5 of my book manuscript, *Liberalism and Dependency Care*.

² See Eva Kittay’s 1999 book *Love’s Labor* for the foundational theorizing about dependency care to which this paper is indebted. See also Joan Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, and Virginia Held, *The Ethics of Care* for foundational works in the ethics of care. For liberal feminist account with a similar structure, see Amy Baehr, Christie Hartley and Lori Watson.

responsiveness,³ which is the capacity to set aside one's own needs away in order to actually respond to the needs of someone else. Thus, responsiveness crucially includes a volitional capacity.

In spite of men's recently increasing participation in care-giving, girls and women continue to have greater facility at care-giving skills. Therefore, in order to secure two aims: a gender-just society and adequate care, the following intervention in the status quo must be achieved - boys and men must be taught care-giving skills. The distance between my proposal and existing cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity in most social forms constitutes a practical challenge for my positive proposals to better prepare men to become care-givers. In this paper, I assess the challenges facing this proposal.

Section 1. An explanation of resistance to just dependency care arrangements

The explanandum

Consider the following two men:

Sam says he is committed to equality, autonomy and fairness. Nonetheless, his wife Laura meets all dependency care needs in their immediate and extended family, which thereby impedes her ability to live a life of her own design. This arrangement occurred as an outcome of the following history: based on her gender, Sam and others assumed that Laura would provide care for the people in their familial circle who require it. The two spouses responded to these pressures through a series of choices and adjustments that led Laura to take on a role as the full-time care provider while Sam continued to pursue his life's vocation as a Mathematician. When presented with an argument that justice requires a de-gendering of care labor, Sam listens attentively and grants the reasonableness of the proposals.⁴ However, his actions are inconsistent with his reasoned deliberations. He fails to

³ These are Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher's terms. See Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 1993. In Chapter 4 of my book, I discuss Tronto's definitions of these terms and I explain how and why my account differs from hers. See also Florence Nightingale's nursing theory about facial expression as communication, which was the forerunner of Tufte's Visual Display of information, and then also Dreyfus's model of skill acquisition.

⁴ I provide this argument in Chapter 4, *Liberalism and Dependency Care*.

make himself available to respond to the care needs of his children, elderly parents, and close friends, and Laura correspondingly continues to meet the care needs due to the belief that these care needs cannot fail to be answered.

Sam is a member of Set 1, consisting of the people who espouse a commitment to the values of equality, autonomy and fairness that justify de-gendered care-giving and, more generally, gender equity and yet resist the changes required to achieve equity in practice.

Mark is also a participant in a heterosexual marriage with a traditionally gendered division of labor. He differs from Sam, though, in that he is not committed to equality, autonomy, or fairness. He is happy to receive the benefits of a social arrangement in which gender bias is pervasive as long as he is a beneficiary of the bias.⁵ He loves his wife, Ellie, but he is not swayed by arguments showing that justice and equality require changes in his own life because he is not committed to the values of fairness or equality. Instead, he views himself to be competing over benefits in his personal life, and he recognizes that he is in the advantaged bargaining position. He is unwilling to forego these advantages unless his wife demands change and backs her demand with real bargaining power. Mark is a member of Set 2, consisting of people who do not espouse a commitment to the values of equality, autonomy and fairness.⁶ In fact, this rationale is not rare or outlandish; on the contrary, Amartya Sen's analysis of 'cooperative conflicts' reveals that this is a widespread rationale in marriages. Susan Okin has also established that traditional marriage is implicitly structured by the inequality in power that results when women are not wage earners and are therefore more vulnerable if they exit the relationship.

In this paper, I explain the resistance of Sam and others in Set 1. My analysis of their resistance will result in the thesis that membership in a social form must be weighed in an all-things-

⁵ His wife fares worse along any of the following metrics: Martha Nussbaum's capabilities list, Rawlsian primary goods, or Uma Narayan's bundle of goods.

⁶ They might be ethical egoists, for example.

considered evaluation of a just society. Here, my focus is gender equity and – more precisely, dependency care arrangements, but my conclusions have more general implications for transitional justice.⁷ I postpone discussion of Set 2 to another paper as will relate to two objections: the objection that my proposal fails to respect multiculturalism as a principle of toleration and the objection that it is overly perfectionist.

The explanans: investments in social forms.

The concept of social forms

The reason that members of Set 1 resist the changes required by gender equity in spite of their commitments to the values of equality, fairness, and autonomy is that they are invested in their social form. These investments are like Kuhn's view of basic scientists' investments in a scientific paradigm, and they similarly lead to resistance to changing social forms.

Joseph Raz defines social forms as the political and social institutions, popular and high culture, norms, tropes, and collectively shared metaphors, economic conditions and the nature of the labor market (1986, p. 311). Will Kymlicka emphasizes the additional importance of language and history, and utilizes the term “societal culture” instead (1989).⁸ I will employ Raz's *account* of social forms, which implies language and history, anyway. Thus, I use the term *social form* as a comprehensive term that summarizes the context in which people live. *Social form* is also preferable to the term “culture” because the former includes institutional arrangements.

⁷ In this way, this is a work of theory about ideal and non-ideal theory. See Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, Bk. III, chap. 5, # 2-7, and Feinberg, “Duty and Obligation in the Non-Ideal World”, p. 257, A. John Simmons, *Ideal and Non-ideal Theory*, fn. # 18. Simmons tells us that Rawls's position on nonideal theory is that it consists in “transitional principles relative to an integrated ideal” (23).

⁸ The discussion of social forms began with Charles Taylor's criticism of liberal atomism. According to Taylor, social forms provide a shared interpretive matrix (1985). Steve Wall's account of social forms differs slightly from Raz's by including moral codes and the institutionalization of occupations (1998). Let me note that I am not reviving the debate between liberals and communitarians in this paper.

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A note about my appropriation of the concept “social forms”

Feminist ethicists do not theorize about *social forms*, but feminism needs a concept that combines institutional and private arrangements and cultural production; they interact in complex ways and they are unified in the sense that together they provide the context of choice for an individual person. Feminism rejects the standard division between public and private spheres, and therefore post-feminist solutions to the basic problems of justice will carve up social forms in new ways.

Raz’s social forms thesis:

Raz defends the following thesis about social forms: the pursuit of a **comprehensive goal** is possible only within a social form that supports it.

A person can have a comprehensive goal *only if* it is based on existing social forms, i.e. on forms of behavior which are in fact widely practiced in his society....In talking of social forms I have in mind the public perception of common social forms of action, each of which has the internal richness and complexity which makes it into a possible comprehensive personal goal (Raz, 1986, 308).

Taking up the example of marriage, Raz illustrates two claims – (1) that the significance of our behaviors depends on social forms, and (2) that individuals can only acquire and maintain their goals through continuous familiarity with the social forms” (1986, 310). Marriage is one comprehensive goal that quite obviously depends on legal institutions; two individuals who make a commitment to each other and register for a marriage license are “married” because it is a recognized comprehensive goal in the laws of our social form. This example illustrates that our actions have the meaning they do because of the social forms in which they are embedded. Raz grants that variations on the social form can develop, but they are always best defined by the fact of

their deviation from that form. Thus, an open marriage can evolve even if this is unknown in a society because it combines elements from existing socially recognized forms.⁹

The second set of reasons Raz provides in defense of his thesis that the range of possible comprehensive goals is set by social forms is that there are some goals that we can acquire only through habituation rather than deliberation. In the case of goals involving relationships with other people, habituation into a shared social form is necessary to have a shared matrix of understanding that makes actions intelligible to one another. Consider the importance of habituation in the case of responding to a tired and distressed friend:

...the conventions of appropriate behavior...include clues by which one judges the intensity or intimacy the relationship has reached, and these in turn determine what reaction will be appropriate...But they are too dense to allow explicit description or learning; they can be learnt only by experience, direct or derived (e.g. from fiction) (1986, 312).

Social forms and dependency care arrangements

Raz's analysis of habituation into social forms can be profitably applied to dependency care arrangements to illuminate the challenges faced by a transition to just dependency care arrangements. These arrangements are often embedded within intimate relationships, and therefore the significance of various forms of care is thoroughly intertwined with these relationships.¹⁰ If this care is not performed by the category of people who have previously provided the care, it will be interpreted as "withheld care." For example, when mothers, wives and daughters provide less care,

⁹ The two elements are "conventional marriage" and "sexual pursuit which is kept free of emotional involvement" (Raz, 1986, 309).

¹⁰ I am not going to conjecture about why care has been gendered, nor will I seek to define gender here. See, Theodore Bach, "Gender is a Natural Kind with a Historical Essence," *Ethics* 2012., and Sally Haslanger, "Gender and Race: What are They, and What do we want them to be?" *Nous*, 2000.

they are understood to care *less about* the people they were assigned to care for in the previous care arrangements.¹¹

Indeed, both hands-on dependency care and the broader category of care are well-recognized ways that people communicate love and concern. Consider the social significance of gestures of concern and hospitality, such as making and sharing of tea. In patriarchal social forms, women typically make and serve tea for the members of the household. If we are to achieve gender equity in care provision, then Sam will therefore have to forego some daily features of life that he enjoys, such as the tea Laura makes for him every afternoon. Sam may resist these changes by complaining about the absence of tea, begrudging Laura her activities that take her away from the house in the afternoon, and so forth. Recall, though that Sam endorses the values that underlie gender equity –unlike Mark, he does not endorse the unfairness that underlies patriarchy.

Is the resistance of Set 1 *justified* in any way or do the members of Set 1 simply fail to be consistent? The resistance of Set 1 is not mere irrationality as inconsistency. It is not the case that Sam merely fails to be moral in these cases, either. Instead, the loss of these gestures places relationships at sea, and without moorings. Correspondingly, the loss of the textured realities of a way of life must be added to an all-things-considered evaluation of gender equity. Indeed, gender equity can result in problems for the relationship as a whole – how will Laura communicate her love and concern for him in a way Sam can understand if they are to depart from traditional forms of behavior?

Note: Generality of my claim about investments in social forms

Everyone is invested in a social form, at least minimally. No person in a society is completely uninvested in a social form – and this is the case for even people who are disadvantaged,

¹¹ The vast panoply of mainstream popular television shows that demonize women for their engagement in their careers and portray them as simply absent attests to the meaning current American culture assigns to women providing less care (see for example Veronica Mars, Castle, Gossip Girl).

such as women in patriarchal social forms, who often orient themselves towards men in ways that provide access to the goods of income and wealth and the social bases of self-respect.¹²

Normative considerations

Thus far, I have established that we rely on shared social forms to communicate with others, to set goals and aims, and that they provide implicit interpretive frameworks for interpersonal relationships. I have explained the resistance of Sam and others in Set 1 with the *concept* of a social form. The next task of the paper is to provide a normative evaluation of this resistance. Does Sam's resistance provide a reason to mitigate going forward with strong proceduralism? This task, in turn, requires a disambiguation of the differential burdens presented by strong proceduralism, which is not equally burdensome to all people. When a social form changes to achieve gender justice in care-giving arrangements, patriarchal men – both Sets 1 and 2, will bear a greater share of the burdens from this change. I use the term “patriarchal man” here to mean “man in a patriarchal social form.”

Definition of the patriarchal man

A patriarchal man benefits from a system of gender inequality in that he is insulated from the costs of dependency care; he receives care without providing it. Moreover, his life projects dictate structural features of his family's life such as geographic location, financial status, and religion. The patriarchal man will have a greater investment in the social form because he occupies a privileged location in the social arrangements and receives a greater number of goods. Patriarchal men can expect to have more leisure than women in patriarchal societies, where the arrow of care points from women towards men. Moreover, the goods possessed by patriarchal men are socially recognized and positively valued. It follows from the position of patriarchal men that they are the set of people with the most to lose from a social form changing to achieve justice in dependency care arrangements.

¹² See, for example, Serene Khader's book *Adaptive Preferences and Women's Empowerment* for a perspicuous discussion of rational tradeoffs that may be falsely identified as adaptive preferences.

Sam is a *man in a patriarchal social form*. Although he does not endorse the social form, his location in it as a man shapes numerous aspects of his daily life. Mark and the other members of Set 2, in contrast, both occupy the position and endorse the inequality on which it is based. In the next section, I consider patriarchal men as a group consisting of both Set 1 and Set 2 in order to understand the social position. Next, I will construct a defense for the rights of patriarchal men to have exemptions from the requirements of gender equity based on an analogy with the social position of cultural minorities. I provide Will Kymlicka's argument for group-differentiated multicultural rights,¹³ and I show that - if Kymlicka's argument is sound - it applies to the plight of patriarchal men under *strong proceduralism*.

The normative status of the cultural membership objection

The burdens associated with navigating a “new social form” - by which I mean a social form that differs from the social form in which a person has developed his or her sense of identity – are well known to travelers and immigrants. Consider the foreignness and disorientation communicated by the Sophia Coppola film *Lost in Translation* set in Japan, which was appropriately lauded for its perspicuous communication of the precise kind of disorientation that occurs when a person travels to a culture in which *everything* is experienced as different. Forays into foreignness can be exhilarating for many personalities, but the newness of a different culture always demands – at least –additional exertion on behalf of the traveler to comprehend the norms and attempt to translate her intentions and actions to others. However, travelers suspend their life projects, and they know that they will return “home” where they will be intelligible, once again.¹⁴

People who move to a vastly different social form than their social form of origin, though, face a far more extreme challenge, which is to become culturally adept enough to communicate

¹³ Group differentiated rights include veto rights or self-government rights. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, p. 126.

¹⁴ Lugones's “world-playing” is relevant here. She notes that world-playing is what minority women are not allowed to do. Include a section on that later.

effectively with other people and build relationships with them. When a person undertakes this burden voluntarily, though, the voluntarism justifies the burden. In contrast, Will Kymlicka contends that if the burden of a loss of one's culture is imposed by a state upon its citizens, it is unjustified. Correspondingly, Kymlicka has argued that members of national minorities - such as the Quebecois in Canada and indigenous groups like the Sami in Finland - should not be required to assimilate to the majority culture of the state, and that they should have exemptions from assimilation as "group-differentiated rights" (Kymlicka, 1989). If Kymlicka's argument succeeds, it will provide grounds for patriarchal men's group rights.

Kymlicka's argument for multicultural group rights

Kymlicka's argument for multicultural group rights is based on Charles Taylor's social thesis, which states that our capacity for agency is possible only from within a social form that promotes conditions for the exercise of these capacities. There are two distinct claims that one can make about the relationship between a social form and individual agency. Taylor's claim is that a social form must support the capacities for autonomy in order for the autonomous person valued by liberalism to develop. His criticism of the liberal atomistic conception of the self follows from this claim.¹⁵

Social forms claim 1: An autonomy-promoting social form is necessary for the cultivation of autonomous capacities.

Kymlicka makes the second claim about a specific kind of relationship between the social form and an individual.

Social forms claim 2: Membership in one's own societal culture is a necessary condition for the integrity of a person's identity. Social form x is a necessary condition for the identity of person X. (particularity clause)

¹⁵ This premise then supports the liberal perfectionism of Raz, Wall, and Mill. Rawls is also aware of the role the social structure must play for the cultivation of a sense of justice in citizens. Although Taylor criticizes liberalism for a commitment to atomism: 'the utterly facile moral psychology of traditional empiricism', according to which we are completely independent outside society – Mill and Rawls are not the proper focus of this critique, as Kymlicka notes. All of them hold that we can develop autonomy only within a certain kind of society – a society that supports the cultivation of the necessary capacities.

Based on the **particularity** clause, Kymlicka concludes that one's culture is a political good and that people need access to their own social form in order to "form and revise their aims and ambitions."¹⁶ A detailed examination of Kymlicka's argument is necessary for the task at hand, because it has important ramifications for patriarchal men.

Kymlicka's argument

1. The particular social form in which one is embedded establishes the range of feasible options. (substitute culture for social form):
2. Therefore, the loss of a particular culture harms one's identity and agency. Losing culture X for person x harms x's identity. This is the case even if the culture is not an autonomy-promoting culture because the exercise of agency simply requires the ability to comprehend options.
 1. For Kymlicka, even losing a culture that is not autonomy-promoting will damage one's agency because of the way in which the possibilities of agency necessitate an identity in a culture.
3. So, losing one's own culture is a burden.
4. When can this burden be legitimately imposed on members of a society?
5. If one chooses to leave one's culture, then enduring the harm is permissible. Voluntary immigration appropriately results in a requirement to take on this harm because it is chosen.
6. In contrast, it is unjust to demand that national minorities and indigenous groups be forced to assimilate into a majority culture because they will lose the context in which their choices are possible and their actions are intelligible.¹⁷
7. Members of national minorities and indigenous groups should have rights that protect their culture and their membership within the culture and exempt them from some laws governing the political state in which they reside.¹⁸

Patriarchal men, like members of national minority groups, have not asked for dramatic changes to their social form. The effects of Sidgwickian "rug-pulling" are largely negative, and they have not sought out these changes, unlike immigrants, whose "voluntary" departure from a social form justifies the burden they incur.¹⁹ Thus, if Kymlicka's argument is sound, its logical extension would exempt patriarchal men from the burdens of changing for strong proceduralism because they have not chosen the changes. His argument is not sound, though. There are at least three reasons to

¹⁶ Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, p. 135.

¹⁷ National minorities include indigenous people like the Sami of Finland, and also ethnic minorities with long histories in a country, like the Scots in Britain and the ethnic Germans in Poland (Kymlicka, *Multicultural Odysseys*, p.36).

¹⁸ See also Chapter 6 of *Multicultural Citizenship*, Will Kymlicka, pages 126-127.

¹⁹ For present purposes, I will accept the characterization of immigration as voluntary when in fact immigration is far more complicated than this and the term voluntary can be used in only a very weak sense to describe people who leave societies in which there are very meager options in favor of societies where their life opportunities will be much better.

reject his argument. First, there are some individuals who are capable of a cosmopolitan sense of their identity. Consider Bruce Ackerman's description of a day in the life of the cosmopolitan (himself); he jumps into his German car, types on his Japanese word processor (this was 1994), and dines over Indian food while discussing intellectual trends from Paris. Although I think that Ackerman overestimates the extent to which this kind of cosmopolitanism applies to the American population in general, the important point for present purposes is that some people are capable of a thoroughly cosmopolitan identity.²⁰

We should also reject Raz and Kymlicka's version of the social forms thesis because they fail to appreciate the significance of innovation.²¹ Raz thinks that the most significant thing about innovation is the distance it achieves from an existing social form. However, when we consider a literary innovator like Toni Morrison who did not have a readily recognizable option to be a literary genius as an African-American woman - it should be evident that the most significant thing about Morrison and her work is not the distance she travels from established norms of behavior. It is, instead, Morrison's innovative body of work. To reduce the significance of her work to a mere critique of existing social forms is to miss the value inherent in her novels.

²⁰ Bruce Ackerman, "Political Liberalisms," *Journal of Philosophy*, 1994. Ackerman rejects Rawls's view, ascribing to a cosmopolitan view of the individual, instead: "The challenge is to join strangers in a common project of political cooperation, grounded in a mutual recognition of each individual's equal right to be different. Rather than seek to include immigrants in this liberal process of public reason, Western nations deal with "aliens" by excluding them at the frontier. It is this choice of force over reason which makes present-day immigration practices a scandal of the liberal West. By beginning his thought experiment with the notion of a completely closed society, Rawls makes it easy to ignore this glaring injustice. The assumption is also false to the facts of modern life. Reading Rawls's stipulation of a closed society in the evening, I reviewed the events of my day. Oversleeping my alarm clock made in Taiwan, I had hurriedly thrown on clothes manufactured variously in China, India, Italy, and England. I then sat down to my only All-American event: breakfast-glancing through *The New York Times* to read about the tragedy in Bosnia and the threats of nuclear attack from North Korea. I then jumped into my German car, speeding through the slums of New Haven, to spend a profitable morning pounding away at my Japanese word-processor in my Yale office. Lunch was at an Indian restaurant with friends who enthusiastically championed the latest crazy ideas coming out of Paris. I proceeded to the classroom to give a talk on justice to a large multinational student body, following this up with one-on-one conversations with four graduate students-two Americans, one Japanese, one Indian. My wife and I then went to dinner at a Chinese restaurant to hear friends describe their recent trip to Greece. I am sure Rawls's life is not too different, and that the typical day of a Dutch or Italian intellectual is even more cosmopolitan. Why, then, should we not begin analysis from the vantage point of an open society, rather than a closed one?"

²¹ Here I do not purport to address the metaphysical claim about social forms from Charles Taylor or its potential foundations in Wittgenstein.

Finally, Kymlicka's argument relies on a static account of the relation between a person's identity and her culture when, in fact, people can come to identify with a new culture. This is the topic of the next section.

Factors that affect pro-attitudes towards new social forms

By "new social form" I mean a social form that differs from the primary social form in which a person developed his or her sense of identity. In addition to whether one has chosen to live in a new social form, the burdensomeness of a different social form is also influenced by the material costs and benefits, which contribute to another variable - *the propensity to develop a pro-attitude towards the changes*. In a study of Iranian immigrants in Sweden, Fereshteh Lewin shows that living in a social form that differs significantly from a person's social form of origin can lead to identity crises due to a loss of inner integrity. A loss of inner integrity is the result of two distinct factors: "a discrepancy between the dominant culture and the culture internalized in the individual" and also the individual's failure to identify himself with the social groups or classes in the new society (2001, 123).

Lewin's study shows that Iranian women were better able to avoid identity crises in Sweden because they experienced the benefits of greater work opportunities and legal protections. These benefits subsequently led to a positive attitude towards the new culture, which in turn facilitated integration. Conversely, Iranian men did not experience these benefits and therefore formed a negative attitude about integration, which in turn led to a lesser ability to overcome the loss of inner integrity. Additional immigration studies have shown that the loss of one's mooring in a social form of origin leads some immigrants to fall into despondency and escapism, and even to commit suicide (Seltzer, 1980).

If the social form of the U.S. were to change radically and rapidly to achieve just dependency care provision, identity crises could result from the expectation that men should discern the care

needs of others. In addition, recognizing that dependency care requires mastery of complex skills will reconfigure prestige among occupations. These changes will be disorienting for nearly everyone, but those who currently provide care have more to gain from the changes I recommend. For the existing set of care providers, the required adjustments to one's sense of identity will be accompanied by the promise of greater self-esteem, self-worth, and less exhaustion from hard labor.

Analogously to the case of Iranian men in Sweden, patriarchal men in an autonomy-based liberal society receive benefits that they will lose when a just distribution of dependency care is achieved. Patriarchal men will gain a new set of burdens when women cease to be de facto caregivers - namely, the dependency care needs of society (generally) or of their intimates. The acquisition of these burdens will be compounded by a new experience of conflicts with workplace structures and policies.

The changing social form is likely to lead to identity crises due to conflicts with tropes and norms surrounding dependency care. To elaborate on my earlier point regarding *masculinity and identity*, the two care-giving skills attentiveness and responsiveness are alien to dominant norms of masculinity because the orientation that the self has to others when the self is being attentive is one of receptiveness. In contrast, norms of agency traditionally associated with masculinity are assertive. Thus, the socialization of men and their orientation to others in daily life will change if they acquire caregiving skills. Patriarchal men's material losses from strong proceduralism will be compounded by identity crises and the disorientation that results from a social form that is changing in dramatic ways.

In addition, individual differences in adaptability will also affect the burdensomeness of these changes. Some people are simply more flexible, whereas other people are more rigid. To be sure, innate propensities to adapt to change should not be confused with differences in willingness to change as influenced by one's investments in the social form. To illustrate this point, consider

again a woman who is embedded in a traditional patriarchal culture. The woman might be unwilling to accept changes to that social form because her expectations for her future are shaped by her position in the society. In addition, an intersectional analysis is needed; and as Vicky Spelman has argued, women's social positions are not determined solely by the fact of being a woman – race, ethnicity, class, disability, sexual orientation, and so forth have to be included within the analysis. Stated generally, if a woman occupies a position with high social status, then she may be indisposed to accept changes to a social form in which she is advantaged in some ways, albeit disadvantaged with respect to gender.²²

The final variable determining the burdensomeness of the changes required for de-gendered dependency care is its predicted impact on a person's actual relationships. Political philosopher Chandran Kukathas has argued that the conflict between belonging and freedom is evident in the historic case of the life of Kartini, who is a figure also discussed by Susan Okin and Eamonn Callan.²³ Kartini was a 17th century Javanese princess who studied European enlightenment thinking and sought to revolutionize Indonesia. In her correspondence with Dutch intellectual Stella Zeehandelaar, Kartini decried the practice of arranged marriage. Kartini yearned for an education in Europe, which she characterized in her own letters as the path of freedom. However, in spite of securing a seat in a Dutch university and finally overcoming all major obstacles to this pursuit, she ultimately decided to forego the opportunity and to accept an arranged marriage. Her Dutch friends criticized this choice as one that betrayed her considered values and simply capitulated to social pressures. Correctly interpreting the case of Kartini is important because Kukathas claims that the need for belonging trumped Kartini's goals of autonomy and intellectual development. I contend, however, that we need to understand the expectations that Kartini would have thwarted by leaving

²² In traditional Indian culture, for example, a woman will provide care to her parents-in-law and correspondingly expect to receive care from a future daughter-in-law. See Serene Khader (2011) for a detailed account of the difference between adaptive preferences and rational trade-offs.

²³ *Towards a Humanist Justice*, 2009.

her home to study abroad. It is significant that the reversal of her decision to travel abroad occurred at a time when her father was ill because we can assume that she would have felt a duty to tend to her ill father as his daughter. Consequently, leaving him at that time would have been interpreted as a lack of love for him – and Kartini articulated the value of love as the basis for her decision to forego a European education in her letters. Kartini’s choice revealed that she could not seek autonomy, freedom, and individuality without severely rupturing her relationships. She faced a dilemma, which I will theorize in a more general way as *the Kartini position*. **The Kartini position** is the social position from which a person cannot attain other personal goals, and some freedoms and related goods while also preserving the health of her existing personal relationships. Let us refer to the person in the Kartini position as “Kartini.” If the people with whom “Kartini” is in relationships do not endorse the liberalizing changes “Kartini” seeks, then she will have to choose between the liberal goods and her relationships. Kartini’s dilemma was particularly difficult because it involved her personal relationships; thus, it was not merely a matter of distributing goods among strangers. As I established with the earlier Razian analysis of the goals of friendship, marriage, and other interpersonal projects, habituation plays an important role in the success of these goals because they are dense. They “involve more than even those experienced in them can explicitly describe” and more than the individual pursuing the goal – they also rely upon an entire social form in which the people have been habituated.²⁴

Thesis

The preceding analysis shows that resistance to justice in dependency care is not fully explained by resistance to the particular change Y2 (men providing care); instead, the object of resistance is change to the social form X in which person x and the practice Y1 is embedded. Thus, what the members of Set 1 resist is not change X, but rather, the departure from social form X.

²⁴ Raz, 1986, p. 311.

Below, I summarize the variables affecting the burdensomeness of a changing social form for an individual.

Variables affecting the burdensomeness of a changing social form for an individual

1. Voluntary/involuntary provenance
2. Material benefits gained from the new social form
3. Material benefits lost from the new social form
4. Individual identity
5. Individual adaptability to change
6. Relationships [Kartini position]

Section 4. Conclusion.

The differential burdens experienced by patriarchal men in a society undergoing the changes of strong proceduralism must be evaluated and weighed against the value of justice in dependency care arrangements. However, recognizing these burdens does not entail conservatism. Instead, a theory of justice should seek to mitigate these burdens; and the good of cultural membership must be weighed against the importance of gender equity. My proposal is that achieving a theory of justice that respects cultural membership, provides the good of care, and respects autonomy requires attention to the burdens of changing social forms.²⁵ There are two ways to achieve this end. It can be achieved either by:

1. The complete and entire change of a society, so that the entire social form becomes radically transformed, or
2. Slow change that allows new cultural constructions to spring up around the new distributive arrangements.

²⁵ I argue for the other two goals in Chapters 1-4 of *Liberalism and Dependency Care*.

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Both approaches require intervention by political actors. Pragmatic considerations and a presumption against coercive state interference in the lives of individuals will tilt the scales to support the second solution.

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