I

Introduction

William A. Galston and Peter H. Hoffenberg

"The poor are always with us" – at all times, in every society. Nonetheless, societies have responded differently to the enduring questions such privation raises: who is poor, why are some poor while others are not, and what (if anything) should be done about their condition?

In keeping with the Ethikon Institute's mission of addressing significant global public policy questions in its Series in Comparative Ethics, this volume explores how great moral traditions, secular and religious, Western and non-Western, wrestle with basic questions about poverty and the poor. These traditions include Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism among the religious perspectives; classical liberalism, feminism, liberal egalitarianism, and Marxism among the secular; and natural law, which might be claimed by both.

Contributors to this volume were asked to discuss how their particular traditions deal with questions clustered around overarching themes.[1] What is poverty? Who are the poor? Is poverty a matter only of material conditions?[2] Are some people poor because of their own choices? Is poverty a deserved (if unintended) consequence of individuals' behavior? Are some individuals and groups more vulnerable and thus more likely to become impoverished? Is it the responsibility of the nonpoor to reduce – or, if possible, eliminate – poverty? Or should they eschew direct intervention on the grounds that such action might not alleviate poverty but rather worsen it or exacerbate other social problems? To what extent is the alleviation – or abolition – of poverty a feasible option? Which measures are likely to be most effective and ethically appropriate? Should these measures be undertaken by the government,

[1] The complete list of "topic-related questions" for the authors includes the definitions of poverty, identification of high-risk groups, role of volition, goals of poverty-related ideas and programs, remedies, scope and priorities, and responsibility and conditionality.

[2] World Bank South Asia recently estimated that about 1.1 billion people in South Asia live on less than two dollars per day; 700 million in India live on less than that; and 300 million people in India live on less than one dollar per day.

individuals, or voluntary organizations – or some combination? Who should receive assistance? And what are the limits to individual and communal obligations?

It should come as no surprise that the great religious and philosophical traditions respond to these questions in highly diverse ways. Not only do they offer different answers to the core questions poverty raises; they arrive at those answers in different ways. The moral and ethical authority might lie in sacred texts, bodies of law – witness the Jewish halakhic-based and Muslim *shari'a*-based responses to poverty and the poor – or the philosophy of leading thinkers.[3] Does one refer to the writings of John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and John Rawls when considering what to do about poverty and the poor, or to the Hebrew Bible and the Talmud, the New Testament and the Qur'an? The essays in this volume prompt us to wonder whether we are compelled to choose between secular and religious approaches to poverty.

Indeed, these approaches share an important characteristic: most were developed in circumstances in which individuals, households, and local communities took principal responsibility for identifying the poor and alleviating their plight. This raises a practical question: how, if at all, do these approaches apply in modern conditions, when the definition of poverty reflects economic theory and data and its rectification often falls to national and international institutions? To illuminate (though not to answer) this question, the volume begins with a background essay on "Global Poverty and Unequal Development: Contemporary Trends and Issues." Authored by Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, director and lead author of the *Annual Human Development Reports* of the United Nations Development Programme, this essay provides the quantitative global picture of the poor and poverty and also outlines thinking among key economists and policy makers concerning the types, scope, and causes of poverty and its remedies in the modern world.

As Fukuda-Parr notes, recent history offers examples of both success and failure. For example, economic growth in China and India has significantly reduced income-based poverty in those polities. By contrast, income-based poverty in other parts of South Asia and nearly all of sub-Saharan Africa has proved less tractable. Such uneven development can also be seen in the disproportionate number of women and children all around the world living and dying in poverty.

On the conceptual level, there remain disagreements about the precise working definition of poverty, a debate often focusing on whether a specific income level defines poverty, whether it is better viewed in relative terms, or perhaps in noneconomic terms such as social exclusion or deprivation of

[3] Jill Jacobs, "Toward a Halakhic Definition of Poverty," *Conservative Judaism* 57, no. 1 (Fall 2004): 3–20; and Adam Sabra, *Poverty and Charity in Medieval Islam: Mamluk Egypt, 1250–1517*, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

capabilities.[4] (The work of Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate in economics, is of particular importance in this debate; his contributions to the questions of poverty and the poor inform several of the following essays, most significantly the ones on feminism and liberal egalitarianism.)[5] Not surprisingly, differing definitions of poverty often result in further disagreements about whether progress is being made in the war against poverty and, if so, where and at what cost.

There are also major disagreements about the relationships among growth, prosperity, equality, and poverty.[6] Many scholars argue that efforts by institutions and governments to fight poverty through policies of income redistribution and employment protection end up reducing economic efficiency, growth, and wealth, thereby increasing poverty. Perhaps economic growth and direct measures to enforce equality are not compatible; but what about economic growth and poverty reduction, a query pondered in the classical and egalitarian liberal traditions? What should be the balance between promoting economic growth and attacking poverty, notably when growth exacerbates inequality (as has often been the case in recent decades)? Would it be more efficient and equitable to practice trickle-down or percolate-up growth policies?[7] Those are not new queries. After all, Adam Smith and his colleagues in the Scottish Enlightenment investigated strategies for generating

[4] Helpful consideration and comparison of different definitions of poverty are included in Dag Ehrenpreis, ed., *Poverty in Focus: What Is Poverty? Concepts and Measures* (Brasilia: International Poverty Centre, United Nations Development Programme, 2006); Frances Stewart, Ruhi Saith, and Barbara Harriss-White, eds., *Defining Poverty in the Developing World* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), esp. Stewart, Saith, and Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, "Introduction: Four Approaches to Defining and Measuring Poverty," 1–35; and Paul Spicker, *The Idea of Poverty* (London: Policy Press, 2007).

[5] Among other works, see "Poverty as Capability Deprivation," *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999), 86–110.

[6] The classic post-1945 analysis of comparative national economic growth remains Simon Kuznets, *Modern Economic Growth: Rate, Structure and Spread* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). More recently, the various relationships among inequality, growth, wealth, and poverty are discussed in Benjamin M. Friedman, *The Moral Consequences of Economic Growth* (New York: Knopf, 2005); Liah Greenfeld, *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978); Jonas Pontusson, *Inequality and Prosperity: Social Europe vs. Liberal America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); Theo S. Eicher and Stephen J. Turnovsky, eds., *Inequality and Growth: Theory and Policy Implications* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007); Paul Johnson, "The Welfare State, Income and Living Standards," in *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, vol. 3: *Structural Change and Growth, 1939–2000*, ed. Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 213–37; and Laura de Dominicis, Raymond J. G. M. Florax, and Henri L. F. de Groot, "A Meta-Analysis on the Relationship between Income Inequality and Economic Growth," *Scottish Journal of Political Economy* 55, no. 5 (November 2008): 654–82.

[7] Santonu Basu and Shushanta Mallick, "When Does Growth Trickle Down to the Poor? The Indian Case," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 32, no. 3 (May 2008): 461–77.

wealth, enhancing liberty, and reducing "pauperism" while trying to solve the riddle of "why some nations are so rich and some so poor."[8]

Economists and others attempt to understand the possible connections between international trade and finance on one hand and poverty and inequality on the other. Do global institutions such as the World Bank, movements such as the liberalization of international trade, and overseas policies including foreign aid affect the poor and poverty itself?[9] If so, what are the effects of such globalization, or economic integration, on the poor and poverty, within and among nations?[10] Might globalization benefit the poor and

[8] Istvan Hont, "The 'Rich Country–Poor Country' Debate in Scottish Classical Political Economy," in *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. Hont and Michael Ignatieff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 271–315; and David S. Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998). Scholarship on the early political economists' views and policies regarding "pauperism" includes Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Donald Winch, *Riches and Poverty: An Intellectual History of Political Economy in Britain, 1750–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and D. P. O'Brien, "3. Pauperism," in O'Brien, *The Classical Economists Revisited* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 337–39.

[9] The relationships among trade, finance, and poverty as interconnected global phenomena are the subject of a recent explosion of policy studies and publications. The main contours and points of disagreement if not outright opposition on such issues can be discerned by comparing Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), and Deepak Lal, *Reviving the Invisible Hand: The Case for Classical Liberalism in the Twenty-first Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). For discussion of trade liberalization and other international measures, including the importance of a case-by-case approach, and their consequences for both growth and poverty, see Richard Kneller, C. W. Morgan, and Sunti Kanchanahatakij, "Trade Liberalisation and Economic Growth," *World Economy* 31, no. 6 (June 2008): 701–19; Stijn Claessens, Geoffrey R. D. Underhill, and Xiaoke Zhang, "The Political Economy of Basle II: The Costs for Poor Countries," *World Economy* 31, no. 3 (March 2008): 313–44; and Bernard M. Hoekman and Marcelo Olarreaga, *Global Trade and Poor Nations: The Poverty Impacts and Policy Implications of Liberalization* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007). Among the economic, political, and to a degree moral connections considered is that between poverty and foreign aid. What are the effects on the poor and poorer nations of the international system of foreign aid? Might the efficiency and impact of foreign aid as a tool to fight poverty be improved? What should be the focus of foreign aid if the goal is poverty reduction? These are among the topics discussed in William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and So Little Good* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), and Easterly, *Reinventing Foreign Aid* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008). Some scholars ask the fundamental question of whether aid itself is the most sensible approach to poverty reduction. Among examples of such considerations is John Weiss, "The Aid Paradigm for Poverty Reduction: Does It Make Sense?" *Development Policy Review* 26, no. 4 (July 2008): 407–26.

[10] The impact of global economic integration on poverty within and between nations is considered in Dani Rodrik, *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); M. Shahid Alam, *Poverty from the Wealth of Nations: Integration and Polarization in the Global Economy since 1760* (New York: Palgrave, 2000); and Ann Harrison, ed., *Globalization and*

help reduce poverty, as some contend?[11] Or does economic integration across borders increase poverty and inequality? Might the causes of success and failure in countries such as Bangladesh and the Ivory Coast be found in matters of local culture, including religion? Does poverty reflect domestic political institutions or geographic circumstances, and how should such specifics shape poverty-fighting policies? Do these more local factors interact with international institutions and actions to relieve or rather perpetuate poverty? As Fukuda-Parr's overview reveals, these and other queries remain controversial among both experts and the general public.

These contemporary issues challenge the great religious and philosophical traditions without undermining their relevance. Some – the Catholic natural law tradition, for example – have spent much of the past century rethinking the relationship between the basic premises of their creed and the distinctive features of modern economies, and their teachings have proved widely influential. Others, such as Islam, have been integrated into the legal architecture of modern nations-states. Scholars studying Asian nations have probed the influence of historic traditions such as Buddhism and Confucianism on the organization of their economies. And, of course, philosophical traditions such as the variants of liberalism have developed with modern economies and political institutions steadily in view.

"Poverty is a hydra," Kent van Til proclaims in his chapter on "Poverty and Morality in Christianity." That is not a minority view. Reflections on the

Poverty: National Bureau of Economic Research Conference Report (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Daniel Cohen changes the nature of the discussion by contending that the poorer nations neither gain from nor are exploited by globalization. Rather, they are forgotten, ignored, and excluded, thus essentially victims of the unbridgeable gap between economic expectations and resources. See *Globalization and Its Enemies* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007). The vast contemporary literature on the relationship between public policy and global poverty more often than not places the problems in the historical and current frameworks of "The West and the Rest." Such works include Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*; Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*. China's economic growth and political grasp, not to mention appetite for natural resources, have now placed it alongside "the West" as a source of foreign aid and investment.

[11] Among the most controversial and influential "neoliberal" supporters of globalization's antipoverty consequences is Jagdish Bhagwati, the prominent South Asian economist. He claims that multinationals "can have a potentially major role to play in the alleviation of poverty" – as long as "their adverse effects can be removed by appropriate domestic policies." See "Why Multinationals Help Reduce Poverty," *World Economy* 30, no. 2 (February 2007): 211–28; *In Defense of Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); and *Free Trade Today* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). Bhagwati has most recently argued that international trade can address questions of growth and poverty if it is without what he terms "termites," or preferential agreements, which, in fact, create unfair and unfree trade. Please see *Termites in the Trading System* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

poor and poverty typically reveal the ways in which various strands of human thought and behavior – material, ethnic, and intangible – are interwoven.[12] The famous "Adam Smith Problem" – the seeming contradiction between the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and the *Wealth of Nations* – is in essence the same as a query raised by Max Weber more than a century later and renewed by this volume's contributors: what is the relationship in human nature and society between the pursuit of material self-interest and the moral connections binding members of the social order – in ethical terms, between virtue and greed, cooperation and competition?

One group of scholars has recently argued that exchange itself makes us more virtuous, thereby combining the moral and material objectives of modern society and economy.[13] That is not the conclusion reached by most of the traditions represented in this volume. The contributors do consider, however, the way their particular tradition theorizes the relationship between morality and the market. Much is at stake in naming and describing this "hydra," not the very least what Barrington Moore Jr. has called "the moral aspects of economic growth."[14]

Among the foundational issues with which the contributors grapple are conceptions of self and society, human nature and the good life. David Loy's "The Karma of Poverty: A Buddhist Perspective" suggests how Buddhist societies and practicing Buddhists turn to "four noble truths" to define, address, and endure poverty. Texts and principles guide responses to poverty and the poor, including the ways in which impoverishment is considered a cause of *dukkha*, or ill-being, suffering, and delusions. Buddhism offers a way of thinking about poverty and wealth that challenges most "Western" approaches. Negotiating the tensions between spirituality and materialism, that tradition recognizes that extreme impoverishment makes it difficult to follow the intended spiritual path and that wealth can be used properly. That claim is consistent with Buddhism's critique of consumerism and materialism, and of the values often accompanying the pursuit of wealth and higher standards of living. Unlike most of the traditions considered in this volume, Buddhism

[12] Robert C. Lieberman, *Shaping Race Policy: The United States in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[13] Paul J. Zak, ed., *Moral Markets: The Critical Role of Values in the Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008). Also see, Daniel Friedman, *Morals and Markets: An Evolutionary Account of the Modern World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[14] Barrington Moore Jr., *Moral Aspects of Economic Growth, and Other Essays* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998). Among the other essays in this collection, "Principles of Inequality" pursues the historical reasons for the failure of egalitarian projects, most notably in the modern compulsion for social coordination and the division of labor. One could contrast Moore's fatalism about the pursuit of equality with W. G. Runciman's more optimistic challenge for governments, such as Great Britain's and other Western ones, to at the very least reduce the probability that children born into poverty become impoverished parents themselves. See "Commentary: Always with Us? Why There Does Not Have to Be an Underclass," *Times Literary Supplement*, December 11, 1998, 13–16.

offers a fundamental rethinking of the self and of the individual's relationships with others as a guide to the right pursuit and use of material wealth. (Darrell Moellendorf does point out some of the ethical considerations in egalitarian liberalism concerning equality, rights, and distributive justice that might prompt a reconsideration of the unchecked pursuit of wealth.)

One might readily add to the list of foundational issues how the traditions define one's moral obligation to individuals and groups, whether others are considered to be "one of us," and whether membership is defined according to religious, civic, household, ethnic, or other criteria. Do particular traditions make room for obligations to nonmembers, to "strangers"? Do certain societies and their leading moral traditions make distinctions among those who are poor, focusing on women and children, for example, or those who are thought to be deserving? The sociology inherent in each moral tradition sheds light on such matters. In the case of Hinduism, for example, Arvind Sharma argues that distinctions among castes helps explain that tradition's historical and contemporary responses to poverty in India.

The idea of differentiating among those recognized as poor is an old one. During the medieval period in Europe, distinctions were made between the "shamefaced poor" and others, thus between those who deserved charity and those who did not.[15] The distinction between the deserving and the undeserving poor, allegedly rendered obsolete in the West by the rise of the welfare state, has witnessed a revival during the past generation. Today, we often distinguish between the working poor and others.

Such distinctions are connected to larger issues. Have some subordinate groups been understood as inferior, hence undeserving, or as unfairly vulnerable, hence deserving? For example, when did the category of "child poverty" arise, and why does it denote such a compelling problem? Is it a common concern among various societies, cultures, and ethical traditions? Do some traditions differentiate child poverty from other kinds because of an ethically grounded understanding of how children should be treated? Peter Nosco's discussion of Confucianism's emphasis on households and Nancy J. Hirschmann's exploration of feminist understandings of motherhood both shed light on the familial relationships that shape poverty.

The link between gender and poverty is at the heart of Hirschmann's chapter, "Poverty and Morality: A Feminist Perspective," in which she considers the reasons for the disproportionate number of women living in poverty, and the structural and cultural chains that often prevent women from escaping those conditions.[16] The debate in the West about the "feminization of poverty"

[15] Bronislaw Geremek, *Poverty: A History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997).

[16] For example, women tend to endure longer periods of unemployment, or longer periods between jobs. A recent analysis of "durations of unemployment" in China suggests that women are just as serious about getting a new job but that their efforts are obstructed by gender-based obstacles, such as lack of access to social networks, unfair treatment with respect to mandatory retirement, and unequal entitlement or access to reemployment

has non-Western correlates. The chapters on Buddhism and Islam also consider the ways by which gender and poverty intersect. The Buddhist approach is not without its own internal dilemmas – for example, the contrast between the high social status of monks who achieve *karma* and the low social status of women who do not. The public problem of female prostitution in Buddhist societies is one of the more extreme examples of this tension.

Another threshold issue is whether a tradition views poverty as a moral and ethical challenge that must be publicly acknowledged and addressed. John Stuart Mill wrote in the 1830s that the modern age, or "civilization," is marked – and marred – by its determination to place whatever we find ugly and disturbing far away and beyond sight. We build prisons not only to incarcerate criminals but also to hide them (the English once dispatched them to the Antipodes); we place the insane in asylums; and we move to avoid living near or even interacting with the poor.[17] Acting against poverty requires Western traditions to reconsider the moral and philosophical premises underlying these practices of separation. Should the poor share the public space with the nonpoor? Do they have a right to be visible and audible, regardless of the discomfort the better-off members of society may feel?

If the poor are experienced as threatening and thought of as unlike others, how can the more fortunate be motivated to take care of "the needs of strangers"?[18] In light of the natural law tradition, for example, Stephen Pope asks whether a society can be considered decent if it fails to address the needs of the homeless, a group pushed to the margins. Can one make a greater leap and cease thinking of the poor as strangers at all? Some of the traditions discussed in this volume, including Christianity, move us in this direction, setting up a tension between communal ties and universal obligations.

The possibility that moral claims for assistance rest not on community membership but rather on universal human ties raises a question about the relationship between poverty and democracy. Most of the authors address democracy as an ethical ideal and practice. To see why, we may turn to some radical groups in seventeenth-century England that argued that the poor man has as much rightful power and authority as the rich man. The poor were thus part of the people or the commonwealth.[19] As the Leveller Colonel Thomas

services. See Fenglian Du and Xiao-yuan Dong, "Why Do Women Have Longer Durations of Unemployment Than Men in Post-Restructuring China?" *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 33, no. 2 (October 2008): 233–52.

[17] John Stuart Mill, "Civilization," in *Mill's Essays on Literature and Society*, ed. J. B. Schneewind (New York: Collier Books, 1965), 148–82. The essay was originally published in the April 1836 issue of the *London and Westminster Review*.

[18] Michael Ignatieff, *The Needs of Strangers* (New York: Picador Books, 1984).

[19] Christopher Hill, "The Poor and the People in Seventeenth Century England," in *History from Below: Studies in Popular Protest and Popular Ideology*, ed. Frederick Krantz (New York: Blackwell, 1988), 29–52; and David Wootton, "The Levellers," in *Democracy: The Unfinished Journey, 508 B.C. to A.D. 1993*, ed. John Dunn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 71–89.

Rainsborough boldly proclaimed in 1647, "For really, I think that the Poorest he that is in England hath a life to live, as the greatest he."[20]

Those making such claims about the lives of the poor are what we may call normative democrats – which is not to say that, in practice, democratic publics will always choose to assist their poor, let alone the poor living outside their borders.

Indeed, the record of democracies in combating poverty and addressing the needs of the poor is decidedly mixed. Many claim that democratic societies do more to improve the welfare of the poor, or at the very least, as Sen argues, avoid catastrophes such as famines, in contrast to undemocratic regimes. While some claims about the superiority of democratic governance in avoiding economic disaster and deprivation are empirically sound, others stand on shakier foundations.[21]

Among the moral dilemmas democracies face is the problem of inherited wealth. Can democratic societies eliminate or significantly reduce poverty without reshaping the intergenerational transmission of resources? As several of this volume's authors emphasize, this is not only an economic question but also an ethical one. Can democratic governments limit inheritance rights in the name of fighting poverty, for example, and argue that individual and familial rights to property can be compromised for the greater social good of sharing that property within the larger community?[22] In a number of traditions, secular and religious, the answer to this question is affirmative, and the "larger community" is defined as including all human beings, wherever they may reside.

The essays in this volume invite – perhaps compel – readers to grapple with a number of painful and often-overlooked issues. Among them is violence – specifically, the moral and ethical relationship between violence and poverty. In what ways are coercion and violence, such as rape and war, connected to poverty? Some argue that individuals and groups are poor because they suffer systematic and structural violence. Are the poor not only more vulnerable to violence but also less likely to recover from it? If so, poverty may be at once a

[20] For an accessible transcript of the debate, see "The Putney Debates (the Second Day, 29 October 1647) in the Clarke Manuscripts," in *The Levellers in the English Revolution*, ed. G. E. Aylmer, Documents of Revolution, series ed. Heinz Lubasz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 97–130.

[21] Is it true that nondemocracies treat their poor worse than democracies do? A recent study reveals that democratic countries spend more money than authoritarian ones on education and health but that the benefits of such expenses are more often than not enjoyed disproportionately by the nonpoor, the middle- and upper-income groups. Also, democracy has little if any effect on infant and child mortality rates among the poor. See Michael Ross, "Is Democracy Good for the Poor?" *American Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (October 2006): 860–74.

[22] Those and complementary questions about inheritance law in France, Germany, and the United States are addressed in Jens Beckert, *Inherited Wealth*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

cause *and* a result of violence. From a different but connected point of view, many contend that poverty morally justifies acts of violence to overcome the condition of impoverishment and perhaps achieve equality, or a lessening of inequality. There is a hint of that "just war" on the part of the poor in Pope's discussion of Bartolome de las Casas and his moral defense of Amerindians in the face of the brutal sixteenth-century conquest of the Americas.[23]

The essays on Buddhism, feminism, and Marxism also refer in various ways to the importance of violence in understanding poverty and the poor. The introductory discussion of current economic studies concerns violence, including war and rape, as a cause of poverty or, at the very least, an obstacle to overcoming it. Violence directed against individuals, groups, and their property is also connected to questions of personal and public security. It is widely recognized that poverty is both a cause of insecurity and a consequence of such insecurity, most notably in the cases of weak states and civil wars.[24]

Mancur Olson once asked, "Why is the 'right' to protection from poverty or low income less amenable to solution by legal or constitutional fiat than some other problems?"[25] Many traditions have indeed offered laws and policies to do just that. Sometimes the proposed solution has included the right to a living or "basic" wage.[26] Other efforts in this direction have focused not on income

[23] See Bartolome de las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*, trans. Herma Briffaul, ed. Bill M. Donovan (1522; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

[24] Lael Brainhard and Derek Chollet, eds., *Too Poor for Peace? Global Poverty, Conflict and Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007). For a provocative analysis of the relationship between economic development and violence, see Amy Chua, *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability* (New York: Doubleday, 2004). Closely connected to questions of economic and security policies is that of food supply and pricing, the convergence of issues sometimes referred to as "food security." For a discussion of how international economic institutions and their policies affect food and poverty, see John Madeley, *Hungry for Trade: How the Poor Pay for Free Trade* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2000).

[25] Mancur Olson, "A Less Ideological Way of Deciding How Much Should Be Given to the Poor," *Daedalus* 112, no. 4 (Fall 1983): 217–36.

[26] Carole Pateman, for example, has argued that a "basic income" policy would be a more efficient and just way not only to confront poverty but also to fulfil ideals of democratic citizenship. Others have pointed out that the inability to secure a regular living wage makes men and women – particularly women – vulnerable to health and security problems. The lack of that wage might not be the immediate cause of poverty, but it is a proximate or only slightly removed cause. A guaranteed income was proposed in recent American history as an alternative to welfare payments and considered by various presidential advisors, elected officials, and economists as a way to ensure basic economic security. In addition to considerable political opposition, recommendations for a guaranteed income in various different forms also confronted some of the cultural and ethical dilemmas in the distinction between the "deserving" and "undeserving" poor and in the discussion of whether such a policy would be a question of charity or of justice. For further discussion, see Brian Steensland, *The Failed Welfare Revolution: America's Struggle over Guaranteed Income Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).