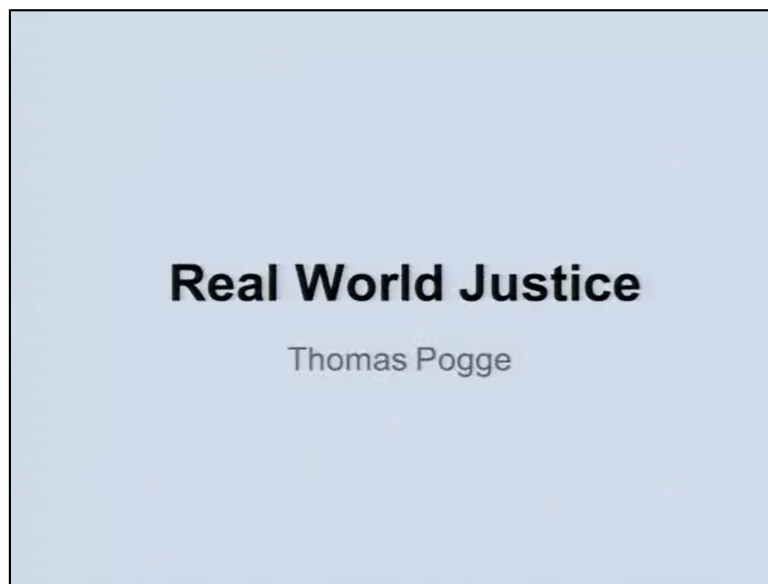


**Ethics**  
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**Module No. #01**  
**Lecture No. #34**  
**Discussing Thomas Pogge's 'Real World Justice' - Part - 1**

And today, we are going to talk about, another article in Applied Ethics called, Real World Justice, by a Philosopher called, Thomas Pogge.

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These are the details of the article. This is, continuing in our foray with, Applied Ethics.

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- Philosophers in the real world - engaging with the conceptual reasons of world poverty in a world with growing average income.
- Pogge asks philosophers to engage in the debate armed with factual information.
- Economic theories not final, to be 'absorbed with caution'
- Philosophy to explore assumption of the prevalent dominant domains of understanding.
- For example: the assumption of persons as *homo economicus* 'who single-mindedly and rationally, seeks optimally to satisfy his preferences. Such imaginary creatures are not good approximations of persons in the real world.' (p.29)
- Popularity of certain methodologies of studies may be to the fact that they are supportive, rather than 'subversive' of the position and policies of those in power.' (p.30)

As, we remember earlier, we have tackled another Philosopher, delving into Applied Ethics. And now, we have another strain of Philosophers in the real-world, engaging with conceptual reasons, of world poverty in a world, with growing average income. So now, this is again, when a Philosopher descends, from the alleged ivory towers and comes down to engage with, the problems of the real world out there. Now, this is quite a passionate plea.

But, the difference with Singer comes out to be, this is quiet numerically backed up. So, it is often that Philosophers are, blissfully ignorant of empirical happenings. So, say in Philosophy of mind, doing Philosophy of mind, without knowledge of the current state of Neurosciences. So, these all seem to, disengage Philosophy from the world out there. Whereas, many Philosophers would argue, that Philosophy is perhaps the most applied discipline. Because, that is the way, you lead your life.

This is an example. This article picked up, is an example, of such a claim. So, when Pogge asks Philosophers to engage in the debate, armed with factual information. So, this is kind of a pun, a kind of a critique that will, Philosophers have always been, tangentially distance from factual information. It has always been about arguments in principle, and never about fact. So, well here, Pogge brings to light, a very implicit conflict between Ethics and Economics, and particularly market Economics, as it is practice today.

And, which is a dominant strain of, which is almost become the whole of economic thinking, today. Economics as a discipline, has strongly been influenced by, what they call free market economy, and market Economics. So, economic theories are not final. That, they are to be, what

I quote him, he says, absorbed with caution. Now today, we are used to, depending on the experts. We depend on the experts, for medical advice. We depend on experts, for economic advice. We depend on experts, all over.

**“Professor - Student conversation starts”** now, why should a government be run, by elected politicians. Why not continue with specialists? What are the elected leaders, specialists in? If, all the decisions, are decisions of specialisation, what are the elected leaders, specialists in. (vocalised voice 03:13 to 03:23) the specialists, have no accountability to people, per say. Okay.

(vocalised voice 03:28 to 03:58) Alright. So in fact, extending to, what we talked about in Crito, that well, criticist asks you to go to the specialists. When you talk about the gymnast, you go to the expert in gymnast, not to people at large. So, when you have a medical issue, you go to a doctor. When your country, or when your society, have been facing an economic crisis, you go to a specialist.

So today, our way of understanding the world, is very strongly based on, specialists. And, Philosophy is the hallmark of the generalistic outlook to life, or to the world out there, to knowledge out there. So, when we are having an economic problem, we look to the specialists in Economics. Yes. I did not get the connection, that you have made between, Philosophy and specialisation.

Okay. Now, different areas of study, specialise in different domains. So, Crito, Socrates, himself said, that well, we need to seek the opinion of the expert. Now, a doctor is an expert in medical sciences. Economist is an expert in economic trouble. So, what is a Philosopher expert in. So well, Philosophy is in contrast to these specialisations.

Philosophy is the hallmark of the generalist. So, it is understanding at the broadest level. So, that does not make us, or does not make Philosopher, specialists in something. So, it is just as holistic approach. It is a holistic approach. Yes. When you are looking for a solution to a problem, you break down the problem into simple parts, and you tackle each problem on its own basis.

Now, there are specialists for each problem. In fact, that brings a critical difference between, how traditional Indian systems of medicine viewed the human being, versus the western mode

of medical treatment, where each human being is broken down into, various parallel running systems and organs. And therefore, each of which has a specialist, and is treated accordingly.

But, the Indian system, or Ayurveda, has classically regarded the human being as a whole, to be treated as a whole, not as taking care of the parts. Now, this is very common to our understanding, perhaps in an elaborately segregated and specialised world, we have specialist for every domain. So, if there is a problem with the economy, we have to seek opinion of an Economist.

You have a problem with, the defence of the country, you seek opinion from the general, or from the military community. Now, Pogge starts here with cautioning, that well, Philosophy to explore, assumptions of the prevalent dominant domains of understanding. So, what are these prevalent dominant domains of understanding. One of them, is well, Economics, and the way, the world economic order proceeds.

So, what sparks, the author into this article, is well, fact number one, that the average income of the world is growing. And, fact number two, that there is still absolute number of poor people growing, with the sub-human living also growing. So, where can we, or what can we make sense of this. Is poverty, a moral issue, or an economic issue. Now, when I talked about governance, why are we based on elected leaders.

When, we could actually choose somebody, who is specialising in management. Why not, let a country be run by a corporation. Yes. What is the space for a bureaucrat? What is the space for a generalist? So, this is where, the author puts in his claim, that well, the economic theories are not final, and they are to be absorbed with caution. So, it is not that, the generalist can now rest in peace, and with the specialists taking over.

Somehow, to have the big picture, and to see how, whether poverty is an economic issue, or a moral issue, we still need to have the generalist, who does not readily take in the opinions of the specialists as final. So, these are the dominant domains of understanding. The world economic order, is one. So, if you are looking for a correction of poverty, we need to look to Economists, or we need to look to, leader of people.

(vocalised voice 08:59 to 10:07) so, I will disagree with the point, that there is something in Philosophy, that makes it eminently suitable to, that make it more capable of having the general stream. Okay. Now first, it is the authors reaction, is perhaps not so much to, Economics as a discipline.

But, the current economic order, which with the dominant economic thinking, that is taking place. So, you could guess that out from the, amount of research funding available to, which kind of research projects, taken up by the world community at large. So, this is where, he brings about the point, that well, it is not that, these disciplines, or these knowledge outlooks, are essentially fraudulent.

But, they can interpret the truth in a way, which is suitable to the ruling elite. And given, why Philosophers have to step in, or what makes Philosophy, perhaps the most suitable discipline for the generalist, is because, the methodology of Philosophy is very varied. We are not dealing with, just techniques and tools. So, yes, there is a philosophical component, in every academic pursuit.

But, if we are looking at Philosophy as a subject, it is the epitome of a generalistic outlook. So, whenever you are talking about an Egalitarian Economics, or Economics raising questions, about very general issues, that is mostly the philosophical, or the introductory part of Economics. Well. Whereas, the trend of specialisation, tends to limit any discipline, to just the tools and techniques used. Whereas, Philosophy is perhaps the least affected by this, trend for specialisation.

Because, intrinsically, specialisation is difficult in Philosophy, because it raises the broadest questions. To answer the broadest questions, you need input from various domains. Say, a simple classic philosophical question is that, how ought to live one's life. Now, this will invite opinions, or invite information and understanding, from a wide variety of disciplines, right starting from biology to sociology, that how should one treat oneself, or lead one's life.

So, intrinsically, Philosophy is more akin to generalist studies, rather than other disciplines of specialisation. Literature of course, is one. Humanities in general, and Philosophy in particular, is very strongly generalistic. And, that is why, the amount of information required, to make sense, at any advanced level of this discipline, is much lesser than compared to other

disciplines. Say, if you are trying to understand a medical problem, you need to be familiar with the medical vocabulary, before comprehending the problem.

Or, you want to understand computer problem, or if you want to understand an economic problem, you have to understand. They have built a lot of axioms, on top of the fundamental axioms. Now, Philosophy deals with very little axioms. So, that is why, people can walk into Philosophy, from various stages and places in life. And, that is perhaps the reason why, Philosophy would be more akin to, a generalist understanding.

Because, if you take one of the off-debated assumptions of market Economics, and Economics in general, interpreting persons as homo economicus. That, who single-mindedly and rationally seeks, optimally to satisfy his preferences. Such imaginary creatures, are not good approximations of persons, in the real world. Of course, that is the author's opinion. But, the basis of Economics, more particularly market Economics, more particularly the dominant strains of Economics, which uphold the current world economic order.

What this particularly, he is bringing to light is, we are making a decision, between our preferences. These preferences can be outweighed by moral notions, which is difficult for the economic model, to locate, to situate. That well, each one of us have preferences, and rationality is in single-mindedly, following your order of preferences. So, when the moral component enters, that well, it is almost like a simple a paradox. That, we all do, what we want to do.

That is, fairly simple enough. And, wanting to do, what benefits us. Right. That, we are all selfish people, and we want to do, what benefits us, and avoid, what harms us. Right. That is the basic assumption, what the homo economicus tries to put up. Now, what about the, say, acts of martyrdom, or acts of sacrifice. Where do we locate that? That, if we all, like the egoist claims, that we all function, in this rationale that, let us get as much as, what we want.

So optimally, we all function, selfishly. But, that is a poor representation of the world. Because, it leaves about that domain, where people apparently choose to act, in ways that will harm them, and perhaps benefit others. So, this whole notion of martyrdom, or of sacrifice, is contradicting. So, this assumptions of homo economicus, rules out that possibility of sacrifice.

In fact, would consider sacrifice as irrational, especially if that sacrifice, is at the cost of the agent's own self.

So, now the entire economic model, the current world economic order that is built, according to the author is assuming, this as the fundamental understanding of human beings. If there is an axiomatic error in the axiom, of say, homo economicus here, then of course the model that is built on such an axiom, will definitely be far from a real representation of the world out there. So, that is what the author puts out that, such imaginary creatures, are not good approximations of persons in the real world.

So, popularity of certain methodologies of studies, may be to the fact that, they are supportive, rather than subversive, of the position and policies of those in power. So, this is almost, what you raised about political interests, that well. Why are certain methodologies more popular, or certain discipline surge in ways of understanding. Say, if I can quote an example, a simplistic understanding of left oriented Economics, is on the decline.

And, a market-oriented Economics is better funded. And therefore, is flourishing much more than say, 20, 30 years back, in even in our country. So, even in India, now you find that, economic thinking takes directions. So, whether research and the advancement of knowledge is as innocent, as we would like it to be, or is it shaped by, interests which require a particular methodology to flourish.

So, if we are talking about these methodologies, which are supportive, rather than subversive of the position and policies of those in power. Let me quote an example. Say, in the 1990's, when there was, this era of liberalisation in India. That is when, governance required a more solid input from, the market understanding, or from the economic understanding, of the world economic order, than the requirement of the local people, or the people from whom, the government was elected.

So, it was then, the Economists, who claim to understand the world economic order, said that well, this is a right decision, if you open up our boundaries. And, this was not decision, from the dominant economic thinking, at that time. And because, it opened up. And, that was a political decision, the economy opened up. Now, this opening up, again started influencing, the kind of Economics being done.

So, understanding the world economic order, and how best we could benefit from it, became the dominant methodologies of studies. And, it seems to be that, the author points out that, there is a kind of an implicit, hand in glove arrangement. That well, the kind of results, that could support governing class, seem to encourage the thinking class, to think in, or interpret, or think in such a manner, that would endorse, the governance of the governing class.

So, it is a very deep, and a politically charged claim. That, this Philosopher, here is making a note, that he is coming from a rich developed country. And then, this is going to be immensely unpopular, amongst the dominant view, in his context. (vocalised voice 20:26 to 20:31) well. Here of course, implicitly he is referring to, the strain of Economics that studies, or that endorses the world economic order, or free market.

Is he talking about like our ecology, best on the philanthropic approach, rather than the egoistic approach. No. In fact, he is saying that, the world economic order is based on the, egoistic approach of all. Okay. In fact, he goes ahead to talk about philanthropy. And, what makes philanthropy, really philanthropic. And, what makes it an act of reparation. Perhaps, in one of coming slides, we will talk about it. Shall we proceed.

(vocalised voice 21:16 to 22:02) Yes. So, in fact, the immediate example that comes to my mind, is in fact in the Indian historical tradition, the learned class were supposed to survive on the dole of the majority of the society, not a direct funding from the ruling class. And therefore, historically, Chanakya was an evidence of a thinking class, that did not get along with the ruling class.

In fact, the duty of the thinking class is to speak, truth to power. So, if the thinking class is on the pay role of the ruling class, it is almost like a financial collusion. And, it is very difficult for one class, to oppose the other. So, yes. In fact, the author here is critiquing, the world economic order. The economic system, that we have come across where, we find such a strong linkup between, the ruling class and the thinking class.

That, we find that, the ruling class supporting, and those elements in the thinking class, that provide justification to the ruling class. And therefore, it almost starts as a collusion. So, the evidence of it is, in from various disciplines. And, it is a general talk about, patents and trade



agreements. These all, a kind of an implicit cohort between, the thinking class and the ruling class.

So, the thinking class, has to get away from the domain of. It is nothing so specialised, that we are incapable of comprehending it, on making sense of it, or having an opinion on it. So, it is not that the leader should always, look onto the specialist. So, yes, I can think of one example in Indian history, where it did not get along. Well. And therefore, traditionally, the thinking class has been, even in the Greek tradition, be it Socrates or Plato, has been exhibiting descent with the ruling class.

So, whether it was, capital punishment of Socrates, or the change of empire of Chandra Gupta Mourya. Both of these are examples, where the thinking class, interferes with the ruling class. We would have more such people, the institutions in which they work. The active institutions had, more independent sources of income, funding. Right. It is because, they depend on the economic ruling elite. (vocalised voice 25:13 to 25:15)

In fact, this is actually a stronger critique of, education systems in the western world, where unlike India, where educational institutions are fully funded by private entities. So, we find philanthropic and major contributions happening, from industrial classes to educational institutions. And, in a way, implicitly this puts pressure, on the line and direction of research, that the thinking class will take.

So perhaps, the author implicitly suggests a class, where in the typical Indian scenario, where the government buffers, this influence between the clout of ruling class, and makes it a systematic buffer, that it is not a direct relation of benefiting. So, to keep the thinking class neutral, that way. Sir, the government, the ruling class itself, can be a source of treasure, for the thinking class. So, even when the government is the funder, we cannot assume, that the thinking class works independently. (vocalised voice 26:36 to 26:37)

Okay. Now, that was a difference between, the constitution of a government, and the working of a corporation. So, in any government set up, the constitution of the government is so rigid and fixed, that it is not fluid enough, to allow the influence of the, say the premier, to percolate into the thinking class. Because, it is buffered by a, very strong mechanism, legal mechanism.

That, a fictional entity, is created as a government, from whom the premier or the ruling class, only gets the authority, to manage this. But, it cannot fundamentally change the frozen rules, which is possible in, if it is a more flexible corporately funded unit. So, the stability, or the robustness of our governmental intermediary, is perhaps much higher than the, flexibility and efficiency of a corporate structure. So, okay, coming back here.

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- '... we cannot just learn and benefit from the theories of the experts. We must think for ourselves and, as best we can, become experts.' (p.30)
- The return of the generalist - epitomized by the philosophical outlook
- A call to philosophers & generalists, to engage with data, be empirically informed & think for oneself rather than relegate opinions to the domain of supposed experts!
- World poverty is one such issue: What causes poverty & why does it still exist?
- Is it just the result of local factors as many methodologies would analyze or is it the big picture that can explain this phenomenon - 'the huge impact of the world economic order on the incidence of poverty worldwide.'

So, when the author says that, we cannot just learn and benefit from the theories of experts. We must think for ourselves, and as best as we can, become experts. So, that is a crucial thing, that well. As, human being is not specially trained for any particular discipline, have an opinion on say, any macroeconomic, or any macro level policy, that is being made.

So, if I need to know whether, liberalisation has done good to India, or not done bad to India, do I need to go back to an, economic expert to find that out, or can I find that out, on my own. Now, here the author's claim is, that well, we are alive enough, and we are capable enough, and the data is innocent enough, to not to be contaminated by the theories of experts, which are between information and policies.

So, increasingly, policy decisions, which come from, an elaborate backing of expert's laden theories, seem to have more credibility. That is what, the author is questioning here. That well, as a citizen of this country, you are capable of comprehending, or as a citizen of the world, you are capable of comprehending, what the world economic order is all about. Poor people, they do not have much more idea about the, economic things and other things.

Then, how can they will think that, I can do that. It is very difficult for them to justify, his or her own knowledge also. In that case, we cannot say that, we can think for ourselves. But, everybody has that capacity. But, we need some resources. Otherwise, how can we say that, there is no need of expert. At least, if you are taking about the educated people, still they are going to the experts, and they are asking for the merits and demerits.

Because, at least we want to know the exact point, where we can establish ourselves. So, in that case, I think, we need both at a time. Like, we have to improve our own knowledge, to become an expert, and we need also an expert. Okay. Well. Let me think of an analogy. Let say, having an opinion, if following newspaper editorials. Now, these are experts, who are writing for the generalist, to have a comprehensive view.

So, we do need experts, to give opinions. But, those opinions, are not taken for granted. Ultimately, we are in the judgement seat, one. And, two is the point you raise, is actually the issue that, the author raises elsewhere in the article, that well. That, level of poverty and inequality, can sometimes be so much that, even the basics subsistence required, to think, to debate, to argue, and to take a decision, seem to be lacking.

So, categorically say, underdeveloped countries, are marked by an almost dwindled middle class, to a large number of lower-income group, who would not even be willing to debate, or comprehend the macro issues. So, with an increase of the middle class, the number of people who are able to, have an opinion about macro issues, grows, as the world or the nation develops.

So, the author is trying to point that out, well, perhaps the world economic order is in such a way, that this inequality continues to expand, and this, who are at the bottom end of this inequality, are almost condemned to stay there, with no internal movement between the layers of the economy. So, well. Then, he is talking about, well, that is why the generalist needs to return, which is epitomised by the philosophical outlook, definitely not by Philosophers alone, but by a very journalistic outlook.

That well, we can understand the world order, without banking only upon the opinion of the specialist there. Do we differ on this? Please opine. How is it possible. (vocalised voice 32:38 to 32:40) still, we need something more. We cannot say that like, I am a Philosopher. So,

whatever I am looking, or way of looking it is like, most important rather than others. It is very difficult to define, know sir. Because, for Economists, they can travel, sir.

They have that rights. Then, how can we use here. We are differentiating here, the human rights. It is like, we are categorized like, between Economics, and Political Science, or Philosophy. Okay. This is, not as much as a call to, disciplinal specialisation. Philosophical outlook means what? In what sense, you are saying. A very generalistic outlook. So, it is not that, you have to be a specialist in Philosophy, to have this.

But well, epitomised by the philosophical outlook is, that well, attitude which is displayed. When you say, that well, I can comprehend a macro level decision. So, it is not, that well, because so-and-so said. They were relying on testimony. Relying on the testimony of the expert. So, this is not necessarily a battle between, Philosophy and Economics. But, a battle between specialisation and generalisation, that well.

We are talking about the philosophical outlook, or generalistic. Is there, talking about that, everybody has the equal rights to say something. Everybody have equality in one selves. And, well, perhaps, what can be read into it, is that, everybody has the capacity to opine. That, we non-specialist, or the non-expert, is not imperviously isolated from the knowledge, or the thinking of the expert. That well, the expert cannot hide, behind the garb of numbers, and make a policy claim, which the non-expert has to handle at face value. Right.

Absolutely agree with the third point. That, as generalist, we all due to engage with, whatever data with morals, with be empirically informed, when we do that, and think for oneself. So, I think, as I say, it is the point that, he is trying to make is, as far as, things that concerned all of us, in our day to day social political existence is concerned, we are not completely ignorant.

And because, that the things that are being discussed all around us, and we engage with that. And, we have a practical understanding of that. I do not think, he is talking about theories of earth going on, at the atomic, or sub atomic level. He is not talking about, such very specialised theories. Here, he is talking about Economics. And although, some argue that, Economics also deals with the abstract, and specialised topic. The classic divide between, Microeconomics and Macroeconomics.

But, the issue of poverty is addition, that so pervade, and so obviously present in the world. That, if we cannot possibly argue that, non-experts cannot have a say out. But, you know, I think, what he is saying is that, he is not making a case against the experts. Experts make all their work. But, we should always be aware. We, the audience of the knowledge produced by the experts, should always be aware that, ideology can crepe in to, any area of work.

And, even the experts may be ideologically biased, in their so called disinterested enquiry. So, when we receive, what they put out in the world, we should look at it critically, using our own critical faculties, and make our own judgements. Right. Sir, when we read editorials in the newspaper, it is true, that the people writing them, are more informed in in some ways. And, they express things more articulately.

But, of course, they have their own ideology. So, when we read the editorials, we have to read the. (vocalised voice 26:40 to 26:41) not take everything, that they see at the face value. But, you know, you seem to be saying that, any expert is necessarily limited by the narrowness of their feet, the narrowness of their approach. And, in order to go beyond that narrowness, he need to adopt the generalistic approach. Is that what, you are saying.

No, not exactly. That, all experts are confined to the narrowness of their approach. Of course, they are heavily influenced by the, tools and techniques that they use. So, building an economic model, with the basis as homo economicus, makes the model, may be sharp and accurate. But, the axiom on which it stands, ignores a little leeway, of the idea of self-sacrifice. And, that could make a clear distinction, at the level of the model.

However, the model by itself, would be accurate, and as it is. But, yes. So, it is not that, this is just the prelude to the claim, he makes. In fact, this article is a response to the criticism, he is received on his book, on Real World and Poverty. So, that is where, he being a non-Economist, also has tried to understand, an applied training in Ethics he is had, and put forth an alternative view, as how poverty can be eliminated.

So, it is not only in the domain of specialised experts, from a particular methodology of thinking, who can best answer the question, how to eliminate poverty. Here is an example of a generalist, who is empirically informed, and suggests an alternative to, poverty eradication on the world. He finds something erroneous, with the world economic order.

And that, he says, can be only brought to light, if the generalists take a look at the world economic order, and understand its intentions and motives behind it. Yes. Do also include, that generalist outlook. Yes, absolutely. In fact, the generalist outlook is about, the thinking people. So, I am incorrect, if I have put in the impression that, I only mean, people trained in Philosophy. Definitely, no.

It is about the basic human ability of reasoning, and of comprehending a situation, and making a judgement on it. We are trying to connect, or trying to make a harmony between, generalistic and experts. Okay. Or, totally like, overlook the experts, that are then. Well, to put it this way, he is demoting the experts. That well, they are not at a, god like testimony level, as perhaps today, we tend to treat them, or the world order tends to treat them.

Well. For an example of climate change. So, in that case, we do not need generalistic. We need an expert. So, in that case, how can you apply like, this can be applicable in that case. Okay, very interesting. What is climate change. How we understand climate change. Now, that is surprising that, if we delve deep into scientific literature about climate change, there are very documented strongly justified scientific theories claiming, that well, there is no climate change taking place.

So, there are countries, who are not signing into that protocol. So, the conclusion you want, evidence can very often be manufacture with it. And therefore, facts held alone. Perhaps, I can read into this that, facts alone, do not lead you to a decision. And, that is where, the generalist who has to enter to bring in, a value fact combined understanding of the situation. So, even something like climate change, it is not a clearly resolved issue. And, we can, know as much there is to know about it, and have an opinion about it, or think about an alternative to it.

So, there is desperate data coming in from scientific communities, about the same issue. So, it has to be decided, at the political level. And, that political level is the interface with of the, generalist with the specialists. It is not that the, specialists are taking the decisions. It is still that the, specialists inform the generalist, to influence their decision. Perhaps, the author is against this, generalist becoming just an intermediary for the, apparently justified opinion of the specialist, into becoming a policy. Right.

So, well. The question, that the author tackles, is a very simple, and a perennial issue, that plagues us all. And, for quite some time, that poverty in the world, what causes poverty, and why does it still exist. Now, that is a very simple, and almost such a common accompaniment, to human existence in the recent centuries, that does not seem to provoke, that much of reaction, that it ought to.

So, the one way of understanding world poverty has been, as he paraphrases works from Development Economics is that, it is just local factors, as many methodologies, by which he would mean some of the dominant strains of development Economics, he analyse, or, is it the big picture, that can explain this phenomenon. The huge economic impact of the world economic order, on the incidence of poverty worldwide.

So, Development Economics in the sense would, he quotes Amartya Sen's works too. That, it is the socio-cultural effect, the attitudes to gender the cultural baggage, that is carried on in a community, that results in that poverty. And perhaps, poor governance in that area. So, that has been the dominant development thinking, for quite some time. Now, the author puts a very profound challenge to this kind of claim, that well, the solutions are local

That, no perhaps, something in the big picture, in the macro order, in the world economic order, influences poverty worldwide. So, just some stray examples that occur to me, is that well, say, the economic system brings prosperity more, to a certain region in a country, and brings less prosperity, to a certain region in the world. So, is it just, the influence of local factors, or the big system that is being fit, which may be more compliant to, one local system, and may not be compliant to another local system.

The classic example, we have of governance. Now, if we import, a system of governance into a society, for which the system of governance is foreign. Let us take concrete examples. Let us say, the western mode of governance entering rural India. Now, the western mode of governance is based on, very strong individualistic status of the citizens. Whereas, in larger parts of, not just India, but Asian countries, communities' functions, and take decisions, as unitary entities.

So, a model, that worked in the western scenario, need not be successful here. And, it may be varyingly successful, in different parts of Asia, depending on the local culture. So, there is

something also in the model itself, which is intrinsically favour certain attitudes and people, and disfavours or presence disadvantage, to certain people and attitude. So, that is what, this author is meaning at, that well. The world economic order, is also responsible for this incidence of the, poverty worldwide.

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### 1. The Central Claim

- 'the more advantaged citizens of the affluent countries - are actively responsible for most of the life-threatening poverty in the world' (p.30)
- Considering poverty in 15 years after the cold war period - a death toll of 27 crore human beings.
- Are we better off from the past, as many experts console? For Pogge, that is immaterial - that such penury exists, is the problem.
- The folly of percentages - percentage of poverty may be falling in a growing world population, but poverty is growing in absolute numbers - quantification can indicate either way!
- Severe poverty is entirely avoidable today - it is not being avoided because of the 'fantastic increase in equality' (p.32)

So, he goes on to put in a, very direct accusing claim, that the more advantaged citizens of the affluent countries are actively responsible, for most of the life-threatening poverty in the world. So, for this, of course, he does his ground work. And, in his book, he has presented the data in general, considering, his area, or his domain of study, has been 15 years, post the cold war period. And, a death toll of 27 crore human beings, in this period. So, many experts have put in that, we are better off from their past.

Pogge questions, that well, that is immaterial. That, such penury exists. That is the problem. It is not that; it is less than the past. (vocalised voice 47:45 to 47:48) we are better off, in terms of percentage, but not in terms of absolute numbers. So, that matters a lot. Say, that is the folly of percentages. How data, is not as innocent perhaps as, many of us might try to think. So, a simple growth in reduction in poverty as percentage, does not represent reduction in poverty in absolute numbers.

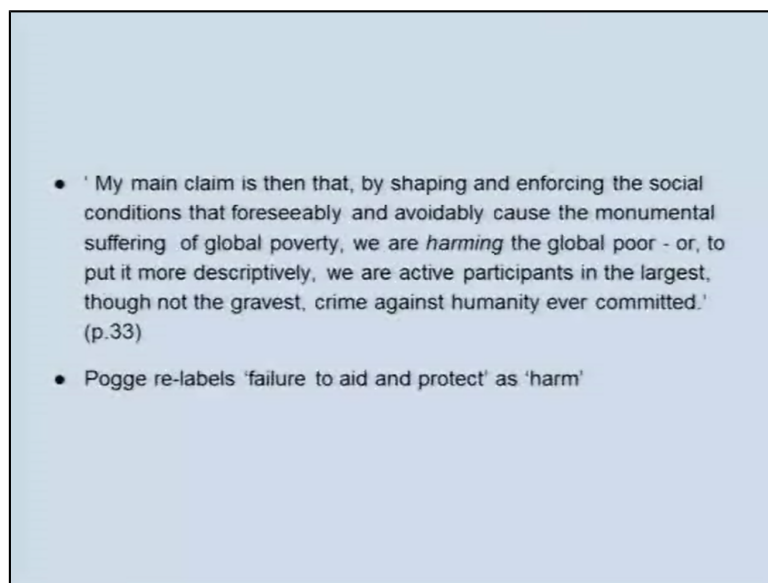
So, how quantification is made, can indicate either way. So, what we are seeing is that, converting or quantifying information, does not necessarily be value neutral. So, it is not as, we would like a system based on fact. We would function in, more or less a positivistic system today, where we want, as little contamination from subjectivity as possible. But, the author



rightly brings to light, that well, even the most sophisticated quantification also represents, the value input of the quantifier.

So, yes. You mean, fantastic increase in inequality. Sorry, it means, fantastic increase in inequality. Well. So, severe poverty is entirely avoidable, now. Engaging with, empirical data available to the author, he makes this claim, that well, this poverty can be eradicated, but it is not because, there is a fantastic increase in the rate of inequality. That, the world may be growing wealthier. But, the wealthy are growing wealthier, and the poor are going poorer. That is a common concern, raised its various quarters.

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So, to quote him, he says, that well, my main claim is then that, by shaping and enforcing social conditions, that forcibly and avoidably, cause the monumental suffering of global poverty, we are harming the global poor. To put it more descriptively, we are active participants in the largest, though not the gravest, crime against humanity ever committed.

So here, the main claim, that Pogge is making, is that, we are actually, and by we mean the citizens of the developed country. And, in later he does, also include the socio-economic and political elite of the developing or underdeveloped nations too. Yes. In the developed country, he is addressing the affluence, it is not all with the ethic. Yes, the affluent citizen, the rich nation. Yes. Okay.

But, being part of the country, in fact the second, brings to my mind, the claim that Socrates made in Crito that, if we are part of a system, so we are and we do not protest against it, we are

implicitly giving our consent to it. Because, mostly the world economic order is being shaped, by rich countries. So, being a part of this wealthy clout of nations, and being a citizen of these wealthy clout nations, and not raising a voice against the system, is in implicit, granting consent to the system, to prosper and flourish.

So, the way, the author puts it, is that, this is almost like a genocide only it takes place in a, very staggered and systemic manner, with no accountability at any level. (vocalised voice 51:41 to 51:45) okay. So, he relabels this as, the failure to aid and protect. And, that is relabelled as harm. So, he makes a very classic distinction between, positive and negative duties. Let us go to the next slide, it will perhaps bring it out. Yes.

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### 2. Positive Duties

- Author aims to 'show how existing world poverty manifests a violation of our *negative* duties, our duties not to harm' (p. 34)
- Positive duties are not tackled here. Positive duties require one to do something, negative duties require one not to create harm.
- Pogge regards the later stronger than the former - '...the duty not to assault people is more stringent than the duty to prevent such assaults by others. And, having assaulted another, the attacker has more reason to ensure that his victim's injuries are treated than a bystander would.'
- Is negative duty stronger than positive duty?
- Duties of reparation much stronger than charity.
- How the wealthy are morally related to poverty - not a case for charity but for negative duty. The wealthy are responsible for sustaining the macro-order that benefits & perpetuates from inequality.

So, how existing world poverty manifests a violation of our negative duties. That is, our duty is not to harm. So, positive duties are not tackled here. Positive duties require, one to do something. Negative duties require, one not to create harm. So, the example that it gives is quite, explains it very lucidly. That, the duty not to assault people, is more stringent, than the duty to prevent such assaults by others. And, having assaulted another, the attacker has more reason to ensure that, his victim's injuries are treated, than a bystander would.

So, what it means, is that well, he attacks this notion, that even implicitly Singer talked about in his article of, Famine Affluence and Morality. That well, we may be at peace, that are the affluent. Let us understand, the affluent, as affluent across the nations. Because, people who are in positions, who to make even a noise, if not effect a policy change, make noise about the subscription to macro level policies.

So, even if we are not preventing harm, that we ought to prevent harm to others. So, this non protest against macroeconomic policies is actually, harming proactively. And, not that, we are standing as a bystander, and seeing harm happened. So, he shifts the liability of the world poverty on developing nations, on developed nations, and the elite of the developing nations, which allow these world economic policies to prosper.

So, it is not that, the world bodies do an act of charity. When he gives the example of an industry, which is polluting a river, and then makes grants for studying pollution, or reducing pollution. That is no more to be seen, as a charity. And, what Pogge here sees, that the world community doing, by making these huge aids and donations, what it seems to be calling philanthropy and charity, is not even the minimum expected as duties of reparation, for the harm that has already been done.

So, he takes this negative duty, in the stronger sense. Yes. Singer does is. He defined the notion of charity, as a positive duty, if I understand it correctly. And, what he does is, take us beyond the notion of positive duties. (vocalised voice 55:00 to 55:02) intermediate duties, which he argues, almost in this stretch. Right. That is, duties of reparation. That, it is not a favour, not an act of charity, but it is almost a loan, that one has to repay.

That, in fact, we raise that question, because this moral loan has been taken, by generations before. So, we already have enough philosophical issues about, moral accountability over a lifetime. So, this is asking for moral accountability, over generations. So, what the colonisers have taken away, centuries from today, do the successes of the colonisers, owe that back to the ex-colonised.

So, that is the question, that he takes for granted. But, that has also been places, where this has been critiqued, that well. Can we at all, start afresh, when not considering, what is a historical situation of it. So, he regards these duties of reparation, much stronger than charity. So, it is, that the wealthier nations, and the world economic order, needs to be changed, so as to fulfil its negative duties, duty of reparation.

Because, this sustains, the inequality. That, this macro world order, that is there, it benefits and perpetuates from the current inequality. So, world economic order needs to be changed, which

would. So, the fault or the defect, is in the macro level order, in tackling poverty. So, let us think of an example. Such a world economic order. Yes. World economic order. Think of a local example, where a macro policy influence. **“Professor - Student conversation ends”**