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Historical Responsibility and Liberal Society

by Prof. Dr. Janna Thompson

Abstract: *Why should leaders of polities, as representatives of citizens, be required to apologise and make reparations for deeds committed in the historical past? Assumptions commonly made by liberals about the scope of responsibility and the duties of citizens make this question difficult to answer. This paper considers some unsuccessful attempts within a liberal framework to defend obligations of reparation for historical injustices and puts forward an account based on the lifetime-transcending interests of citizens.*

In my country (Australia) the newly elected Prime Minister recently opened Parliament by making an official apology to Aborigines and Aboriginal communities for unjust policies of the past – particularly for the attempts of past governments to wipe out Aboriginal culture by taking children away from their parents and putting them in orphanages or foster homes.¹ The apology was seconded by the Leader of the Opposition. People from Aboriginal communities were in attendance, including some of the individuals who had been ‘stolen’ as children. The apology was watched on television by millions of Australians, many of whom strongly supported this act of coming to terms with the past.

This ceremony of apology is one example of attempts by governments to address historical injustices. These attempts to make recompense, though often welcomed and applauded, raise difficult moral and political issues.² From a philosophical point of view one of the basic questions raised by attempts to make up for the past is why existing citizens and their governments have a responsibility for apologising and making recompense for historical injustices.

Three propositions held by many liberals make it difficult to understand or justify acts of apologising and making recompense for historical injustices like the wrongs committed in course of Australian history to Aborigines. According to the first proposition, what matters in ethics and political philosophy are the interests and preferences of existing and future individuals, their rights and responsibilities, or their ability to be autonomous agents. The dead don’t count. They have no rights and we owe them no duties. Subscribing to this proposition thus seems to rule out any historical claims or justifications that appeal to the interests of the dead

or the demands that they once made.

The second proposition is that individuals share responsibility for an action if and only if they participated in committing it, or at least could have participated. Citizens of a democracy can be said to participate in the deeds of their government if they participate or could participate in the electoral process. But most present citizens were not in the position to participate in bringing about events that occurred in the historical past, so they do not, according to the proposition, share the responsibility and cannot, as a collectivity of citizens, be expected to apologise and make recompense.³ The third proposition emphasises this point by contending that citizens of a democracy incur obligations only through consent or voluntary action. They cannot inherit political responsibilities from their familial or national predecessors.⁴

These three propositions are deeply embedded as assumptions in most liberal philosophies and they stand in the way of any account of historical obligations. So if we are to justify the idea that citizens ought to make recompense for historical injustices, then either we have to explain how liberals can find a way to reject or circumvent them, or we have to abandon liberalism. In this paper, I will examine some attempts by liberals to justify the existence of historical obligations and I will argue for an account that rejects the three propositions but nevertheless has a claim to be described as ‘liberal’.

History and rectification

If historical entitlements possessed by individuals or groups exist simply because of acts that took place in the historical past – if they do not depend on participation or consent of existing people or the interests of the dead – then reparative claims need not require the rejection of any liberal assumptions. A number of liberals have adopted this approach to explaining how people can now be owed reparation for historical deeds and why those who had nothing to do with the wrongs must take responsibility for ensuring that reparation is paid. Nozick makes use of Locke’s theory of how individuals acquire titles to property to present a historical theory of entitlement that has as its corollary a requirement of rectification.⁵ If someone has been unjustly disposses-

sed then he or his heirs ought to receive appropriate recompense and the passage of time, the death of those who did the wrong, and the innocence of present people make no difference to the existence of this entitlement. Those who are responsible for rectification acquire this duty not because they belong to a particular polity or family but because they happen to have something to which they have no rightful title.

Boxill, also appealing to Locke, presents a similar account of rectificatory obligations to explain why white Americans owe reparation to African-Americans for the historical injustice of slavery. Slave owners and everyone who consented to slavery (Boxill assumes that they included most white Americans living at that time) harmed those who were slaves and owed them reparation because of this harm, he says. This reparation was not paid and the debt remains outstanding. “Since present day African Americans are the slaves’ heirs, and have inherited their rights to reparation, it follows that they have inherited titles to a part of the assets held by the entire white population.”⁶

The main difficulty faced by these historical accounts of entitlement and obligation is explaining how any historical act or omission has the power to impose obligations that can persist through the generations. Waldron plausibly argues that injustices tend to be superseded by changes of condition or simply the passage of time.⁷ Property rights, he thinks, are justifiable because they enable people to carry out their life plans. Appropriation without the consent of the owner is clearly unjust, and victims of this injustice are owed reparation. But if time passes and reparation does not occur, the demand for reparation loses its force. Others now depend on the property for the pursuit of their life plans and the dispossessed and their heirs have had to find another way of living their lives. Moreover, factors that result from historical change – increases in population, changes of climate and the needs of present people – tend (in his view) to override entitlements that come from history. Boxill’s version of the historical entitlement thesis seems particularly vulnerable to this consideration. If reparation was owed to slaves for the harm that was done to them, then how can anyone else inherit their entitlement? If their descendants are suffering from the effects of slavery and from other in-

justices, then they are also owed compensation. But this is a different matter.

Unjust enrichment

Boxill's position can be interpreted as an argument about unjust enrichment rather than an argument about inheritance of entitlements to particular assets. Present American citizens are the beneficiaries of slavery and other injustices to African-Americans just as present Australians have benefited from the wrongs done to Aborigines. All white Americans, he says, owe a debt because "The whole of each generation of whites specified that only the whites of the succeeding generations were permitted to own or compete for the assets it was leaving behind."⁸ The benefits they gained, in other words, depend on an injustice and the beneficiaries ought to return at least some of their assets to the heirs of those who were wrongly dispossessed or exploited. The debt in question is not a particular possession or form of compensation which was owed to people of the past and should now be paid to their heirs. It exists only because the descendants of the victims of injustice have been unjustly prevented from getting equitable benefits from the deeds of the past. If, contrary to fact, African-Americans and Aborigines were as well off as white Americans or Australians, there would be no unjust enrichment and thus no grounds for compensation.

No evil is without its compensation. The less money, the less trouble; the less favour, the less envy. Even in those cases which put us out of wits, it is not the loss itself, but the estimate of the loss that troubles us.

/ Seneca; Spanish-born Roman Statesman, philosopher /

Since claims based on unjust enrichment, so understood, depend crucially on the relative benefits and burdens of existing people, it might be argued that what is called for is not reparation for past injustices, but an application of requirements of distributive justice. Distributive theories, like that of Rawls, insist that those who have gained more than their fair share from past transactions should compensate those who have less than their fair share. Why should it matter whether the inequity was the result of past injustices or some other occurrence such as a natural disaster?

Sometimes it does seem to matter. Suppose, says Gosseries, that someone finds money in his house and uses it to buy expensive wine, later discovering that the money is counterfeit and that his wine merchant has thereby suffered a loss.⁹ It is reasonable to suppose that the person, though innocent of wrongdoing, should return at least something of the gains he has made to the one who has suffered loss. Similarly, if you discover that your family for-

tune is the result of your father or grandfather cheating his clients, many of whom are now living in poverty, you might reasonably believe that the fact that *your* wealth was gained at the expense of others gives you a special responsibility to share at least some of these assets with those who suffered loss. However, it is probable that the further back in the past the injustice lies and the more that the situation of the heirs of the victims seems to be the result of other factors, the less inclined you will be to think that you have a personal responsibility to the descendants of victims – as opposed to a general, social responsibility based on duties of distributive justice. If claims based on unjust enrichment fade away, then it is an unpromising basis for historical obligations.

There are further disadvantages to basing an account of responsibility for reparation on an appeal to unjust enrichment. In the case of many injustices, no enrichment has been gained by present citizens. Most Australian citizens have gained nothing from the policy of taking Aboriginal children away from their families. And if social and psychological harms, as well as economic costs, are taken into account, there are grounds for believing that slavery in the US has resulted in higher costs to the white population than benefits. Moreover, some of the worst injustices of history – genocide, torture, use of 'comfort women' – are not properly treated by legalistic forms of reparation that have to do with loss of assets and the return of property. What seems to be required to do justice in the eyes of the victims or their heirs is not merely monetary compensation but some form of official apology and a demonstration of contrition. It was such a demand that the Australian Prime Minister was responding to. But such acts fly in the face of the liberal propositions discussed above. How can an apology be offered by people who played no role in committing the injustice and how can it be given to those who are not the actual victims but their descendants?

Restitution as reconciliation

Apologies and token gestures of compensation might be incorporated into the liberal framework by treating them not as an admission of responsibility and a demonstration of contrition but as a way of providing solace, recognition or 'closure' to victims or their descendants – as a way of reconciling communities within a political society. Waldron seems to take this position when he points out that historical memory is central to the identity of many people and that the suffering caused to present people by their memories of historical injustice can be best dealt with by offering an apology and ma-

king other token gestures.¹⁰ These gestures are made to the living, not the dead, and since they are really about achieving good relationships in the present and future, they do not involve the acceptance of responsibility for historical acts or the debts of past people.

The problem with this way of understanding acts of apology for historical injustices is that it means that these apologies are insincere. They do not mean what apologies are supposed to mean – those who make them are not admitting responsibility to those whom they victimised – and yet their affect on present people seems to require that people take the apology as meaning what apologies are supposed to mean.¹¹ If recipients of the apology come to believe that the act was only done for the purpose of making them feel better, they would probably reject it. Moreover, the reconciliatory approach to apology leads to the question of why apologise at all for historical injustices. There are probably more efficient, and certainly more honest, ways of making people feel better about the past of their community – psychological counselling for example.

Giving the dead their due

Ridge points out that by dropping the first liberal assumption – that the only individuals who count in theories of justice and right are present and future people – we can provide an economical account of why we should offer apologies and reparation for historic injustices. If we believe that we can harm or benefit the dead, then it is clear why reparation is required. Their rights were violated; they are owed. Though we cannot directly compensate them, we can promote objectives that we have reason to believe that they cared about. 'Most slaves probably cared very much about the welfare of their descendants, so the United States could provide reparations to the slaves by promoting the welfare of their descendants.'¹² And though we cannot apologise directly to the dead we can apologise to their descendants who act in this situation as their representatives.

Ridge's account makes the controversial assumption that has been defended by a few philosophers but opposed by others – that the dead can be harmed and benefited.¹³ He also assumes that these harms and benefits are sufficiently weighty so as to motivate us to engage in political acts or to make the sacrifices required by reparation. These assumptions have implications for moral and political philosophy that are largely unexplored. But the more immediate problem is that making these assumptions does not solve the problem of collective responsibility and inherited debt. Why should present citizens take responsibility for injustices that they had no role in committing? Why should they believe that they have a moral debt inherited from their predecessors?

Another approach

Working in a liberal framework, we have so far failed to find an account that makes sense of, or adequately justifies, apology and reparation for historical injustices. There are several responses that can be made to this failure. We might abandon the third proposition of liberalism and lay it down (as does Ridge) that citizenship simply requires people to accept an obligation to make recompense and reparation for what members of their polity did in the past. Treating states as agents that are accountable for the actions of past governments is a widely accepted legal convention. But liberalism has traditionally refused to take obligations of citizenship as given. It has always asked why individuals should accept them. Indeed, some liberals have regarded it as unjust that past citizens can impose burdens on their successors. “One generation is to another as one independent nation to another”, said Thomas Jefferson, thus insisting on the right of citizens of each generation to re-make their institutions, commitments and policies according to their own interests and values.¹⁴ Jefferson, who was himself the maker of constitutions, was inconsistent on this point, but it would be better, philosophically speaking, if we could provide an answer to the question of why citizens should take responsibility for the deeds of past generations.

Another more drastic response is to abandon liberalism. Communitarians and others who stress the communal source of identity have no difficulty explaining why we have historical obligations. Says MacIntyre: “I belong to this clan, this tribe, this nation. Hence what is good for me has to be the good for one who inhabits these roles. As such, I inherit from the past of my family, my city, my tribe, my nation, a variety of debts, inheritances, rightful expectations and obligations.”¹⁵ But for those who lack these tribal certainties, whose sources of identity are more diverse or who fail to identify with their nation or their forebears, a move from identity to obligation is unappealing. So let us return to the question of whether a justification can be found within the liberal framework.

The position that I will defend rejects the three propositions that so many people regard as fundamental to liberalism. Nevertheless, it counts as a liberal approach in so far as it rests on an even more basic liberal assumption: that the justification for a political society, and the duties it assigns to citizens, is its continuing commitment and capacity to protect and underwrite their ability to define and pursue their own good and to obtain the resources and to secure the conditions that they need, whatever good they decide to pursue. My contention is that when we take into account what it means

to most people to live a meaningful life we will understand why the obligations of citizens must be intergenerational and why they can have duties in respect to the historical past.¹⁶ My strategy is to re-examine the starting point for all liberal theories: the interests and needs of individuals. I will argue that these interests and needs require institutions that enable citizens to make and have fulfilled lifetime-transcending demands in the framework of an intergenerational polity that is prepared to take responsibility for the past.

Lifetime-transcending interests

To support this thesis, I make three claims which I cannot defend adequately here. I want to establish that they are at least plausible. The first is that all or most citizens pursued interests can be described as lifetime-transcending. Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* assumes that ‘fathers of families’ will be concerned about what happens to their descendants and that this will motivate an acceptance of duties to future generations.¹⁷ An interest in the well-being of descendants is clearly a lifetime-transcending interest. But it is important to recognise that people’s goals, including those of childless individuals, generally involve interests that are lifetime-transcending. Artists and academics may strive to produce works that they hope will be appreciated by people of the future; at least they like to think of themselves as making a contribution, however small, to a tradition or a practice that they hope and assume will continue indefinitely into the future. People work for ideals and reforms that they hope will triumph in the future, they care about the future fate of their communities, or they simply want their existence and their efforts to be properly remembered by future members of their group.¹⁸

Not all people have goals that are explicitly lifetime-transcending. A businessman may be interested only in building up his business and making a good profit and may not care what happens after his death. We can think of lots of cases, real or imaginary, where people are pre-occupied by interests that do not transcend their lifetimes. But it is important to note that these lifetime centred interests often depend, whether the individuals recognise it or not, on what people do after their deaths or on the persistence of a particular state of affairs. The businessman would probably not want people to claim after his death that he got his fortune in an illicit way or that he was not good at running a business. He is likely to want those whose opinions he cares about to respect his achievements, and he is likely to care about the persistence of a way of valuing that rates running a successful business as an admirable enterprise. I would not be so rash as to claim that

everyone has lifetime-transcending interests. But, then, not everyone cares about other goods that liberals think that societies ought to protect.

My second claim is that having lifetime-transcending interests is central to living a meaningful life. On this matter, philosophers who have discussed the ‘good life’ generally agree. According to Partridge, “Well functioning human beings identify with, and seek to further, the well-being, preservation and endurance of communities, locations, causes, artefacts, institutions, ideals, and so on, that are outside themselves and that they hope will flourish beyond their lifetimes”, and he uses data from psychology to back this up.¹⁹ To seek a meaningful life, says Nozick, is to seek to transcend the limits of one’s individual life.²⁰ A meaningful life, claims Wolf, is one in which a person actively engages in projects of worth – a pursuit that requires commitment to something enduring.²¹ Lomasky similarly claims

A stiff apology is a second insult....
The injured party does not want to be compensated because he has been wronged; he wants to be healed because he has been hurt.
/ G.K. Chesterton /

that a commitment to long-term projects that persist over time and project into the future is an important component of a person’s identity.²² Essential to a human agent, says Taylor, is the capacity to be a strong evaluator: “to evaluate the worth of one’s projects or one’s life, and this requires that he or she subscribes to a higher order of good such as justice, God, aesthetic beauty or knowledge, that makes him part of something larger than his own life.”²³ It would also be rash to claim that no one can live a life that he or she finds meaningful without having lifetime-transcending interests. But the fact that having lifetime-transcending goals and interests is so often central to living a meaningful life, means that individuals ought to have an opportunity to acquire goals that involve lifetime-transcending interests. And if this opportunity is to be real then they must live in a society that enables them to acquire goals that they have a reasonable chance satisfying. A society can be judged according to the range of options it provides to individuals to pursue goals that they can find meaningful. A liberal society will provide individuals with a large range of options to acquire and pursue lifetime-transcending interests.

My third, and most controversial, claim is that their lifetime-transcending interests can give individuals a justification for making demands of their survivors or successors. Consider the widely held view that it is wrong to destroy the

reputations of those who are dead by telling malicious untruths about their lives. To condemn this as wrong we do not need to suppose that the dead can be harmed by malicious lies. It is sufficient to appreciate why the living care about their posthumous reputation. They may care because of the harm that slander could do to their objectives, projects, ideals, and the people they love. Or they may care because they want their efforts, accomplishments, and objectives to be properly appreciated after their death by those whose opinion they respect, and by the members of groups and institutions to which they made contributions. In either case, their lifetime-transcending interest in their reputation makes it legitimate for them to de-

"Why should I apologize because God throws in crystal chandeliers, mahogany floors, and the best construction in the world?"

/ Jim Bakker /

mand of their survivors that their posthumous reputation be protected. For if a person thought that her posthumous reputation would be vulnerable to those who would have no compunction against telling malicious lies for their own gratification or profit, she could not with confidence pursue lifetime-transcending projects and causes, or believe that what she did would make a contribution or have a chance of being appreciated. She could not be confident that her attempts to provide benefits for her children and community would not be subverted by the suffering that they would later be caused. Her ability to achieve important objectives and to give her life meaning would be seriously undermined. In other words, her society would have failed to provide support for people to develop objectives that are central to living a meaningful life.

These considerations give members of a society reason to support a practice that requires survivors to protect the posthumous reputations of the dead. The motivation is not merely our own self-interest in our reputations but an appreciation of how protection of posthumous reputation contributes to the ability of individuals to live meaningful lives and to protect people and things that they care about. And given that we have good reasons, moral and pragmatic, for accepting the practice, we are also obliged to accept a duty to protect the reputations of those whom we survive.

Not all demands made by people of their successors are legitimate. I may desire that my children adhere to particular religious beliefs but I am not entitled to demand that they do so. I am not entitled to demand that my successors continue my projects. But it is not so implausible to suppose that I am entitled to de-

mand that they remember and appreciate the sacrifices that I have made for their sake. In general, a person can determine what she is entitled to demand of her successors by considering what she would accept as a legitimate demand of her predecessors.

Historical obligations

A liberal society ought to ensure that individuals are able to develop and pursue goals that involve lifetime-transcending interests and it ought to underwrite the performance of duties that arise from legitimate lifetime-transcending demands. A liberal polity that answers to these requirements is one in which citizens regard themselves as participants in relationships of intergenerational cooperation with the aim of maintaining institutions and practices that enable these requirements to be fulfilled. Citizens through the generations have the duty of ensuring that institutions and practices that enable legitimate lifetime-transcending demands to be fulfilled are maintained. They have the responsibility of maintaining institutions and practices, in the framework of which, individuals can develop and effectively pursue goals involving lifetime-transcending interests.

Their obligations arise from two sources: first of all, from the legitimate lifetime-transcending demands of citizens; and secondly from a consideration of how polities and other intergenerational groups, as associations of individuals with lifetime-transcending interests, ought to treat each other and to treat other intergenerational associations.

If citizens can make legitimate lifetime-transcending demands, then there should be institutions and practices that ensure that they are fulfilled and these institutions must also ensure, where appropriate, that recompense is made for a failure to fulfil them. Given the importance of their lifetime-transcending interests it seems reasonable, for example, that individuals should be able to provide an inheritance for their children or that they should be able to pass on a project to those who might be interested in continuing it. Though individuals cannot demand that their successors continue their projects, it seems reasonable that their society ought to underwrite their desire to pass on their projects to those who might be interested in pursuing them. So understood, entitlements of bequest and inheritance have a justification, though a society can legitimately choose to put limits on these entitlements for the sake of promoting greater equity. Nevertheless, a just society should provide some institutional support for bequest and inheritance. Within the framework of its institutions individuals can make legitimate demands concerning the disposal of their possessions, and if these demands are not properly fulfilled, and

there is no justified excuse, then restitution is owed to the heirs for their failure to obtain what was due to them. These considerations allow an appeal to rights of property as a basis for some historical obligations without having to subscribe to implausible ideas about historical entitlements that cannot be challenged by appeals to present needs and circumstances.²⁴

The second source of historical obligations and entitlements comes from a consideration of how intergenerational communities, whether polities or communities of other kinds, should treat each other and should treat other intergenerational groups given that their members have lifetime-transcending, as well as lifetime, interests. If we accept the idea that polities and communities ought to treat each other with respect (unless there is good reason not to do so), then this requires that they should respect each other as intergenerational communities. Out of respect, they ought to strive to reach long-term understandings and agreements with each other when their interactions make this appropriate, and out of respect for each other as intergenerational societies they ought to keep their agreements unless there is a good moral reason not to do so. If they fail to be properly respectful of each other or fail to keep their agreements without a good excuse then they commit an injustice and incur an obligation of reparation. If this obligation is not fulfilled by the present generation, then it becomes a duty of their successors. Just as individuals have obligations to fulfil legitimate demands of those they survive, they also, as citizens, have an obligation to keep the legitimate agreements made by their predecessors and to make recompense for their failure to treat other intergenerational communities respectfully. Those who deny that this responsibility exists fail to appreciate the nature and justification of a society in which people have intergenerational responsibilities.

Polities have intergenerational responsibilities to each other. The idea that polities ought to act as responsible intergenerational agents – thus committing their citizens to accept historical responsibilities – is supported by reference to the interests of citizens. But we can argue for the same reason, that polities and their citizens have intergenerational responsibilities in respect to other groups that enable individuals to pursue lifetime-transcending interests or are the focus of their lifetime-transcending demands: tribes, ethnic groups and even families. Slavery as it was practiced in the Southern states of the USA was an injustice not merely to individuals, but also to family lines, and the Jim Crow laws introduced by Southern states after the Civil War were designed to keep the families of former slaves in a position of per-

petual subordination. This way of understanding historical injustices like slavery make it intelligible why present people, as members of a family or a tribe that has suffered from a history of related injustices, can be owed reparation for injustice that includes acts committed in past generations.

It also makes intelligible the giving of apologies. An apology is an act of taking responsibility that is given by the members of one intergenerational community to the members of another. It is an acknowledgment of the entitlements of individuals as members of such a community. Present members of a polity can have a responsibility through their representatives of apologising for a historical injustice just as they can have a responsibility for reparation in other forms.

Conclusion

The account that I have offered of why citizens have historical responsibilities rejects all three of the propositions commonly associated with liberalism. It contends that demands made by those who are now dead can be the source of obligation (though it does not require believing that the dead can be benefited by what we do). It gives citizens responsibilities for deeds that they had no part in committing and it requires them to fulfil obligations that they inherit from their political predecessors. Nevertheless, the account is based on a view about the relationship between individuals and their political society that is even more fundamental to liberalism. Whether this is enough to make it a liberal theory is up to others to judge. But liberal or not, it is an account that answers to the beliefs that many people have about their responsibilities as citizens: the beliefs that motivated many Australians to welcome and applaud the apology made to Aborigines and their communities.

Notes:

(1) In the words of Rudd: "We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians. We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country" (Rudd 2008).

(2) I have written specifically on this issue in Thompson 2008.

(3) This view was presented by the former Prime Minister of Australia John Howard, as a reason for not apologising: See Howard 1997.

(4) I am assuming, as do most liberal political philosophers that a democratic polity consists of its citizens whose representatives govern in their name through the institutions of state. Citizens, according to this view are responsible for what their representatives do.

(5) Nozick 1974: 151-153.

(6) Boxill 2003: 77.

(7) Waldron 1992: 18-19.

(8) Boxill 2003: 76.

(9) Gosseries 2004: 9.

(10) Waldron 1992: 6.

(11) All accounts of the meaning of apology that I have encountered stipulate that the one who apologises takes responsibility for the act in question. See, for example, Davies 2002 and Gill 2000.

(12) Ridge 2003: 44.

(13) Feinberg 1984: Chapter 2, argues that the dead can be benefitted or harmed by our actions. For a criticism of this account, see Lamont 1998.

(14) Jefferson 1907: 456.

(15) MacIntyre 1981: 204-205.

(16) 'Generation' is a vague, but useful term. In this context, present generations are those who are in the position to participate, in one way or another, in making policies that will affect the young and unborn, and past generations consist of citizens who are now not in this position.

(17) Rawls 1971: 288.

(18) See Meyer 1997: 141-143.

(19) Partridge 1981: 204-207.

(20) Nozick 1989: 166-167.

(21) Wolf 1997: 211.

(22) Lomasky 1987: 32.

(23) Taylor 1989: 63-73.

(24) I have defended these ideas about inheritance and reparation in Thompson 2001.

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