



The Spirit's Cradle: Language, Identity and the Global Justice Debate

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Friday, September 13, 2019 3pm-4pm / Discussion Until 5pm

Bessey Hall 105, Coffee & Tea Provided

Discussions of global justice have tended to develop along the lines dictated by their Rawlsian provenance, with a focus on individual rights and resources, and a great deal of attention given to the limits of toleration, the redistribution of goods, and more recently, questions of environmental justice. The work of Van Parijs and De Schutter has explored what the latter has termed 'global linguistic justice', in particular with respect to the expansion of English as a lingua franca, but language and language death have largely been marginal to the wider debate. This paper therefore explores why and how that debate should be inflected, through an ethical examination of global politics on the linguistic plane. Beginning with Charles Taylor's *The Language Animal*, and his arguments about the centrality of language to human life and identity, the philosophy of JR Jones is then analysed as a particular expression of these broader claims. Writing in 1960s Wales, he inspired the burgeoning Welsh language movement, particularly with his claims around the interpenetration (*cydymdreiddiad*) of language and land and its significance in the formation of peoples, and their continued existence. These claims around the deep, formative significance of language are then contrasted with the underlying assumptions about language in the debates around global justice and the political liberalism that informs them. Arguing against the possibility that such a liberal framework can assimilate these concerns, the final section posits Wales as a case study for examining the implications for the global justice debate when prioritizing the claims of 'burdened linguistic peoples' - thereby raising difficult issues around historical relations, race, land and the natural environment, often marginal to mainstream debates.

Dr Huw Lloyd Williams is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at Cardiff University, Wales, UK, and a member of the research centre, Cardiff Law and Global Justice. Amongst his publications are the books, *On Rawls, Development & Global Justice: The Freedom of Peoples* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2011) and *Global Justice: The Basics* (Routledge, 2017), which is co-authored with Carl Death and interrogates the interface between theory and practice. He also publishes regularly in Welsh, including a book on Welsh intellectual history, *Credoau'r Cymry* (University of Wales Press, 2016), and a sequel, *Adferiad y Meddwl Cymreig*, due to be published in 2020. He has been involved in a number of groups as a political activist, including a 3 year long campaign for a Welsh language school in his home community of Grangetown, Cardiff, whilst he has recently taken up the inaugural post of Dean of the Welsh Language at the University. He is an affiliated lecturer with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, who have provided a grant for his visit.

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