

UDC 141.7:177.9(477)

DOI <https://doi.org/10.30970/PPS.2024.56.7>

## THE PATH TO SOCIAL JUSTICE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MACINTYRE AND NUSSBAUM'S APPROACHES IN THE CONTEXT OF UKRAINIAN SOCIETY

**Yuliia Manuilo**

*Kharkiv National University V. N. Karazin,  
Y.B. Shad department of theoretical and practical philosophy,  
Svobody sq., 4, 61022, Kharkiv, Ukraine*

This article examines the paths to social justice through a comparative analysis of Alasdair MacIntyre and Martha Nussbaum's philosophical approaches, contextualized within Ukrainian society. Employing a critical review methodology, this study highlights the relevance and application of MacIntyre's virtue ethics and Nussbaum's capabilities approach to the unique socio-political and economic challenges facing Ukraine. The study juxtaposes MacIntyre's emphasis on tradition, community, and practices with Nussbaum's focus on individual capabilities and human development, illustrating both the complementary and contrasting elements of their theories. By integrating MacIntyre's notions of communal virtues and Nussbaum's framework of essential capabilities, the research identifies a potential synergistic model for fostering social justice.

The findings reveal that combining these approaches can offer a robust framework for advancing social justice in Ukraine, particularly in its transition from a Soviet legacy to a market-based economy. This comparative analysis underscores the practical significance of these philosophical frameworks in shaping policies and social structures that promote equality and human development. The study further explores how MacIntyre's critique of modern moral philosophy and Nussbaum's advocacy for state-guaranteed capabilities can address existing social inequalities and enhance civic participation.

Conclusions recommend a balanced adoption of both MacIntyre's and Nussbaum's insights to effectively address and navigate the complexities of social justice in contemporary Ukrainian society. Policymakers, civil society, and academics are encouraged to consider these integrated approaches to create a more equitable and just social order, ensuring that all citizens have the opportunities to achieve their full potential.

*Key words:* social justice, Alasdair MacIntyre, Martha Nussbaum, virtue ethics, capabilities approach, Ukrainian society.

**Introduction. Problem statement.** Ukraine faces a persistent challenge: deep-seated social and economic inequalities that continue to stifle the country's progress despite ongoing reforms. While existing approaches to social justice have been implemented, they lack a robust philosophical foundation, leaving room for improvement in their effectiveness. This article delves into the potential of two influential frameworks – Alasdair MacIntyre's virtue ethics and Martha Nussbaum's capabilities approach – to address these issues within the Ukrainian context. By comparing and contrasting these frameworks, we aim to identify their strengths and weaknesses, explore possibilities for integrating their key elements, and provide concrete recommendations for policy development.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The issue of social equality is highly relevant for Ukrainian society due to ongoing socio-economic transformations and the need to address historical inequalities and promote social justice in a transitioning political landscape.

This article draws on key works to analyze social justice approaches. MacIntyre's "After Virtue" [8] and "Dependent Rational Animals" [7] critique modern moral philosophy and emphasize virtue ethics. Knight's "Aristotelian Philosophy" [4] and Lutz's "Tradition in the Ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre" [6] provide further insights into his theories.

Nussbaum's capabilities approach is examined through "Women and Human Development" [10] and "Creating Capabilities" [12], with broader justice implications discussed in "Frontiers of Justice" [11].

Beadle and Knight's "Virtue and Economy" [1] and Kymlicka's "Contemporary Political Philosophy" [5] offer comparative analyses relevant to integrating both philosophers' frameworks. Sakwa's "Postcommunism" [13] and Miller's "Principles of Social Justice" [9] address socio-political transformations pertinent to the Ukrainian context.

These sources collectively inform our comparative analysis of MacIntyre's and Nussbaum's approaches, applied to Ukraine's social justice challenges.

The article's **purpose** is to create actionable recommendations that blend the seemingly conflicting approaches suggested by modern philosophers, thereby to enrich the discourse surrounding social justice and welfare in Ukraine and fostering the implementation of more fair and effective policies.

The **main task** of the article is to conduct a comparative analysis of Alasdair MacIntyre's and Martha Nussbaum's approaches to social justice, evaluating their relevance and applicability in addressing social justice issues within the context of Ukrainian society.

**Basic material and results.** Social justice is a pivotal concept in political philosophy, significantly impacting societies in transformation. Ukraine, undergoing substantial social and economic changes, stands at a crossroads where social justice could shape its trajectory toward stability and prosperity.

Since gaining independence in 1991, Ukraine has faced economic instability, political corruption, and social inequality. These challenges hinder progress and exacerbate societal divisions. Social justice, defined as the fair and just relation between the individual and society, is crucial for addressing these disparities and fostering a more equitable society. While these issues persist, solutions rooted in ethical philosophy provide a lens through which policies can address systemic challenges.

Ukraine's economic transformation has led to increased inequality and social stratification. The gap between the wealthy and the poor has widened, and marginalized groups lack access to essential resources. Addressing these issues through social justice can create policies that promote inclusivity and fairness. At the core of these challenges lies the need for a framework that goes beyond redistribution and addresses the ethical dimensions of equality.

Alasdair MacIntyre and Martha Nussbaum offer distinct yet complementary approaches to social justice. MacIntyre's virtue ethics emphasize community, tradition, and practices in shaping moral behavior. He argues that contemporary moral discourse has lost its connection to historical and communal contexts [8]. A just society, according to MacIntyre, fosters the development of virtues through shared practices and traditions. This perspective is relevant for Ukraine, where community and shared history can enhance social cohesion and moral development.

Martha Nussbaum's capabilities approach focuses on individual well-being and opportunities [10]. True social justice, she argues, considers what individuals can do and be – their capabilities. This approach highlights the importance of providing resources necessary for a dignified life, impacting areas like education, healthcare, and economic security.

Both MacIntyre and Nussbaum offer valuable insights. MacIntyre's focus on community and tradition builds a strong moral foundation, while Nussbaum's emphasis on individual

capabilities guides policy creation. In essence, their frameworks intersect where the individual's well-being meets community-driven moral development, offering a multidimensional approach to justice.

Based on the fundamental concepts of MacIntyre's virtue ethics, this section will explore the implications of his approach for understanding social justice in Ukraine, highlighting the potential for cultivating virtues necessary for promoting social cohesion and addressing the country's pressing social and economic challenges.

Alasdair MacIntyre's critique of modern moral philosophy is foundational to his approach to virtue ethics and social justice. He argues that contemporary moral discourse has become fragmented and incoherent, lacking a unified framework for understanding and addressing moral issues. According to MacIntyre, this fragmentation stems from the Enlightenment's rejection of Aristotelian ethics, which emphasized the cultivation of virtues within the context of a community and tradition [7].

MacIntyre emphasizes that moral reasoning must remain connected to historical and cultural contexts, advocating for a community-based ethical framework. Traditions provide the necessary narrative and communal context for individuals to understand and develop virtues. This stands in contrast to the individualistic tendencies of modern moral philosophy. For MacIntyre, a return to virtue ethics rooted in tradition and community is essential for achieving social justice, as it fosters a shared understanding of the good life and the common good [8].

Central to MacIntyre's virtue ethics is the concept of "practices". He defines practices as "coherent and complex forms of socially established cooperative human activity" that aim to achieve goods internal to that activity [8, p. 187]. These practices are crucial for cultivating virtues, as they provide the context in which individuals can develop the skills and dispositions necessary for moral excellence. Examples of practices include professions, arts, and sports, all of which require a commitment to standards of excellence and the pursuit of internal goods rather than mere external rewards [3].

MacIntyre's focus on practices and traditions carries substantial significance in the context of Ukraine. As the country moves from a centralized system to a market-driven economy, it must confront the task of reconstructing its social fabric and moral principles. The legacy of the past, characterized by collectivism and authoritarianism, has fostered a climate of mistrust and eroded communal bonds, complicating efforts to promote virtuous behavior and achieve social justice [13]. MacIntyre's emphasis on community and tradition may give Ukraine a promising avenue to restore a shared sense of purpose and moral unity.

Furthermore, in professions like healthcare and education, MacIntyre's emphasis on internal goods could improve standards of excellence, promoting ethical and cooperative practices that transcend individual gain. This approach aligns with MacIntyre's belief that social justice is not merely a matter of distributing resources but involves the cultivation of a virtuous citizenry committed to the common good [5].

MacIntyre's ideas also resonate with broader discussions in political philosophy about the limits of liberal individualism and the need for a more community-oriented approach to justice. Scholars like Michael Sandel and Will Kymlicka have similarly critiqued the shortcomings of liberalism and emphasized the importance of community in fostering social justice [5; 14]. These perspectives support MacIntyre's argument that a focus on virtues and communal practices is essential for addressing the moral and social challenges of contemporary society.

Having established the foundational aspects of MacIntyre's virtue ethics approach to social justice, it is now essential to explore Martha Nussbaum's capabilities approach, which provides a distinct framework centered on human flourishing and the realization of individual potential.

Martha Nussbaum's capabilities approach offers a comprehensive framework for addressing social justice, emphasizing the importance of enabling individuals to achieve a range of essential human capabilities. This approach is particularly relevant for countries undergoing significant social and economic transformations, such as Ukraine, where ensuring equitable access to opportunities and freedoms is crucial for sustainable development.

Nussbaum's approach is grounded in the idea that justice should be measured by the real freedoms and opportunities available to individuals to live a life they have reason to value. In her seminal work, "Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach," Nussbaum outlines ten central human capabilities that she argues are necessary for a truly human life. These include life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotions, practical reason, affiliation, other species, play, and control over one's environment [10]. Each capability represents a fundamental aspect of human dignity and well-being, reflecting Nussbaum's commitment to a holistic view of human development.

In "Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach," Nussbaum elaborates on the theoretical underpinnings of her framework, emphasizing that capabilities should be seen as substantive freedoms that enable individuals to function in key areas of life [12]. She argues: "A life that is truly human is one that is shaped throughout by these human powers of practical reason and sociability" [12, p. 33]. This perspective is crucial for understanding the depth and breadth of her approach to social justice.

One of the key strengths of Nussbaum's approach is its flexibility and applicability to diverse socio-political contexts. For Ukraine Nussbaum's emphasis on individual capabilities aligns well with the need to build a society where all citizens can flourish. For instance, the capability of practical reason, which involves being able to form a conception of the good and engage in critical reflection, is essential for fostering democratic participation and civic engagement [10].

Nussbaum's approach also highlights the role of the state in guaranteeing these capabilities. In "Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership," she asserts that a just society must ensure that its institutions provide the conditions necessary for individuals to develop and exercise their capabilities. She writes: "The basic political principles of a society must be chosen with a view to the lives they make possible for the people who live under them" [11, p. 70]. This perspective is particularly relevant for Ukraine, where state institutions often struggle with issues of corruption and inefficiency. By adopting a capabilities approach, policymakers in Ukraine can prioritize reforms that enhance the real freedoms and opportunities available to all citizens, thereby addressing the root causes of social injustice.

With a thorough understanding of both MacIntyre's virtue ethics and Nussbaum's capabilities approach, we can now undertake a comparative analysis to evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of each framework in addressing social justice within the Ukrainian context.

Both Alasdair MacIntyre and Martha Nussbaum offer robust frameworks for understanding and promoting social justice, though their approaches differ significantly. MacIntyre's virtue ethics emphasize the cultivation of virtues within a community context, arguing that practices and traditions are crucial for developing the moral character necessary for social justice [8]. In contrast, Nussbaum's capabilities approach is more individual-centered, focusing on the actual abilities and freedoms individuals must pursue a good life.

One significant similarity between the two is their emphasis on the importance of community and societal structures. While MacIntyre focuses on the role of community in nurturing virtues, Nussbaum highlights the state's role in creating conditions for individuals to develop and exercise

their capabilities [4; 10]. Both acknowledge that individual well-being cannot be divorced from the social context and that achieving social justice requires systemic efforts.

The potential for merging elements from both approaches within the context of Ukraine is quite encouraging. MacIntyre's focus on tradition and community can cultivate a sense of shared values and collective responsibility, essential for a society transitioning from the remnants of Soviet collectivism. Meanwhile, Nussbaum's capabilities approach can enhance this by guaranteeing that individuals possess the freedoms and opportunities required to actively participate in and benefit from this collective prosperity [6; 10].

Nevertheless, there are considerable challenges and barriers to applying these philosophical concepts in Ukraine. The legacy of centralized governance has fostered skepticism towards collective efforts and government actions. Additionally, the current political instability and economic inequalities present significant obstacles to developing the stable and supportive institutions needed to promote virtues or secure essential capabilities [2].

Following the comparative analysis of MacIntyre's virtue ethics and Nussbaum's capabilities approach, it is essential to assess the practical implications of these frameworks for addressing social justice issues in Ukraine. Ukraine, currently grappling with significant socio-economic disparities, political instability, and systemic inequalities, requires a multifaceted approach to promote equity and sustainable development.

MacIntyre's emphasis on community, tradition, and the cultivation of virtues offers a pathway to restore communal values and rebuild moral norms that have been eroded by decades of political upheaval and corruption. By focusing on moral education and the reinforcement of civic virtues, Ukraine can begin to strengthen its social fabric and promote collective responsibility. The re-establishment of community-oriented practices is crucial for fostering social cohesion, which remains weak due to lingering distrust from Soviet-era governance structures and recent political crises. According to MacIntyre, social justice is deeply embedded in the shared practices and traditions that bind a community, and this model is particularly relevant for Ukraine, where historical and cultural ties can play a vital role in rebuilding social solidarity.

Simultaneously, Nussbaum's capabilities approach offers a complementary framework that prioritizes the individual's well-being by ensuring that all citizens have access to essential freedoms and opportunities. This framework can guide much-needed policy reforms in Ukraine, particularly in the areas of education, healthcare, and social welfare. Nussbaum's capabilities framework focuses on enhancing individual capacities, such as access to quality education and healthcare, which are vital for improving citizens' life prospects and reducing the socio-economic disparities that have widened since Ukraine's transition to a market-based economy. The integration of Nussbaum's principles would ensure that marginalized groups gain the necessary tools to lead fulfilling lives, contributing to both individual and societal well-being.

To address these challenges effectively, policymakers in Ukraine should take a two-pronged approach. First, by drawing on MacIntyre's virtue ethics, they should foster a renewed focus on civic education and community engagement. Programs aimed at cultivating civic virtues such as integrity, responsibility, and public service could reinvigorate public trust and participation in political and social life. This would help create a more ethically grounded and community-oriented society, countering the individualism that often dominates market economies.

Second, adopting Nussbaum's capabilities approach would encourage policies that target key socio-economic inequalities. By focusing on expanding access to healthcare, improving educational outcomes, and creating economic opportunities for all citizens, Ukraine can take meaningful steps toward a more inclusive and just society. The state's role in guaranteeing these

capabilities, as Nussbaum argues, is crucial for ensuring that all citizens are empowered to participate in and benefit from the nation's economic and social development.

The integration of MacIntyre's and Nussbaum's philosophical frameworks provides a comprehensive strategy for addressing Ukraine's social justice challenges. By focusing both on the cultivation of civic virtues and the expansion of individual capabilities, Ukraine can begin to rebuild its society on principles of fairness, inclusion, and moral integrity. Future research and policy initiatives should continue to explore how these frameworks can be operationalized to address the country's most pressing issues, from socio-economic inequalities to the promotion of democratic engagement and community resilience.

**Conclusion.** Integrating MacIntyre's and Nussbaum's frameworks offers a robust strategy for addressing social justice in Ukraine. While MacIntyre's emphasis on communal virtues provides insights into fostering a cohesive and ethical society, Nussbaum's focus on individual capabilities highlights the importance of ensuring every citizen has the opportunity to realize their full potential.

A hybrid approach combining these frameworks can strengthen social cohesion through community-based initiatives and ensure individuals have access to essential resources and opportunities. Policy recommendations should focus on promoting shared values through civic education, enhancing social institutions, and developing programs to reduce inequality in education, healthcare, and economic opportunities.

Challenges such as systemic corruption and entrenched oligarchic interests must be addressed to implement these ideas effectively. Balancing liberal individualism with communitarian values will be crucial to maintaining the equilibrium between personal freedom and collective good.

Future research should explore these intersections further, providing empirical support to refine and apply these theoretical frameworks to Ukraine's pursuit of justice and equity. This integrated approach not only offers a balanced theoretical perspective, but also practical solutions tailored to Ukraine's unique socio-cultural and historical context.

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## **ШЛЯХ ДО СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ СПРАВЕДЛИВОСТІ: ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ ПІДХОДІВ МАКІНТАЙРА ТА НУСБАУМ У КОНТЕКСТІ УКРАЇНСЬКОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА**

**Юлія Мануйло**

*Харківський національний університет імені В.Н. Каразіна,  
кафедра теоретичної та практичної філософії імені Й.Б. Шада,  
майдан Свободи 4, 61022, м. Харків, Україна*

У статті розглядаються шляхи до соціальної справедливості через порівняльний аналіз філософських підходів Аласдера Макінтайра та Марти Нуссбаум, контекстуалізованих в українському суспільстві. Використовуючи методологію критичного огляду, це дослідження висвітлює актуальність та застосування етики чеснот Макінтайра та підходу можливостей Нуссбаум до унікальних соціально-політичних та економічних викликів, що стоять перед Україною. У дослідженні порівнюється акцент Макінтайра на традиціях, спільнотах і практиках з акцентом Нуссбаум на індивідуальних здібностях і людському розвитку, що ілюструє як взаємодоповнюючі, так і протилежні елементи їхніх теорій. Інтегруючи поняття спільнотних чеснот Макінтайра та концепцію основних здібностей Нуссбаум, дослідження визначає потенційну синергетичну модель для сприяння соціальній справедливості.

Результати дослідження показують, що поєднання цих підходів може запропонувати надійну основу для просування соціальної справедливості в Україні, особливо в умовах переходу від радянської спадщини до ринкової економіки. Цей порівняльний аналіз підкреслює практичну значущість цих філософських засад у формуванні політики та соціальних структур, які сприяють рівності та людському розвитку. У дослідженні також розглядається, як критика Макінтайром сучасної філософії моралі та відстоювання Нуссбаум гарантованих державою можливостей можуть сприяти подоланню існуючої соціальної нерівності та посиленню громадянської участі.

Висновки рекомендують збалансоване прийняття ідей Макінтайра та Нуссбаум для ефективного вирішення складних питань соціальної справедливості в сучасному українському суспільстві. Політики, громадянське суспільство та науковці заохочуються до розгляду цих інтегрованих підходів для створення більш рівноправного та справедливого суспільного ладу, який гарантує, що всі громадяни матимуть можливості для реалізації свого потенціалу в повній мірі.

*Ключові слова:* соціальна справедливість, Аласдер Макінтайр, Марта Нуссбаум, етика чеснот, підхід на основі можливостей, українське суспільство.