

Policing and its search for meaning: procedural justice with *Inochi*

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Introduction

In a book concerned with meaning and complexity it seems appropriate to consider meaning derived from complex professional lives. Policing as a form of service to the public, often in moments of acute danger and risk, may appear, at least ostensibly, to be a career in which meaning is self-evident. Certainly, in the simplicity of training ground doctrine policing is constructed as a career of meaning because it is mainly about keeping people safe.² Does this straightforward account of purpose and effect giving rise to meaning, however that may be individually sensed, survive contact with the experience of time spent in a policing career? If its practitioners – i.e., police officers and civilian staff – instead perceive policing’s daily “reality” as one mired within a convolution of legal, procedural and codified constraints, where is there a well of meaning to be found? Similarly, where is meaning recovered from the arid ground implied by “putting up with” the constant churn of management initiatives as well as from the ambiguities, dangers and, indeed, corruptions of policing culture? Is meaning resilient to or found through personal loss incurred in the course of a demanding career in policing? Such loss is witnessed in many police services internationally in various forms, including manifold negative mental and physical health implications among police personnel.³ If meaning is acknowledged as inherently subjective and, so, is most coherently defined interpretatively in terms of indicators of its obverse, meaninglessness – including low staff morale, resignations and sickness rates – then policing, or, more correctly, its people, may well be experiencing a dearth of meaning.⁴ In parallel, apparent among policing’s own service user base –

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² College of Policing, “Police training to change for all new officers to fight crime,” College of Policing Press Release, 18 June, 2022, <https://www.college.police.uk/article/police-training-change-all-new-officers-fight-crime>.

³ Rebecca Phythian et al., “Developments in UK police wellbeing: A review of blue light wellbeing frameworks,” *The Police Journal: Theory, Practice and Principles* 95, no. 1 (2022): 24-49.

⁴ Police Federation of England and Wales, *Pay and Morale Survey 2022 – Headline Report December 2022* (Leatherhead: Police Federation, 2022), 25-28, 34-42.

the public – is growing unease or rejection of police legitimacy, a loss of confidence in policing and, indeed, as experienced in at least some jurisdictions, an apparently increasing willingness to do physical harm to police personnel.⁵

Procedural justice, which Tyler, in his influential work, defines in terms of how people's experiences of policing impact significantly on their perceptions of its fairness and, thus, its legitimacy, may be potentially significant in terms of policing personnel recovering meaning to their professional lives.⁶ Procedural justice suggests process that is justice "done with" rather than "done to" its participants. Conceptually, it thus seems to be situated between points of opposite polarity. At one polarity is individual agency to walk away from or towards how policing is done. At the other polarity is the structural power of policing institutions to enforce law and regulation using means including force. Procedural justice is, arguably, intended as an interplay between these polarities of agent and structure.⁷ Practitioners may, therefore, perceive themselves to be party to an enterprise that unlocks personal agency to flourish for an agreed good – *bonum communis* – while inhibiting structural determinism's capacity to excessively inhibit agency.⁸ Therein may well be meaning and a relief from the reductionist existence of being a mere functionary imposing the power of a rigid structure.

However, individuals birthing new professional beginnings from procedural justice may suffer vulnerability to the organisation's willingness to release itself from the safety of holding power and

⁵ Police Federation, *Pay and Morale Survey*, 43; Isabelle Kirk, "Confidence in the Police sinks in two years," *YouGov*, March 22, 2022, <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2022/03/15/confidence-police-sinks-two-years>; Cormac O'Keefe, "Serious assaults and violence against gardaí rise sharply," *The Irish Examiner*, March 03, 2023, <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/courtandcrime/arid-41084488.html>.

⁶ Tom Tyler, "Procedural Justice, Legitimacy, and the Effective Rule of Law," *Crime and Justice* 30 (2003): 283-357.

⁷ Anthony Giddens, *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984).

⁸ Bonaventure Chapman, "St Thomas and the Common Good," *Dominicana*, November 10, 2014, <https://www.dominicanajournal.org/st-thomas-and-the-common-good>.

influence through those rigid structures whose outworking necessitates the need for procedural justice in the first place. Insight from institutional scholarship highlighting how organisations and sectors embracing change often drift back to previous “safe pathways” of control appears readily applicable to change aspirations in this context.⁹ For example, the report entitled “A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland” (1999) (also known as the “Patten Report”), which made 175 recommendations, is still widely considered to be the most significant and complex blueprint for police reform in the world.¹⁰ The Patten Report might be viewed as a paradigm of procedural justice. It held that policing with the community should be the core function of the police service.¹¹ It opened the prospect of community leaders attending police training courses in neighbourhood policing problem-solving techniques.¹² Yet this moment of ostensibly momentous change cautiously maintained the safe pathway of policing being the sole job of the police service, albeit with scope for partners and community leaders to share some responsibilities and conduct oversight. Policing “done with” only went as far as those with sufficient power and ability to access the structures for policing design and oversight. The Patten commission did not appear to foresee police, partners and the public – especially policing’s most frequent users, including vulnerable and marginalised people – working together as equals to jointly design, deliver and oversee policing. Translation of report into legislation through political process saw further weakening of possibilities. Indeed, it was “undermined everywhere...the Patten Report had not been cherry-picked, it had been gutted....”¹³ In this regard, it has been argued that the post-Patten era has been concerned primarily with the superficial correction of police-community relations.¹⁴ This is not to deny meaningful changes in policing in Northern Ireland since the end of the Troubles, including embedding police in a human

⁹ Simon Bulmer and Martin Burch, “Organizing for Europe: Whitehall, the British State and the European Union,” *Public Administration* 97 (Winter 1998): 604-8; Michael Mulqueen, *Re-evaluating Irish national security: affordable threats?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

¹⁰ Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, *A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland* (Belfast: Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, 1999); John Topping, “Beyond the Patten Report” (PhD diss., Ulster University, 2009), 22.

¹¹ Independent Commission, Recommendation 44, para. 7.9.

¹² Independent Commission, Recommendation 51, para. 7.17.

¹³ Topping, “Patten Report,” 23.

¹⁴ Topping, “Patten Report,” 17.

rights framework and devolution of policing powers to the local assembly government.¹⁵ However, the Patten Report's conceptualisation of procedural justice was structural: designed into the process of change is prescription solely by powerful elites of the change required. In such a context, overall public confidence in the Police Service of Northern Ireland remains good (86% in 2020/1) but a minority (42%) believe that the police and other agencies "seek people's views about the anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime issues that matter."¹⁶ The police representative body, the Police Federation for Northern Ireland, campaigns vociferously on issues including "a mental health crisis in policing" and officers feeling undervalued.¹⁷ Whither meaning?

The PSNI example is but one. Arguably, retaining structure at its centre raises questions as to whether it is possible to comprehensively achieve urgent foundational reform of policing as recommended by, among others, the Casey Review of London's Metropolitan Police and articulated at ground/street levels in the transnational Black Lives Matter movement.¹⁸ This study emerges partly out of concern regarding the repetition of such structuralism and its chilling effect upon meaningful lives in policing. It focuses away from internal reform of structure, workforce, process, culture and so on and towards the journey policing personnel must make to recover or recognise meaning in their lives. In this regard, Parrott refers to a "paralysing roadblock" for the individual's journey arising from being locked into "shame" about what they did or did not do or can or cannot

¹⁵ Michele Lamb, "A Culture of Human Rights: Transforming Policing in Northern Ireland," *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 2, no. 3 (2008): 386-93.

¹⁶ K. Ross and A. Gilligan, *Findings from the 2020/21 Northern Ireland Safe Community Telephone Survey* (Belfast: Department of Justice, March 2022), 14, 17.

¹⁷ Police Federation of Northern Ireland, "Mark Lindsay set to retire as Chair of PFNI," Police Federation of Northern Ireland press release, accessed March 27, 2023, <https://www.policefed-ni.org.uk/media-centre/2022/february/mark-lindsay-set-to-retire-as-chair-of-pfni>.

¹⁸ "About," Black Lives Matter, accessed March 27, 2023, <https://blacklivesmatter.com/about>; Baroness Casey of Blackstock, *An independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service: Final Report*, March 2023, <https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/met/about-us/baroness-casey-review/update-march-2023/baroness-casey-review-march-2023.pdf>.

do. Something both outside and internal to the individual is needed for them to navigate the complexities and problems hindering meaningful lives.¹⁹

In this context, the chapter develops a case for procedural justice infused in practice by what is termed *Inochi*.²⁰ It argues that from conscious self-awareness of *Inochi* flows a coherent way through to practicing procedural justice whereby the police service is but one of many actors in policing and equal to all. Beyond organisational plurality, *Inochi* is a meaningful way of living that seems akin to what Thomas Merton calls “nothingness” – inner calmness and strength found in, and so welcoming of, simplicity by the loss of power.²¹ What follows, in that context, is an attempt to set out an approach that normatively espouses the urgent need for deep and sustained oneness to characterise the future of policing. It is radical in the sense that deep oneness underpinning policing’s quest for meaning through procedural justice is considered outside of what the philosopher John Moriarty describes as “the gable end walls” of who we sociologically are.²² How meaning may be derived in procedural justice is, thus, examined through lenses informed by traditions of Eastern as well as Western mystical thought, and, so, arguably beyond the boundaries of scientific method as it might otherwise be applied to questions of how we know or understand life. Perhaps something of the direction of enquiry is captured in reflections of former *Financial Times* columnist Lucy Kellaway. Upon retraining as a teacher and moving to work at a deprived northeast England school, Kellaway reported listening in disbelief on being informed by her employer that her job was “to love all our students – especially the ones who are hardest to love.”²³

¹⁹ Shannon Parrott, “Cause me to Understand Your Ways, O Lord: A Journey through Psalm 25,” *Search: A Journal of the Church of Ireland* 46, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 23.

²⁰ Ueda Shizuteru, Victor Forte, and Michiaki Nakano, “Inochi: Three Japanese Concepts of Life,” *The Eastern Buddhist*, 45, no. 1 and 2 (2014): 253–74; Hase Shōtō and Michael Conway, “Faith and Inochi as Infinite Life,” *The Eastern Buddhist* 45, no. 1 and 2 (2014): 275–98, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26261420>; Masahira Marioka, “The Concept of ‘Inochi’: A Philosophical Perspective on the Study of Life.” *Japan Review* 2 (1991): 83–115, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25790898>.

²¹ Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander* (New York: Image Books, 1968): 158.

²² John Moriarty, “Interview with John Moriarty,” interview by Andy O’Mahony, *Dialogue*, RTÉ Radio 1, Dublin, 1997, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmB-G-16qNQ>, accessed March 27, 2023.

²³ Andrew Brown, “Guardian lauds archbishops past and present,” *Church Times*, January 6, 2023, 23.

This emphasis on love seems to me oddly profound, because from it everything else flows. If you force yourself to care deeply for every one of your students, you work harder for them, you want the best for them. All the other stuff I learnt in teacher training after leaving my job as a columnist in the *Financial Times* – differentiation and assessment for learning – seems a bit by the by.²⁴

Kellaway's realisation, achieved, according to her narrative, through opening out to love as a professional motivation, concerns her place in equality with all. She does not abandon the role of teacher, with its power over others, but teaches by cherishing even the most difficult to encounter pupil and gaining "oddly profound" wisdom from so doing.²⁵ In this context, it is worth noting Frankl's doctrine of Logotherapy to discern meaning in life and, therein, how he contends that "Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of their personality. No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him."²⁶ Understanding the very essence of another human being is, surely, foundational to the quest for fair and proportionate criminal justice outcomes as well as personal meaning.

In its focus on oneness and, therefrom, equality, this chapter could instead confine itself within a Frankfurt School critical studies perspective, holding in perpetual suspicion police exercises of power over others as exclusionary, totalitarian and even violent.²⁷ However, the chapter seeks a way to mitigate the risk arising from perpetual suspicion of othering those in authority: such othering may well be at odds with achieving the buy-in of powerful actors to radical diminution of their own power. Moreover, it may manifest as a form of coercive, exclusionary power as and of itself. Especially egregious, in the context of this chapter, would be othering that glossed over policing

²⁴ Brown, "Guardian lauds archbishops," 23.

²⁵ Brown, 23.

²⁶ Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2013), 148, Kindle.

²⁷ João Nunes, "Reclaiming the political: Emancipation and critique in security studies," *Security Dialogue* 43, no. 4 (2012): 345.

personnel being motivated to serve through a social justice lens and, indeed, who might continue to serve as such despite suffering personal as well as professional harm and injury. Somewhat softer and more inclusive boundaries may, thus, yield utility to – and, indeed, imbue greater fairness in – scholarship. This is not to argue against the need for effective mechanisms of containment (e.g., defunding), transparency and accountability over structures of policing, education or other endeavours characterised by unequal power relationships. Nor is it to dispense with rigorous questions that might be posed from an emancipatory critical studies lens, such as “whose policing is it?” and “in whose interests is policing being done?” and “by what speech act is policing being legitimised”? Instead, below, the chapter will suggest as essential a practice of radical inclusivity, echoing, perhaps, something of Habermasian discourse ethics.²⁸ The chapter does so with reference to resources including transcendent ones that seek to diminish othering by cherishing.

***Inochi* as a way through to meaning**

Sometimes referred to as “the founder of modern policing,” British politician Sir Robert Peel famously stated that “the police are the public and the public are the police.”²⁹ Peel’s aspiration that policing should, in standards and practice, mirror if not exceed public expectations appears in a contemporary context to be but partially fulfilled. Over the last fifty years, public, political and judicial dismay at a series of crises besetting policing has led policymakers in multiple jurisdictions to invest in significant efforts to position the practices of policing within carefully assembled ethical codes and human rights principles.³⁰ Yet appalling scandals involving errant police officers, up to and including offences of rape and murder, continue to engulf policing.³¹ Findings of institutionalised

²⁸ Suzanne Metselaar and Guy Widdershoven, “Discourse Ethics,” in *Encyclopedia of Global Bioethics*, ed. Henk ten Have (Cham: Springer, 2022): 895-902, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-09483-0_145.

²⁹ The Police Federation of England and Wales, *Your police service: putting the public first* (Leatherhead: Police Federation, undated), accessed 28 March 2023, https://www.polfed.org/media/13687/putting_the_public_first.pdf.

³⁰ Peter Neyroud et al., *Policing, Ethics and Human Rights* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

³¹ Casey, *Independent Review*.

racism, sexism and homophobia pose fundamental questions about policing's capacity to reform.³² The collapsing credibility of policing in the second decade of the twenty-first century, articulated in, for example, "defund the police" movements, is a narrative that has been familiar to many states.³³ Initiatives to foster – often through police training and education – values including integrity and trustworthiness, ethics and human rights in response to scandal, seem, ostensibly, aligned to procedural justice's onus upon policing "done with" communities.³⁴ Arguably, the act of incubating reformed culture and values acknowledges, if nothing else, both a yearning and need for police to embed its efficacy in moral purpose. Yet the crises continue, public perceptions of policing legitimacy are weakening and so too is police morale.³⁵ Deepening divisions seem to characterise what it means to be police and policed.

It is posited that what remains elusive – despite manifold efforts to develop police behaviours that imbue policing with a meaning that is ethical and trustworthy as well as effective – becomes apparent when *Inochi* is allowed into conscious consideration. As noted earlier, when translated into English, *Inochi* means life.³⁶ But in Japanese, we find three words for life, each distinctive in meaning.³⁷ If transposed into an academic context, the first word, *Sei*, refers to the study of the philosophy of living. *Seimei*, which is the second, is life as studied in the natural sciences – so medicine, molecular biology, genetic engineering and the like.³⁸ Scholarship of *Inochi*, the third word, posits it as both intuitive and crucial. Scholars hold that it cannot be systematised into a field of study.³⁹ Rather, it is in encounter with literature, arts, and religion that our self-consciousness of

³² Casey, *Independent Review*.

³³ Jennifer E. Cobina-Dungy and Delores Jones-Brown, "Too much policing: Why calls are made to defund the police," *Crime and Punishment* 25, no. 1 (October 2021): 10.

³⁴ Tara M. Kane, "The Pursuit of Procedural Justice and Police Legitimacy: A Case Study of Community Police Officers' Perceptions of the Perceived Benefits of Higher Education" (PhD diss., Eastern Michigan University, 2020), 1-2, 8.

³⁵ Casey, *Independent Review*; Police Federation, "Pay and morale survey."

³⁶ Shizuteru, Forte, and Nakano, "*Inochi*"; Shōtō and Conway. "Faith and *Inochi*"; Masahiro, "The Concept of 'Inochi'."

³⁷ Shizuteru, Forte, and Nakano, "*Inochi*," 265.

³⁸ Shizuteru, Forte and Nakano, "*Inochi*," 265-66.

³⁹ Shizuteru, Forte and Nakano, 268.

Inochi is accomplished.⁴⁰ Without *Inochi*, life within the contexts of the more sociological and scientifically concrete works of *Sei* and *Seimei* are missing an essential third dimension.

At the root of *Inochi* is humility and selflessness.⁴¹ As with Abrahamic theologies, much symbolism and metaphor are involved. Japanese meditative tradition critiques how humans seek to stand tall in the world.⁴² Similarly, the biblical Adam and Eve allegory suggests how, since earliest times, the human way, sociologically, is to seek to dominate, to be constrained by rules or laws, and to impose consequences when rules are broken.⁴³ In domination is implied an order of structure over agent. In contrast, the *Inochi*-inspired (in)action of consciously sitting in quiet stillness is instructive.

Figuratively and actually this meditative disposition brings its participants to ground level where their poise embodies equality with nature and with all living things.⁴⁴ A narrative to illuminate the value of *Inochi* in how lives are lived is as follows:⁴⁵ we live life contained within the boundaries of *Sei* and *Seimei*. So, we may be living. But are we really living? We are alive and dominating, but we are destroying the planet that sustains life. We have technology but our time for aliveness is smothered in our addiction to our devices. We aim to change the world, but we run headlong into the complex traffic rules of unfair society. We are, as such, set up to have the meaning of consciousness with all things drained from our lives, despite our best intentions.⁴⁶

Moriarty's gable end walls image captures this well.⁴⁷ It implies that we play out much of our existence within the fixed constraints of who we sociologically are, or acceptably can or desire to

⁴⁰ Shizuteru, Forte and Nakano, 268.

⁴¹ Shōtō and Conway. "Faith and *Inochi*," 279-83.

⁴² Shizuteru, Forte, and Nakano, "*Inochi*," 261.

⁴³ Genesis 2 (NIV).

⁴⁴ Shizuteru, Forte, and Nakano, "*Inochi*," 261.

⁴⁵ Masahiro, "The Concept of '*Inochi*,'" 30-42 provides excellent data on public understandings of *Inochi*.

⁴⁶ I owe this insight to a conversation with Professor Takuo Dome, Meta-Science Society, September 2, 2022, Zoom.

⁴⁷ Moriarty, interview with Andy O'Mahony (see FN 22).

be.⁴⁸ While we do, our world becomes scarred by our human intention and purpose.⁴⁹ We become diminished not just environmentally, as the language may, at first glance, suggest, but in what we can see of the *veritatis splendor*, or truth of the splendour of life.⁵⁰ According to Moriarty, we must be transformed into our fullness or we are nothing more than an existential virus to the earth.⁵¹ There is no meaning to us or for us. Correspondingly, *Inochi* upturns what seems the logical inclination to measure success in life in terms of career, material ownership and so on. Life lived conscious of *Inochi* is life patiently accepting the certainty of death.⁵² Death, the great leveller, denotes equality and, by resting in this certainty, we can practice easy joy and selfless giving. No value can be found for dominance of one over the other. Exercising power for power's sake is a disturbance to peaceful, patient, level coexistence. The Franciscan philosopher Richard Rohr is, arguably, in similar territory with what he calls "Falling Upward."⁵³ To Rohr, our careers, ambitions and noble aspirations to change the world are, when we fail to fulfil them, waypoints to divine wisdom. To fall deeper into failure is to fall "upward" to ever closer proximity to where God is to be found. Jesus executed so that religious leaders could reinforce their standing by casting his life as one of abject failure, is both a moment of powerlessness *in extremis* and one in which the utter meaninglessness of worldly power is exposed. Wisdom is in accepting that in our nothingness we are not freed from suffering but can escape meaninglessness to practice love, mercy and oneness with all.⁵⁴

If *Inochi* cannot be studied and the Christian God is cast as unfathomable love and mercy, then at play, it seems, is the committal of an act of faith which is, as such, distinguishable from norms of scientific enquiry. Consequently, while *Inochi*, *Sei* and *Seimei* are relational they are also distinctive

⁴⁸ John Moriarty, interview with Tommy Tiernan, *OK Baby DVD*, 2000, ASIN: B00122VFNQ.

⁴⁹ John Moriarty, interview with Tommy Tiernan.

⁵⁰ Moriarty, interview with Andy O'Mahony, 20:39.

⁵¹ Moriarty, interview with Andy O'Mahony, 23:47.

⁵² Shizuteru, Forte, and Nakano, "Inochi," 267-9.

⁵³ Richard Rohr, *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

⁵⁴ Rohr, *Falling Upward*.

because the carefully limited boundaries of the scientific latter cannot fully capture the limitless possibilities of the faith-based former. Some may see in traditional linear mathematics, with its polarities, its beginnings and ends, similarities with *Sei* and *Seimei* but perceive *Inochi* in quantum physics, whereby polarities are found here and there all at once. There is perhaps some ideational similarity with the Christian belief of a God who is one in three and three in one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.⁵⁵ Such a scheme may suggest that we cannot think of another or indeed engage in othering anything or anyone and at the same time grasp fullness of meaning (even if the gendered Christian language is, in itself, an othering). In such a construct, the polarities of structure and agent emerge as incomplete and even inadequate to the possibilities suggested by remaining distinct yet continuously intermingling.

Procedural Justice and *Inochi*

Having considered how consciousness of *Inochi* may ease a way through to oneness in living, it seems both appropriate and intriguing to move into further reflection upon what conscious awareness of *Inochi* implies for the power structures of policing and, therefrom, meaning to policing personnel. Having noted, earlier, death as the great leveller, it is worthwhile to point out how in police practice, professional encounter with death or injury can be both a moment to exercise lawful powers but also a reminder that powers, however draconian, cannot undo the fate awaiting us all. So, what has policing done since Peelian times? Arguably it has, from an *Inochi* perspective, stood tall, putting itself above others. In being the controller distinct from the controlled, it upholds a linear and even polarised order. It is neither quantum nor relational. Ever practicing othering, ever sticking to process, it risks squeezing out the spaces in which *Inochi* can be encountered. And so, it

⁵⁵ 1 John 5:7–8 (NIV).

may be posited that policing's people find themselves sociologically hemmed within, as it were, gable end walls where a thirst for meaning grows.

Again seemingly prescient is the parallel drawn, above, with institutional scholarship, which posits the stickiness of structural power.⁵⁶ Such stickiness, or reluctance to cede power for reasons including the capacity to remain safe, relevant and to control policy, finance, budget and employment, can render anaemic the hoped-for fullness of agency-structure interplay.⁵⁷ Policing's institutional resistance to change – what in the language of *Inochi* may be termed its insistence upon “tallness” as a power-holder over its communities – can be examined through the development of procedural justice approaches, now discussed. Such scholarship, in the main, makes interests-based cases as to beneficial impacts for policing and public arising from a procedurally just focus upon improved interaction. Donner, Maskaly, Fidell and Jennings draw upon forty-six studies to derive a twofold conclusion: firstly, organisational attention to becoming procedurally just in how it delivers its services beneficially impacts upon employee perceptions of the organisation and the value they derive from their own role in it. Correspondingly, service users – the public – report greater trust, confidence and satisfaction with policing and, thus, more solidly view the police service as legitimate.⁵⁸ Bottoms and Tankebe connect legitimacy of power to the ability of police “to reflect agreed values, norms and beliefs with wider society, attained through dialogue.⁵⁹ Assumed, however, is power resting with “power-holders” even if legitimacy is conceptualised as interactive, involving “both power-holders and audiences.”⁶⁰ Similarly, Tyler, writing some 17 years after his influential early work on procedural justice, contends that consensual models – such as procedural justice – motivate public cooperation in fighting crime and heighten police identification with and

⁵⁶ Mulqueen, *Re-evaluating Irish national security*.

⁵⁷ Mulqueen, *Re-evaluating Irish national security*.

⁵⁸ Christopher Donner et al., “Policing and procedural justice: A state-of-the-art review,” *Policing* 38, no. 1 (2015): 153–172, <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-12-2014-0129>.

⁵⁹ Anthony Bottoms and Justice Tankebe, “Beyond procedural justice: A dialogic approach to legitimacy in criminal justice,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 102, no. 1 (2012): 119–170.

⁶⁰ Bottoms and Tankebe, “Beyond procedural justice,” 119.

engagement in communities.⁶¹ However, he also continues to conceptualise in terms of policing being the task of a structure – primarily the police service – and, thus, reform being about change within that structure so that the police organisation can better operate as principle service provider.⁶² “It is likely that (a) the practices of the police can be crafted to raise perceptions of procedural justice, (b) police training can alter officer behavior, and (c) redesigning police organizations internally can motivate their members to treat community members more fairly.”⁶³ Evidently structuralism retains much currency in such problem-solving scholarship. Love, even as mediated within professionally structured channels, is seemingly not considered. But as to procedural justice’s efficacy, Tagin and Cody, importantly, distinguish between perception and actual change in how procedurally just practice impacts upon communities and police.⁶⁴ On the one hand, public perceptions of procedurally just policing link to perceptions of policing legitimacy. However, yet to be established is whether actual change towards procedurally just police treatment of people leads to changes in legal compliance and perceived legitimacy.⁶⁵ Flowing from such uncertainty is the intriguing question of what will motivate police to “do the right thing” and turn their practice towards procedural justice, when moving beyond words into action may prove unrewarding in terms of stimulating a more law-abiding, trusting and satisfied community? Indeed, such behaviour might well run contrary to the organisation’s resistance to change, where such resistance is emboldened by institutionalised uncertainty concerning the rewards of ceding power. As such, a deeply sedimented barrier to a less powerful police organisation working in equality with all is a ready possibility.

⁶¹ Tom Tyler, “Procedural justice and policing: A rush to judgment?” *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 13 (2017): 29–35, DOI: 10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-110316-113318.

⁶² Tyler, “Procedural justice,” 29.

⁶³ Tyler, “Procedural justice,” 29.

⁶⁴ Daniel Negin and Cody Telep, “Procedural justice and legal compliance,” *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 13 (2017): 5–28, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-110316-113318>.

⁶⁵ Negin and Telep, “Procedural Justice and legal compliance,” 5.

***Inochi* as necessity?**

The chapter is rooted in addressing an apparent absence of meaning besetting policing and, therein, the challenge of recognising or recovering meaning. Advocated here, in the context of *Inochi*, is policing done in equality and a profound sense of oneness with each other and all things. Thus, it is, arguably, reflective of a crisis of meaning being painted on a canvas much wider than policing. It is a crisis characterised by seemingly accelerating decay in the standing and credibility among the public of democratic institutions, public bodies and settled forms of governance associated with them.⁶⁶ Arguably, hyper-mediated, post-economic crash, post-Covid 19 societies are less likely to accept themselves as being reflected in, and represented by, “partnership” modes of public governance, such as those familiar in much contemporary policing. Such partnerships often comprise an elite of public service providers (e.g., police), governmental bodies and well-established NGOs. Rappaport, in a powerful critique of efforts to “democratize” policing through partnership, warns how such structures favour those with the “time and wherewithal to participate, and the human capital to dominate.”⁶⁷ Noteworthy here is Landemore’s “rule of the many” thesis urging towards norms of seeking shared perspectives and community self-rule so as to legitimise public life.⁶⁸ So too are practical responses in the form of, for example, powerful institutions dispersing research funding, to spark radical modelling of inclusive democracy.⁶⁹ Common to all appears to be interest in service providers and service recipients embracing each other’s wisdom, leading, perhaps, to co-design, co-creation, co-implementation and co-accountability.

⁶⁶ William A. Galston, “The Enduring Vulnerability of Liberal Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy* 31, no. 3 (July 2020): 8.

⁶⁷ John Rappaport, “Some Doubts About ‘Democratizing’ Criminal Justice,” *The University of Chicago Law Review* 87, no. 3 (May 2020): 750.

⁶⁸ Hélène Landemore, *Democratic Reason: Politics, collective intelligence and the rule of the many* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).

⁶⁹ “Cluster 2: Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society,” European Commission, accessed March 29, 2023, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-2-culture-creativity-and-inclusive-society_en.

Partnership policing's traditional authority and standing is, thus, arguably, being outmanoeuvred. So too the traditional social contract between policing and the policed whereby the trade-off in provision by the police of the public's safety is the public's tolerant eschewing of freedom.⁷⁰ It may follow in terms of meaning to their policing lives that policing personnel are being marooned in structures in which their decisions are at increasing risk of failure to impact, because they are losing the traction of credibility. In this context, how procedural justice is designed, built and practiced seems crucial. Growing public distance from traditional structures would appear to suggest the urgency of innovating procedural approaches that provide equality of opportunity to/with those who are losing or have lost trust in police and who see its legitimacy in diminished terms.

Stakeholding in such innovation, therefore, moves from the neat elite binary of police and partners working tightly together to a messier, less predictable placing on an entirely equal footing of the police, partners and the public. Such a mutual embrace of each other's wisdom, value, role and responsibilities in the policing endeavour denotes a direction of travel along which the police service is but one of multiple actors actively intermingling to discern the style, pace and scale of policing a community desires and accepts. Intrinsic is a move towards recovering and amplifying voices drowned out or silenced by the dominant players party to, or influencing, the partnership model, despite its strengths. An obvious corollary would be, as noted above, policing and partners working in oneness with, and treating as their equal, decision makers policing's most vulnerable, marginalised and frequent service users. In this setting is achieved, perhaps, not only a shared meaning to policing as it is practiced but, arguably, meaning shared among all of policing's practitioners.

⁷⁰ Gonzalo Herranz de Rafael and Juan S. Fernández-Prados, "The Security Versus Freedom Dilemma. An Empirical Study of the Spanish Case," *Frontiers in Sociology* 7 (2022): 774485–774485, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2022.774485>.

Remaining at issue, of course, are moments of threat, risk and harm when the deployment of specialist functions of skilled police service personnel is proportionate to the prevailing insecurity and danger. These are moments when, perhaps, meaning to policing is clearest of all. However, they are also moments when police engagement may turn to rigidly enforced, top-down police instruction with little by way of room for individual agency. A police service taking decisions for the public may be entirely reasonable, at the higher end of risk, in cases where criminal behaviour or immediate threat to life or of serious injury is self-evident. But across a much wider plain matters are less clear-cut. Police routinely justify decisions made within a police-recognised framework of what is “objectively” proportionate, lawful, accountable, necessary and ethical (PLANE).⁷¹ Multiple policing thinking tools are in play to support the goal of “fact”-based decisions. (In the UK the principal tool to discern PLANE is the National Decision Model (NDM)).⁷² Critical policing research, being normatively concerned with police structural power replicating structure by excluding individual agency might ask: whose proportionality? Whose accountability? Whose necessity and in whose interests?⁷³ The answers depend on from where one sees the question. Critics may argue that the police service not only justifies but replicates its power by routinely reserving onto itself the ability to elevate its subjective claims for its decisions and actions to the status of objective fact and knowledge. The accused or a bystander may, from a different perspective, see what the police claim to be unbiased fact/knowledge as but one of several competing, subjective understandings of what has occurred. In such circumstances, where we stand on knowledge versus understanding may determine whether positive engagement between police service and policed can proceed. One side – the police service – dominating the other on the strength of “objective” truth claims runs contrary to trust-building engagement among equals. As such, the bedrock of trust for policing by consent and cooperation is weak or absent. It would seem, therefore, that to the greatest degree feasible,

⁷¹ The College of Policing, *Code of Ethics: A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales* (Ryton-on-Dunsmore: The College of Policing, 2014), 4.

⁷² The College of Policing, *Code of Ethics*, 17-8.

⁷³ Michelle D. Bonner, “Reclaiming citizenship from policing violence,” *Citizenship Studies* 25, no. 3 (2021): 318, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2021.1903396>.

the police service and all stakeholders must arrive at decisions and take action on the basis of competing understandings, fully accounting for the subjectivities of each actor. This approach would designate the police service as, again, holding but one subjective perspective to navigating in oneness with all a world of immense complexity. Future policing emerges as an endeavour that will necessitate multiple stakeholders, including the police service, all on equal standing. Even when the particulars of criminality or risk denote the job as one for a police service holding specialist skills and training, other particulars may be understood as requiring design with the community of an alternative community-based resolution and implementation. The working assumption is that room for a wider range of understandings giving rise to a wider range of engagements – perhaps visibly involving the police service but perhaps not – is likely to optimise conditions for procedurally fair outcomes.

The practice of building towards *Inochi* in policing

Inochi, rooted as it is in profound oneness among all, suggests an elegant and attractive philosophy on which to build policing in a time defined by revelation of ugly, institutionalised malpractice on the part of its practitioners. *Inochi* corresponds with, the chapter argues, a wider unsettlement of belief in and acceptance of the legitimacy of traditional institutions of government, state and democracy. It presents a compelling and unifying challenge: if policing is to be equal, it needs to cherish all, even the most difficult to cherish. In turn, even the least cherished must be supported in cherishing policing. As per Kellaway's reflection on love in teaching, love in policing may be no less a profound underpinning for all outputs and outcomes, especially if extended when those who have broken the law, in turn, experience rigorous learning in a restorative system.⁷⁴ But what, in practical ways, may be the steps to such a model? Stimulating an environment for oneness giving rise to equality in policing – a sitting posture that eschews institutional tallness – suggests, as articulated earlier, an

⁷⁴ Brown, "Guardian lauds archbishops," 23.

environment in which police services are but one actor in a multi-actor policing endeavour, with each contributing skills and perspectives to the wider whole. The cast of actors, as noted above, would move beyond the current elitism associated with partnership policing to include the wider public and, notably, policing's most frequent service users – vulnerable and marginalised people, including, where it is considered safe practice, those with perpetrating histories.⁷⁵ Flowing from the goal of equality of standing among police service, partners and public would be policing that would be co-designed, co-implemented and co-evaluated.

Clearly, novel approaches would be required to support the police service workforce, partners and users, especially those with least heard voices heretofore, to face each other equally in loving oneness and, then, to radically reimagine and practice the collaborative effort, risk and reward that policing would become. This *Inochi*-infused renaissance would need to operate at all policing levels – policy, strategy, operations and tactics – while being highly adaptive to complex community as well as post-conflict and other settings of acute humanitarian vulnerability. To go beyond deeply sedimented societal views of what a police service “is,” “looks like” or “comprises,” powerful cultural and creative tools would need to provoke, disarm, unify and crystalise new routes of thinking. The specifics of such measures and their scope, in terms of mixing wholly new innovation with techniques already proven as powerful but used here in an entirely new context – policing – is beyond the remit of this chapter. But perhaps feasible in terms of initially breaking down barriers between previously distanced groupings would be such techniques as body movement in dance,⁷⁶ ethnomediaology (i.e., immersive storytelling through, for instance, filmmaking),⁷⁷ or a “citizens social science approach” to socially just outcomes.⁷⁸ Effectiveness of these tools would be

⁷⁵ Rappaport, “Some Doubts.”

⁷⁶ Lucy Nicholson, “Return To The Body: An approach to working with those in disconnect,” accessed March 28, 2023, <http://dancercitizen.org/issue-8/lucy-nicholson>.

⁷⁷ Storylab, “Welcome to Storylab,” accessed 28 March 2023, <https://www.storylabnetwork.com>.

⁷⁸ Suzanne Wilson, “‘Hard to reach’ parents but not hard to research: a critical reflection of gatekeeper positionality using a community-based methodology,” *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* 43, no. 5: 461-77.

measurable in how they reinforced existing equality initiatives⁷⁹ and sustained open, fully participative dialogue between unfamiliar and distrustful partners to the ends of restoring confidence, legitimacy, efficacy and, indeed, meaning to policing. Supporting stakeholders to recover and amplify unheard voices, negotiate changes, recognise safe choices, and to jointly participate in the policing of their communities in previously unimagined ways, would likely involve creation of educational content and delivery tools. Support might also, if considered appropriate, include mental and spiritual resources. Accountable and value-conscious modernisation would, inevitably, require foresight methods to ensure the short-, medium-, and long-term cost control and impact. Police leaders and external expertise (e.g., academics) would not prescribe outcomes but create an environment in which solutions could be co-conceived, co-designed and co-implemented. Familiar role expectations of senior players in a fixed policing hierarchy exercising power to prescribe solutions would, thus, ease.

***Inochi* and policing: the risk of faith-based certainty**

The case for *Inochi* as a philosophy and experience to move policing from structural othering towards oneness with and, thus, equality of all is developed here in a narrative that also deploys, notably, Abrahamic theological resources. Doing so in this way is intended to highlight resonance with other belief systems emanating from the *Inochi*-inspired wisdom of police services letting go of their powerful “tallness” and positioning themselves as but one actor equal to the most vulnerable. However, recent scholarship connects use of faith-based resources with serious, indeed, deadly risk from policing. Griffith notes a concerning trajectory emerging from the growing influence in policing of Evangelical Christianity associated with practices of selective biblical literalism.⁸⁰ US Evangelical

⁷⁹ Cachella Smith, “MOPAC continues funding to involve communities in recruit training,” *Police Oracle*, March 30, 2023, http://www.policeoracle.com/news/race_and_diversity/2023/Mar/30/MOPAC-continues-funding-to-involve-communities-in-recruit-training_110786.html.

⁸⁰ Aaron Griffith, “‘Policing Is a Profession of the Heart’: Evangelicalism and Modern American Policing,” *Religions* 12, no. 3 (2021): 194-212, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12030194>.

leaders cite scripture to champion anti-police reform narratives such as “defend, don’t defund” the police.⁸¹ Nation and God are cast as one when condemning as ungodly protests against policing excess.⁸² In such a charged environment, various scriptural passages are used within policing to justify police action as God’s will. One such is St Paul’s exhortation: “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities.”⁸³ Such self-reinforcement in exegesis has apparent consequences. One memorable example is the police officer who, at a US Christian police retreat, recalls shooting dead a drug dealer: “By the grace of God he missed. By the wrath of God, I didn’t.”⁸⁴ Such knowing certainty about the Christian God’s policing purpose may well be juxtaposed with the doctrine of faith in an unseen God offering unknowable depths of love and mercy.⁸⁵ Consequently, structure confident in its “objective knowledge” self-assuredly and sometimes lethally surpasses the necessity for oneness with all. Urgently awaiting its researcher is how and to what degree such narratives impact upon policing in jurisdictions other than in the US, such as that of the UK, in which populist right-wing politics and evangelical Christian police associations are, at the time of writing, prominent.

Conclusion

What commenced with the conundrum of how to address a loss of meaning among police personnel concerning their professional lives concludes by noting how the suggested route to meaning recovery – procedural justice practiced in consciousness of *Inochi* – may well stir wider public transformation too. The state of being at oneness with each living thing and, so, conditioned to eschew power over others, points, inevitably, at social endeavour done equally and as one. In policing terms, this shifts the meaning of policing from coercive power enforced by structure to public, partners and police co-designing, co-implementing and co-overseeing the service they want,

⁸¹ Griffith, “Policing is a Profession,” 204.

⁸² Mia Bloom and Rachael Rollings, “Losing My Religion: Evangelicalism and the Gospel of Q,” *Religion watch* 38, no. 1 (2023).

⁸³ Romans 13 (NIV).

⁸⁴ Griffith, “Policing is a Profession,” 207.

⁸⁵ Rohr, *Falling Upward*.

so as to achieve agreed ends. In this context, the police service, as primary law enforcer, moves from its posture of “holding power over” to “sharing power with.” One actor works among multiple actors in the policing arena, albeit one that is a repository of specialist skills and resources. Consequently, policing may become more reflective of a society in which, currently, sentiment towards policing and other democratic institutions is hardening. Suggested here is that such mirroring would manifest in the police gaining legitimacy, confidence and trust in policing and in a concomitant recovery of meaning among policing’s personnel. It is a remedy promising much hope but requiring fieldwork evaluation. Empirical analysis in various policing contexts is, thus, called for.

Conceptually, it breaks new ground to contend, as this chapter does, that procedural justice can be reimagined as an agent-centred, normative approach to the recovery of professional meaning among police personnel. Most novel is how this re-imagining is achieved through conscious awareness of the Eastern tradition of *Inochi* and, so too, other transcendent resources that resemble it. Not least of the counter-intuitive outflows of recasting procedural justice in this way is, Frankl-like, considering the potency of love as a professional quality in policing reform.⁸⁶ However, whereas the chapter is encouraging of the benefits faith-based transcendent perspectives may have for analysis, it also suggests significant risks. Religious certainty, as the antithesis of faith, may prompt egregious excess in the use or promotion of structural power. Such dangerous reductionism seems oblivious to the intermingling of agency and structure and, with it, total oneness and equality conceivable in the context of *Inochi*. Indeed, *Inochi* consciousness appears to both render meaningless police engaging in acts of gaining power and, by the conscious cherishing of vulnerable and marginalised people, to provide to policing’s people a pathway to meaning in their practice.

⁸⁶ Frankl, *Man’s search*, 148.

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