

**ETHICS, POLITICS, AND
DEMOCRACY:**
**From Primordial Principles
to Prospective Practices**

Jose V. Cipurut, Editor

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The Mythical Act of Cosmic Purification shows Mithra—liberty-coiffed God of Light and Chastity, Foe of the Forces of Obscurity—trampling Sin, Malevolence, and Evil (dog, scorpion, serpent), slaying primordial Might (bull), and irrigating “Earth” with its blood.—*Ed.*

Graphic: Roman Sculpture of Mithra Slaying the Bull.

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Prisoners of Our Dilemmas

Jose V. Ciprut

A modern Western textbook on ethics and morals ordinarily would begin by reminding us that these two notions boast European origins: ethics, it might tell us, comes from *ethikos*, ultimately from *ethos*, Greek for 'character'; and morals, from *moralis*, ultimately from *mos*, Latin for 'custom' or 'manner.'¹ If the latter precision might create ambiguity, by juxtaposing custom and manner when it refers to morals, the former assertion might do injustice by failing to recognize the ancient non-Western codes of 'customs' and 'manners'. With those, even the Greeks and Romans themselves had become well acquainted as a result of their exposure, through trade, fact gathering, and military expeditions, which at different times extended to southern Russia, the Indus, North Africa, Gibraltar, and thus into, across, and beyond Europe.

As mortals with duties to ourselves, commitments to our others, and obligations to our life space as a whole, we may find ourselves all too often hamstrung twixt what may look repulsively ugly yet is right and what may seem attractively beautiful yet is fundamentally wrong. Our inclinations to be *just*, and yet our pretensions to be *right*, each and every time and in every situation, usually remain at loggerheads in the minds of the many of us somehow still in touch with our conscience. This sense of being 'torn apart' can imprison us in our dilemmas, should we linger for long to 'muddle through' bravely, short of having to choose between two opposite courses of action: inwardly surrendering

1. As the sixth edition of Thiroux's (1998, 3) *Ethics—Theory and Practice* simplifies it further: "Nevertheless, in ordinary language, whether we call a person ethical or moral, or an act unethical or immoral, doesn't really make any difference. In philosophy, however, the term *ethics* also is used to refer to a specific area of study: the area of morality, which concentrates on human conduct and human values. . . . The important thing to remember here is that *moral*, *ethical*, *immoral*, and *unethical*, essentially mean *good*, *right*, *bad*, and *wrong*, often depending upon whether one is referring to people themselves or to their actions."

to our lust, while publicly proclaiming triumph as we bask in arrogance whenever we find ourselves in the vicinity of ‘success’ attained by *any* means; or succumbing to pangs of conscience and precipitating a premature sense of failure by seeing in ourselves a ‘loser’—a condition far worse than death in settings designed for ‘winners’ only. None of the opposing worldviews reflected by infamous film characters² and by virtuous one-liners³ so far have had epiphanic effects able to foster lasting conversions—whether by the silently repentant, the boisterously born-again, or the myriad others who, in large part unperturbed, believe they simply must continue to prove to themselves and to the world at large that nothing for too long can keep them from that ‘rendezvous with success at any cost’ to which they are destined. Human is as human does. And that seems to be that.

The purpose of this book is three-pronged: to revisit some of the earliest forms of relational ethics and morals; to reexamine the kinship links with systems of belief; and to reappraise what basic tenets came about, and how and why their evolved versions continue to shape the values of humans, markets, and states. By these pursuits, we seek to appreciate whether and wherefore some values have stayed on, while others have vanished from the normative purviews of common practice over time and across space. We also try to gain fresh insights as to the possible need and role for civic ethics in modern global settings that necessitate farther- and farther-reaching democratic governance.

We begin by scrutinizing history, in an attempt to gain a more encompassing longitudinal overview of the evolution of human practice in domains intimately linked with ethics and morals. We proceed from antiquity in Mesopotamia, to Enlightenment in Europe, to modernity in the United States, to metamodernity in a world still reinventing itself, all the while keeping in mind that an omnidirectionally galloping technoscientific civilization has only just inaugurated a millennium during the first century of which human society will undergo relentless and profound transformations triggered—and driven—by economic-cultural, political-social globalizations of hitherto unknown scope and speed.

2. “Greed is good. Greed is right. Greed works. Greed cuts through, clarifies, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit,” insists Gordon Gekko, a pivotal character in *Wall Street*—a motion picture featuring Michael Douglas as Gekko.

3. “Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted” is a remark said to have been made by Einstein, for whom the true value of a human being resided in the extent to which that human being had managed to attain “liberation from the self” (see also Arcenas 2008).

With that framework in mind, we reserve our first set of four chapters to law and morality in ancient Near Eastern social thought and societal practice; to an ethic of peace grounded on justice in Europe during the Age of Enlightenment; to ethics, modernity, and human-animal relations in twentieth-century U.S. society; and to genetics in medicine, with particular attention to its current practice and special focus on its attending prospects and perils in humanity's faster- and faster-paced rush to unstoppable modernization.

We then move to a second group of four chapters, now dwelling on levels of analysis that are just as intimately cross-linked—starting with the individual's ego and ethos; continuing with issues of risk, trust, and markets; and proceeding with matters of ethics, morals, and the state; before closing with discerning comparisons between creed, religion, and morality from pertinent East-West ethical perspectives.

To conclude, we confront complex issues of ethics at theoretical and practical levels of both domestic and international democratic governance, in globalizing contexts. Our last four chapters therefore offer an interlinked array of insights and appreciations with special attention to exclusion, fear, and identity in emerging democracies; to the politics of ethics and the prospects for egalitarian democracy in a shrinking world; to the problem with a democratic ethic; and to the need and requirements for a global ethic of communication capable of transforming the world into a hospitable habitat for those still barely alive and for those yet to be born. Our chapters address their given topics head-on, also by latching on to each other across history and geography through their sequentially developed thematic cohesion.

Law and Morality in Ancient Near Eastern Thought

Many of the deeply held cultural values of Western Civilization are steeped in biblical tradition, which itself partakes of a human heritage shared with other ancient Near Eastern cultures that as such hold the cradle of civilization. Mesopotamian and Ancient Egyptian literatures reflect central moral concerns for, and ideal standards of, propriety in human conduct. When comparatively reviewed, they also reveal many similarities between ancient Near Eastern and biblical thought in the realm of social, sexual, religious, and personal ethics. Nevertheless, significant differences, which stem from their deeply idiosyncratic worldviews, are also apparent.

The literature on ancient Near Eastern and biblical ethics and morals covers many specific aspects with modern implications:⁴ proper upbringing (Kieweler 2001), social and philanthropic ethics (Frisch 1930, Meyerowitz 1935), the genesis of moral imagination in the Bible (Brown 1999), corporate responsibility (Kaminsky 1995), love and sex (Biale 1992), murder (Friedmann 2002), land tenure (Fager 1993), and of course, issues of good and evil (Reventlow and Hoffman 2004), among them. Instead, as an Assyriologist specializing in the law of Akkad and Sumer, the literature of Mesopotamia, and the ethics of Jewish law from its earliest origins onward, Barry Eichler addresses his assigned title by comparing the ethical and moral codes of three civilizations, the Mesopotamian, ancient Egyptian, and biblical, from several angles.

Both ancient Near Eastern and biblical worldviews experienced and viewed human society in cosmological terms. Hence ancient Near Eastern conceptions of law and morality were intimately tied to the cosmic order of the universe and to the realm of the divine. In Mesopotamian and Egyptian thought, law and morality were regarded as intricately interwoven concepts to be identified with the cosmic principles that ordered the universe. The cosmic force is referred to as *kittum* in Mesopotamia and as *maat* in Egypt, both terms connoting “that which is correct and true.” Mesopotamian and Egyptian kings were divinely mandated to maintain the cosmic order and to establish a harmonious socioeconomic reality on earth. Hence they were inspired with the perception of this cosmic force of Truth, which enabled the kings to serve as its earthly agent by issuing edicts and rendering judgments that reflected the moral cosmic standard. In Mesopotamia and Egypt the ultimate source of law and morality was thus rooted in the cosmic forces of the universe to which both the gods and humankind were subject.

Because of the radically different biblical conception of Deity as transcendent and sovereign over the totality of the natural and supernatural cosmic forces of the universe, biblical thought could not accept the ultimate sanction of law and morality as being rooted in the cosmic principle of *kittum* or *maat*. To the biblical mind, the Deity is the ultimate sanction of law and morality, both of which are conceived as expressions of the divine will. Law is viewed as a set of revealed instructions to serve as a divine blueprint for the conduct of human society. Hence biblical law is conceived as a positive prescriptive code

4. See, for instance, Schnabel (1985), Mouton (2002), and F. Watson (2000).

of ethical behavior, not a reactive means of redressing rights violated. In contrast to ancient Near Eastern thought in which the moral cosmic standard was an abstract impersonal force incapable of communicating its will to humankind, biblical thought views the divine moral standard as clearly articulated ethical ideals that are being translated into legal norms. On the basis of a covenantal relationship between God and his people, the entire community becomes responsible, individually and communally, both for the observance of the law and for the maintenance of justice. Thus biblical thought broadened and democratized the Mesopotamian notion of divine selection and covenant between Deity and king by clearly positioning the people on par with the king. This unique biblical notion of law as covenant, established upon a mutual and reciprocal basis in which the people integrally join as one of the covenanting parties, is a major contribution to Western thought.

Although the modern secular world cannot accept the basic premise of ancient Near Eastern and biblical conceptions of law and morality as reflecting an absolute moral standard, lessons gleaned from these ancient civilizations would enhance discussions of modern ethics, were it by providing historical and cultural perspectives of humankind's incessant quest for an ethical and moral society. When one contrasts biblical notions of law and morality with those extant in Mesopotamia and Egypt, one sees that greater moral clarity enhances the sense of personal responsibility, that greater societal valuation of the individual's role in upholding the social contract of law and fostering governance intensifies individual and communal commitment to act responsibly. It is therefore imperative for modern democratic societies to identify the common ethical values they hold to be true and also to articulate clearly their moral standard, which serves as the cultural wellspring of their societal postulates. This necessity is particularly urgent at this time in human history, when, once again, basic moral issues can no longer remain in the private or personal domain but must be translated into legally enforceable norms that are apt to inform society's decision-making policies and to define its actions, especially those likely to have an impact on equity, peace, and justice.

On an Ethic of Peace Grounded on Justice: An Eighteenth-Century Voice

The eighteenth century was the epoch of the European "Enlightenment," one of culture shocks abroad (Weber 2005), revolutionary

thoughts at home (MacCormick and Bankowski 1989), and reconsiderations of criminal law and justice (Porret 1997), with attending social aspirations (Lehmann et al. 2000) and legal limits (Bernard 1979). It was also a century of constant warfare. It produced a number of ambitious proposals for the establishment of peace among nations. The best remembered was produced, late in his life (1795), by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), who—by synthesizing German, British, and French sources—managed to produce one of the definitive philosophies of the Enlightenment and indeed of the whole modern era. Yet while Kant’s little book *Zum ewigen Frieden* (Perpetual Peace) is nowadays more widely read than ever, it continues to be enigmatic in its content: itself written in the form of a peace treaty, it veers between dead seriousness and irony, and seems to contain a fundamental tension. For example:

1. Kant holds personal freedom and the right to acquire property to be the most fundamental among human rights; but freedom and property can be enjoyed only with the consent of others, and indeed, on a globe any point of which can be reached from any other, in principle with the consent of *all* other human beings. Thus a condition of global peace in which the rights of all are secure is understandably the ultimate necessary condition of justice.
2. Kant describes natural mechanisms by which warring people will be led to form republican governments—what we now call democracies with constitutional protections for the rights of those not currently in the majority—and holds that as this form of government spreads across the earth, the temptation for war will diminish, and that correspondingly (and hence, apparently inexorably) peace will emerge.
3. Yet Kant’s theory of human freedom insists that we always have the liberty to choose between the better and the worse course of action. No matter how strongly nature—that is, *our* nature—itself inclines us in the direction of the just and the good, we always have the power to subvert it.

How then could progress toward peace be guaranteed by any natural mechanism?

Historian of philosophy Guyer’s chapter argues that Kant did not really contradict himself: his theory is that nature can guarantee the availability of *means* that can be used toward peace as an end and, in this sense, guarantee the *possibility* of peace, but that only the free

choice of those in powerful positions in governments to use their power as morality commands can actually bring peace about. This line of thought remains as true today as it ever was.

But Kant also recognized that human beings are emotional as well as rational creatures, and discerned that the rhetoric of guaranteed progress toward peace can give us emotional support in our efforts to secure peace even though our reason requires only the recognition of the moral necessity of peace and the mere possibility of successful efforts toward it. Kant saw that a successful strategy for justice—or for any other morally requisite goal—must bring our emotions into harmony with our reason; and this observation remains as true today as it was then. One instance in which human reason and human emotions remain in a state of unresolved debate is, say, in the domain of human-animal relations, dating from antiquity and likely to last for as long as human civilization itself continues to exist.

Ethics, Modernity, and Human-Animal Relations

Human-animal relations have a very long history (Preece 2005), which has led humans continually to rethink them (McKenna and Light 2004) from many angles, including humanist (Matignon 2000), social (Barnett 2001), cultural (Knight 2003), anthropological (Knight 2000), civilizational (Lorenz 2000), ecological (Woodroffe, Thirgood, and Rabinowitz 2005; Quammen 2003), psychological (Akhtar and Volkan 2005), ethical (Blakemore 2005), and interdisciplinary (Corona-M. and Arroyo-Cabrales 2002), as also along a variety of perspectives, including those of domestication (Haraway 2003), hunting (Pelly 2001), experimentation with animals (Birke and Hubbard 1995), animal rights (Reichmann 2000), and alternative-practice proposals (Balls, van Zeller, and Halder 2000; Crabtree and Ryan 1991; OTA 1986; van Zutphen and Balls 1997).

The question of the human use of animals is one of today's most contentious social issues, for it raises doubt on whether it is ethical to interfere in the lives of other species in order to improve upon the well-being of one's own. Throughout human history, men and women have had interactions with animals in ways both good and evil. A very active animal rights movement seeks to destroy that relationship. The change from an agricultural to an industrial society in Western civilization has made that movement's efforts easier: the majority of the citizens are far removed from the natural world, most viewing animals as pets, even

as members of their family. A small number of philosophers have advanced ideas that would seriously affect the well-being of the human species, and radical elements have striven to use these as tools. For example, efforts to block biomedical research by legal, illegal, and even violent means are a serious threat to any nation's health program and also a menace to the institutions working to ensure global medical progress. Other human activities, too, have come under attack, modern agriculture and hunting being two examples. Modern societies have to examine their various uses of animals in a reflective, unemotional way based on scientific inquiry in order to decide how human beings are to act and interact with animals in the modern world.

Unlike most of the other chapters of this book, which consider the ethical implications of human interactions in various fields, this chapter explores aspects regarding human *uses* of animals. From the earliest interactions of human beings with emerging domesticated species—a practice recognized at the time, and since, as a mutually beneficial process—to outright modern biomedical experimentation with animals, including some of the domesticated species, we humans generally have had the upper hand. However, with increasing social sensibilities, mostly resulting from the deepening separation from the natural world that has accompanied the process of urbanization, the self-serving instrumental utilization of animals by humans has also come more frequently into question. The most extreme expression of that concern is found in the animal rights movements, which seek to remove animals from all human control. Given that such an extreme solution is impractical in the eyes of all but a radical few, how is one to ensure the welfare of both parties—humans and animals—since, as Morrison puts it, “animals have little say in the matter”? This chapter hence reviews the ethical implications of the continued use of animals—in entertainment, hunting, intensive agriculture, basic biomedical research and the like—concluding that the complexities in each of these various uses demand acquisition and assimilation of all the facts before deciding what is proper and what is improper in the varied ways that we humans interact with other species. But, to begin with, how are we humans to heal our own species in the future?

The Future of Genetics in Medicine: Practices, Prospects, and Peril

Following the recent success in identifying the human genome, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and U.S. National Institutes of

Health (NIH) had channeled 3 to 5 percent of their annually budgeted outlays for the Human Genome Project (HGP) to studying the ethical, legal, and social issues (ELSI) surrounding these genetic data now accessible worldwide. What was the world's largest bioethics program has thus spawned also a model for ELSI programs emulated around the world, to tap myriad related ethical issues—from the clinical, reproductive, and psychological to the conceptual, philosophical, commercial, and well beyond. And the single most thorough textbook on the practice, promise, and perils of the medical uses of genomics is also one that happens to have been coauthored by the contributor of chapter 5 (Rimoin et al. 2002). Otherwise, the question of what scientists engaged in the life sciences think and do always has been and remains of great and growing interest (Stangroom 2005).

What Reed Pyeritz, chief of the Division of Medical Genetics at the University of Pennsylvania Health System, is trying to sensitize the reader about in his chapter for this book can be represented briefly as follows: now that, at long last, the human genome has been almost completely sequenced, the already quite substantial number and scope of applications of genetics to medicine will burgeon. An area that is already well established is the testing of characteristics of a person's genotype for medical indications. Although such testing need not involve DNA, it does reveal the fact that the high serum cholesterol level of an individual does tend greatly to augment the chances that the subject has a genetic predisposition to a defect in lipid metabolism. Put differently, the sheer ability to sample and analyze a person's DNA, in and of itself, has greatly expanded the opportunity for testing, among other things, presence or absence of disease even in utero, as well as carrier status for recessively inherited disorders such as cystic fibrosis, while also enabling the screening of newborns for disorders that can be treated very early in life and helping to determine an individual's susceptibility to disorders that clinically might not occur until some years later. Each of these indications has special and specific ethical considerations. At the most fundamental level, most genetic testing provides factual information not only about the person being sampled, but understandably also about his or her close relatives. Furthermore, the results of testing may not be as clear-cut as one might anticipate; for example, analysis of a gene may reveal an unusual variant, the consequences of which are unknown. All of this indicates that genetic testing is different from most other testing in medical practice. A

number of closely related public policy issues of deep ethical import are likely to arise in the years ahead. Already, at a minimum, health care providers face the need to make publicly available pretest/posttest counseling (which includes education) about the genetic test itself. Pyeritz's chapter offers a detailed understanding of the why and wherefore of all these ethical considerations, with the future of men, women, and children in a postindustrial civilization of globewide import constantly in mind.

Doubtless too, where and why in a democracy a citizen is tested, and where and why such information may be (mis)used, raise legal and moral and ethical concerns of their very own. Human rights issues may come to the fore, where the practice is exercised, say, in coercive ways in more autocratic, less democratic settings where the rule of law is scant.

Having briefly scanned the history and geography of fundamental ethical considerations with a select, theme-specific focus on humans and their close relations with other human and nonhuman life forms in the first four chapters, we next turn to the interconnected levels of analysis encompassing the practical relational and situational ethics on the planes of the self, the market, the state, and the globe.

Ego and Ethos

In the literature, the *self* is examined from a variety of angles that includes the endogenously affected identity (Chowers 2004)—that is, the post-revolutionary (Goldstein 2005), the reshaped (Centrie 2004), the experience-marked *ego* (Ireland 2004)—as well as the exogenously, and more specifically, social-mentality-driven, *persona* (Whybrow 2005). Reflexivity and intersubjectivity provide extra insights on the ego (Johns and Freshwater 2005), as does the repatterning of the self—say, for caring and healing—as exemplified by the nursing profession (J. Watson 2005), by an aesthetics of the self, treated through clothing and the material culture (Küchler and Miller 2005), and by the belief-related aspects of the self (Shun and Wong 2004; Krumbein 2005; Markham and Özdemir 2005). The self is examined by an abundant literature in ways conducive to even more polyvalent complex understandings by means of insights from alterity (Mensch 2003, 2005; Wall 2005; Fryer 2004) or literary (Kaster 2005), philosophical (Johns and Freshwater 2005), and political (Parker 2004) viewpoints, as also from

psychological (Dilman 2005), moral (Gardiner 2005), ethical (Davies 2000; Wenham 2000), and many additional perspectives (for example, Badiou 1982, 1988, 2003).

Ethics concerned with the principles of 'human duty' is normally based on considerations that do not include the facts of the ordinary everyday conscious experience of individual human beings. The chapter by psychologist-psychiatrist David Williams (who did see 'experiments with animals' in B. F. Skinner's laboratory, as a very young student) hence advances the proposition that a reexamination of ethics might profit from one's taking account of the most prominent facts of human experience. The obvious elements of everyday human consciousness are organized within the framework of existential/humanistic psychology and placed on a 'Phenomenological Map' relating them to mind, brain, and some other underpinnings beyond awareness, including the genomic and spiritual influences that give a sense of direction to the very process of living.

Ego and ethos are united by the concept of ego identity, namely, the first stage of adult ego development, and are applied to ethics through the concept of ego integrity, specifically the final stage of that development. Here, Williams distinguishes two components of ego identity: personal identity, an expression of the individual's unique genomic and perhaps spiritual nature; and social identity, formed on the basis of an individual's ethos. Ego integrity is attained through successful management of the challenges to ego identity, which arise from opportunities for intimate and productive engagement that come to the fore in the normal process of living.

The need for a reexamination of ethics comes from the threat that technology poses to humanity's survival, both from weapons and from defilement of the earth. The human response to the threat lies in the emergence of a new ethos, along with an underlying ethic, that is inconsistent with the self-destroying tendencies of current social systems. To illustrate how a new ethos might arise, Williams proposes an ethical principle based on ego integrity, and then explores the possibility of advancing it through practical empirical research. Williams, with ensuing conviction, concludes that there is a path to a new understanding of ethics through behavioral research on constituents of a new and nondestructive ethos that demands urgent exploration. How does trust affect ego and ethos at both individual and small or large group levels?

Trust, Ethics, and Markets

Some recent events have shaken the very foundations of American capitalism. U.S. business, once traditionally heralded as the model for the rest of the world, has recently taken some hits. Companies that were considered leaders and innovators have become notorious for bad management and even fraud. Enron, WorldCom, Lucent, Qwest, and Xerox have all been toppled like idols with clay feet. Along with them, auditors, once the most highly trusted of all professionals, have fallen. Arthur Andersen has been disgraced and is now no more. These problems are not confined to the United States; large scandals are emerging also in Asia and Europe, and a growing number of non-U.S. corporate accounting scandals are becoming visible across the globe. The result is that trust in the corporate sector has fallen to a new low. The same loss of trust is not confined to the corporate sector, and has begun spreading to institutions like churches and hospitals. And the problem is not just with accounting and finance, but extends to other areas where economic activity has fundamental impacts that extend beyond the narrow confines of profit and loss, among them the environment and product safety and security. In almost every aspect of business activity, companies and their agents are no longer viewed as trustworthy. About the only objective that citizens are prepared to believe as credible for the corporate sector, and for the market institutions that govern it, is the unbridled pursuit of personal gain for those lucky enough to occupy seats of higher power in large organizations. The reproachful tenor and tone in current writings on the topic (Kassirer 2005; Kramer and Cook 2004; Rampton and Stauber 2001) in the United States are very different from those adopted proactively (Garone 1994), let alone much earlier in the United States (*Lectures* 1930) and even until very recently abroad (Shionoya and Yagi 2001).

Kleindorfer's chapter describes the serious problems that arise for economic institutions if and when *trust*, the basic glue of social intercourse, disappears. After a brief introduction to the heart of the matter, this risk analyst submits a few prosaic examples from recent American corporate history, taken from his research in the energy sector and the chemical industry sector. The author considers experimental evidence to shed some light on determinants of trust in market-based transactions. These experiments underline the importance of fairness and open communication in reinforcing trust. Analytical conclusions for the state of trust in the corporate sector and in the people who manage it

do not seem to be very uplifting at this point, but Kleindorfer finds reason to think there are a few hopeful signs on the horizon. These he takes to indicate a developing appreciation by many stakeholders that without trust and good ethics there cannot be any realistic expectations of, or even hope for, efficient markets at a time when relations between markets and the state are changing.

Ethics, Morals, and the State: Rereading the Classical View

In this essay, which is indebted to the work of James Q. Wilson, classicist J. J. Mulhern, who teaches topics on comparative government, considers the rediscovery of character and its importance for the way one understands the silent relation of ethics and morals to politics.⁵ Character has a long history in thinking about politics (Wilson 1995; Garver 2004; Yu 2004). Indeed, for some Greeks, including Aristotle, character (*ēthos*) was the central issue in the study of human things. The Greeks were concerned not only with character itself but also with all the things that were related to it, especially the things that were caused by character and the things that caused character to develop, for better or for worse. These were their ‘ethical things’, or ethics. Thus, for them, ‘ethics’ was not a discipline, nor was ‘ethical’ (*ēthikos*) a concept for expressing general approval, as opposed to, say, ‘unethical’. For some Romans, including Cicero, the central issue rather appears to have been custom, or *mos*. The Romans were concerned both with custom and with the things related to it. These were their moral things, or morals (*moralia*). Thus, at the outset, ‘morals’ was not a discipline, nor was ‘moral’ (*moralis*) an expression of general approval, as opposed to, say, ‘immoral’. Character, was something that belonged to individuals: it was different from custom, which was shared by many; but both Greeks and Romans did agree that custom could have an effect on character development and, hence, that character could be embodied or reflected in custom. In modern times, many thinkers have struggled with what they describe as the relation of ‘ethics or morals’ to the state, often in ways that are not too helpful to the political actor, especially where the

5. I recently looked over McCain and Salter’s book, titled *Character Is Destiny* (2005), in which—as their publishers suggest—the authors seek to “illustrate these qualities with moving stories of triumph against the odds, righteousness in the face of iniquity, hope in adversity, and sacrifices for a cause greater than self-interest . . . by telling the stories of celebrated historical figures and lesser-known heroes whose values exemplify the best of the human spirit.”

language of ethics and morals has long lost the precision it enjoyed in its original classical descriptive form. Some moderns have spoken as if there might be politics without ethics or morals, and ethics or morals without politics. The rediscovery of character leads back to a tradition in which ethics and politics are continuous because, as a matter of fact, actions produce habits, habits are integrated into character, character is reflected in customs or laws, and customs are embodied in institutions, including political institutions or what is spoken of in modern times as the state, and in which, likewise, these institutions reinforce customs, customs mold character, character strengthens habits, and habits make actions easier and more pleasant to perform. This tradition, though neglected for many centuries, *is* helpful to the political actor, since it provides an explicit way of thinking about the political actor's work. Both individuals and institutions, including the state as embodied in the political actor, have an interest in promoting in people the kind of character that disposes them to avoid criminal acts, dependency, and intemperance. Might there be differences in ethics and morality and their respective connection with religion, so different in East and West as to have an impact on customs, manners, and approaches to politics, governance, and attitudes to democracy?

Ethics, Morality, and Religion: Directional Transitions and Trends, East and West

The literature on the connections among religion, morality, and ethics is far-reaching. In the domain of *applications*, its reach extends from considerations of war and peace (Dallmayr 2004) to biotechnological concerns with decisions that may conflict with Christianity (Smith 2005). In the domains of *philosophy*, it encompasses such topics as reconsiderations (Dole and Chignell 2005), theological reevaluations (Lewis 2005), and newer reviews of Christian ethics, a Protestant ethic of work, capitalist values, and Weberian revisiting of material success and religious temperament (Swatos and Kaelber 2005); novel observations on 'the radical protestantism' in Spinoza's thought (Hunter 2005), on Maimonidean ethics (Cohen 2004), or yet again on ancient Egyptian *maat* as a moral ideal (Karenga 2004); and even contemplations of value and virtue in a godless universe (Wielenberg 2005). In a comparative mode, alongside closer studies of discursive formations and of ethical emotions in Buddhist thinking (Griffiths 2004), one finds also lectures on free thought (Wright 2004) and on theories of ethics (Graham 2004).

And hundreds of additional items fall under a myriad other theme-specific rubrics, from mysticism (Jones 2004) to 'just' sex (Farley 2006).

It has been a common assumption in Europe and North America that morality and ethics require a theistic religious foundation. But East Asia has not shared that assumption. Instead, China, Japan, Korea, and also Taiwan have given morality and ethics autonomy from religion and have instead made religion subordinate to morality and ethics. Instead of letting religion dictate the hegemonic moral principles and ethical codes, the governments and peoples of those societies traditionally required religious organizations to accept and to enforce the secular moral principles and ethical codes promoted by the secular state. That stance has been slightly modified in the modern world, under the fresh influence of the notion of religious freedom. Religious organizations now are allowed to supplement and sometimes even to modify the secular ethical injunctions promoted by their secular governments. The peoples of East Asia, nevertheless, remain much more comfortable with moral principles and ethical codes with no theistic religious connotations or foundation, more so than the peoples of Europe and North America are. With such fundamental differences in the worldviews and everyday ethics of peoples, North and South, and East and West, can there ever be a worldwide ethics of communication conducive to the globalization of a democratic mindset, of a mentality of social-cultural inclusion, of a more balanced, more just political-economic interdependence, while fear and exclusion persist deep inside individual societies, and among them too?

Having connected the various levels of analysis in a sequence of augmenting synthetic aggregation and, via cross-sectional means, thus complemented the longitudinal overview preceding it, we next take a detailed look at each of four multilateral concerns, each of which is laden with values specific to issues of great pertinence to the just conduct of democracy in ways indispensable to good relational ethics.

Exclusion, Fear, and Identity in Emerging Democracies

To the classic (traditional) issues of inclusion, exclusion, belongingness, and marginality, the factor of fear⁶ has been able to impart qualities that

6. See, e.g., Ciprut, Editor (2000, 2001), *Of Fears and Foes: Security and Insecurity in a Globalizing International Economy*, penned shortly before "9-11-01."

have very negatively affected domestic and international policies since the fall of the iron curtain at the end of the 1980s, in Europe, and in the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, in the United States, although internecine wars, genocidal outbursts, irredentist militancy in the third world, and excessive disparities between rich and poor inside technologically advanced countries, as well as among wealthy and deprived countries around the world, have complicated matters further, for each and all, in ways seldom seen before. Thus the extant literature, meanwhile, has also expanded to include fresher investigations of traditional modes of exclusion in historical social contexts (Spina 2005; Coviello 2005; Carlisle 2005), while also dwelling on the novel societal effects of fear and hatred (Lukacs 2005). Ensuing challenges to urban cohesion (Kazepov 2005), resultant needs and measures for controlling borders in an enlarged Europe (Bigo and Guild 2005), the domestic impact on American democracy of the United States' global war on terror (Ivie 2005), the fear-control nexus (Siegel 2005), the globalizing effects of localized poverty-marginality issues (Munck 2005), the particular attention now required by laggard regions such as southern Europe (Calavita 2005), and myriad other topics are now continuing to receive fuller coverage.

The chapter by J. Spinner-Halev, a political scientist with a strong interest in issues of morality with regard to citizenship, focuses on ethical problems related to democratization in societies with sizeable religious minorities. The chapter is written with past, present, and future in mind. The author examines why democracies, which are often taken to be inclusive regimes, usually informally but sometimes also formally exclude minorities from citizenship. His main focus here is on religious minorities that often bear the brunt of such exclusions. For example, there is increasing anti-Islamic sentiment in Europe, Muslims in India feel besieged, and the advent of democracy in such places as Indonesia has seen the onset of violence against Christians. The author notes the psychological literature that suggests there is a strong human tendency to identify as part of a group by contrast to other groups, a contrast that often conduces to acrimonious feelings toward those other groups. He finds this literature to be unfortunate but persuasive, regretting that, too often, theorists of democracy discuss citizenship without noting this difficulty. Seeking to correct this oversight, Spinner-Halev argues that this tendency to identify one's group in contrast to other groups is especially dangerous in a democracy. Because the members of a democratic society are supposed to share the very democracy's

sovereignty, when people identify themselves with cluster attributes, in contrast to others' cluster attributes, then democratic exclusion arises.

The first part of Spinner-Halev's chapter weaves this psychological literature together with both democratic theory and the empirical examples referred to already. And the last part of the chapter helps to accomplish two goals: (1) it shows how, to their peril, some theories of democracy and cultural pluralism overlook the democratic tendency to exclude; and (2) it discusses what can be done about the democratic tendency to exclude. Can then, in an imperfect world, a more egalitarian democracy ever be accomplished?

Politics of Ethics: Toward an Ethic of Egalitarian Democracy?

Inequality visits and revisits us in uncountable ways, often in different guises. The more recent literature dwells on a broad range of investigations that cover dilemmas of inequality the world over (Tulchin and Bland 2005); frameworks for theories of equality (Baker et al. 2004); inquiries into inequality on grounds of religion (Hassan 2003), of race—whether by means of discrimination for job openings (Jonas 2005) or by the very role the race factor plays in the nexus between equality and sovereignty in, say, Cuba, of all places (Bronfman 2004)—of sex and gender differences, some of which are opposed by feminists (Andrew, Keller, and Schwartzman 2005); studies of how race and class inequalities discourage and delay integration, in the United States for example (Cashin 2004), and of how inequality can be brought about by the limits to recognition, thus impacting issues of justice as well (Markell 2003); and recognition of economic democracy as an avenue to liberty and equality (Wilkinson 2005). By contrast, as a scholar of law and government, Cameron lets his chapter speculate on the possibility of an ethic particular to egalitarian democracy.

Cameron submits that the ethical conflict at the heart of modern democracy can be understood in terms of the two democratic traditions that have evolved out of the historical emergence of democracy. These two traditions are the libertarian and the egalitarian. The emphasis of the libertarian tradition is on the rights and liberties of the individual against the state's public coercive power; by contrast, the egalitarian tradition defends and champions the equality of citizens against the coercive practices of private individuals, private groups, or private institutions. Seen in these terms, the proponents of the former tradition view the public sphere as the principal threat to democracy, while the

proponents of the latter tradition view inequality in the private sphere as the main threat to democracy. Libertarians limit equality to political equality, or equality before the law, but egalitarians promote economic equality as well as political equality.

Accompanying the libertarian tradition is the argument that any attempt to eliminate inequality in the private sphere will only lead to the terror and suffering associated with the totalitarian state. In practical terms, this syllogism results in a form of blackmail against egalitarian political projects. To take a closer look at the makings of the ideological mobilization against the very goals of egalitarian democracy, Cameron undertakes a psychoanalytic reading of Kantian ethical theory. The outcome seems to suggest that egalitarian democracy offers an ethic more truly universal than its libertarian counterpart. Unlike its libertarian kin, egalitarian democracy starts from an appreciation that the ethical dimension of society is found not so much in an *abstract* universal principle, such as 'natural' rights, but in the universal principle of equality that is latent in *concrete* social relations. It is the political goal of egalitarian democracy to indeed mobilize this concrete universal good against the abstract universal good that supports inequality. In this manner, argues Cameron, it can be said that essentially the ethics of egalitarianism lies in its 'Kantian duty' to eclipse the 'reality principle' purported to support the libertarian worldview's abstract universal. Analytically, then, egalitarian political projects represent a kind of intriguing and timely return of the long-repressed term 'equality', which has remained latent in concrete, modern, globalizing social relations. Would resolving inequality prove to be a conclusive answer to the question of developing a democratic ethic? Or is there more to the tricky question, and to the gist of all possible answers?

The Problem of a Democratic Ethic

The lifting of the iron curtain, the implosion of the Soviet Union, and the almost immediate reaction by its former satellites, now anxious instantly to convert to democratic rule, have sent most of the left and some of the right back to the drawing board, to rethink their political theory in general and their democratic theory in particular.

Much time has elapsed since Dahl's provocative question as to who governs (1961) and David Held's reintroduction of Critical Theory (1980) through an overview of the evolution of that mode of thinking from Horkheimer to Habermas, to be succeeded by Held's models

for democratic rule (1987) and his essays on state, power, and democracy (1989). The main concern now is over the modalities and, moreover, externalities of democratic governance in a globalizing international political economy. This newer focus is amply reflected by the topics addressed in the latest literature—including the state of democratic theory (Shapiro 2003), of capitalism (Schweickart 2002), of the challenges ahead (Carter and Stokes 2002), and of the prospects for reflective democracy (Goodin 2003); issues of democracy and the rule of law (Maravall and Przeworski 2003), of education for democratic citizenship (Lockyer, Crick, and Annette 2003), and of ethics and politics in post-Marxist critical theory (Devenney 2004); regional concerns with the quality of democracy (O'Donnell, Vargas Cullell, and Iazzetta 2004); and questions of representation—again!—(Ankersmit 2002; Laycock 2004), as well as of democratic social choice and institutional planning theory (Sager 2002), naturally not without a scholar's guide to pertinent research (Keman 2002).

More than 2,000 years ago, Plato developed a critique of democracy. He suggested, first, that democracy would not be simply a political arrangement, neutral, as between cultures, but that it would be a culture as well, a least-common-denominator culture. He believed that a democracy would be a culture characterized by people who sought shallow pleasures, rejecting every form of nobility. Knowledge in such a culture would take the form of mere means to the acquisition of pleasure. In his chapter, philosopher Richard Schuldenfrei suggests that those predictions have been borne out and that the evolution of rights serves to inoculate democratic society against every attempt to elevate its aspirations with any higher 'democratic ethic'. Plato not only believed that democratic aspirations were too low, but also believed that they were unstable, and unprotected against degradation to the point where they could no longer support democracy itself. He believed that the pursuit of pleasure would lead democrats to choose tyranny over freedom, if the former could better fulfill their desires. The author argues in his chapter that none of the prominent contemporary philosophical/ethical theories contain the resources to provide enough security against such a possibility, and that hence Plato's critique presents an important relevant contemporary challenge to democracy. So 'what do we need and when do we need it' as demonstrators in the habit of demanding 'everything, right here, right now' usually chant, without thereby always succeeding in communicating their frustration in convincingly constructive, palpably practical, response-eliciting ways?

On the Need and Requirements for a Global Ethic of Communication

Questions concerning the ethics of communication have long retained the interest of scholarly communities from various perspectives that, among other things, addressed basic ethics—in human exchanges (Johannesen 2002); communication ethics and global change (Cooper et al. 1989); ethics in political communication (Denton 1991); media ethics (Englehardt and Barney 2002; Solomon 1999); democratization among the world media (Hackett and Zhao 2005); global electioneering (Sussman 2005); dialogue, as a form of communication in education and for community building (Shields and Edwards 2005); and even in theory itself (McPhail 2006; Shepherd, St. John, and Striphas 2006).

Having elsewhere dealt with the importance of narrative in the social ecology of human society (Krippendorff 2000), of ‘*linguaging*’ as a means of reclaiming the voice of theorized others (Krippendorff 2001), of the code theory of language (Clark 2008), and of language policy and citizenship issues (Schiffman 2008), we now turn to the need and wherewithal for ‘*a worldwide ethic of communication*’ in a globalizing international political economy: a topic of highest urgency for a worldwide ethic of democratic citizenship from now on.

Modern communication technology has already been successful in linking societies and connecting cultures around the globe. What the globe seems to be lacking now is a worldwide media ethic capable and qualified to animate the planetary network already in place. Several international models have been developed, or are under way, to that effect. In this chapter, a philosophical and social ethicist with expertise in journalism and international communication joins hands with a media expert to conduct a thorough analytic synthesis of the needs, ways, and means of addressing the dilemma raised by the query articulated in stylized format at the end of the preceding section.

On the empirical level, common values have been sought usually either by comparing professional codes of ethics or by contrasting media accountability systems within, between, and across countries. On the theoretical level, universal models rooted in philosophical reflection have been proposed—interactive universalism, linguistic commonality, authentic communication in indigenous cultures, the sacredness of life, and international human rights among them. These universals are not abstract absolutes. They are preliminary presuppositions without which cross-cultural principles would be impossible.

Normative formulas of universal scope build on the rich legacy of communication ethics embedded in humankind's cultural histories. Virtually all religions have served early dogma about communication practices. Philosopher Mircea Eliade, rather, found the paradisiacal myth rooted in truth telling, across history and around the world. Alongside cultural diversity are cultural parallels, with Confucius in the East and Aristotle in the West both advocating an ethics of equilibrium, for example. And Carl Jung has identified universal thought forms that he chose to call the 'collective unconscious'.

In addition to epochal theorizing and historical traditions, contemporary sociopolitical policies and mandates promote common ethical practices. But agreements forged among nations and between institutions are not sufficient in and of themselves for providing a universal framework. Media technologies change constantly and raise new issues that need resolution. Hence, only a transdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach on all levels will yield a universal mode of communication ethics adequate to the twenty-first century, if it is done for the reasons and using the distinct approaches toward the emancipatory practical goals and higher objectives that are realistically discussed in this lucidly written concluding overview.

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Before closing, it might prove useful to critique these interrelated contributions: they all seek to enhance an understanding of practical relational ethics in ways that encourage deeper effective politics of governance and broader and more inclusive purviews for egalitarian democracy. They do so from consequentialist *and* nonconsequentialist perspectives. In Guyer's and Cameron's contributions, for instance, one can discern a tendency to emphasize more a nonconsequentialist approach to peace-related and justice-specific ethics grounded, not so much on consequences, but rather on a 'high' standard that finds its motivation in norm-based prescriptions of how humans 'ought to' behave—not according to divine command theory, but in accord with Kantian duty ethics: Kant's categorical imperative need not be mistaken for some version of divine command theory.⁷ Yet, part of the

7. Paul Guyer reminded us that if fifty years ago Elizabeth Anscombe infamously did assert it was, the suggestion is untenable: Kant viewed the categorical imperative to be inherent in *human reason*—thus recognizable by every human being implicitly and every time that we as humans consider acting upon a *principle of action* (some proposed 'maxim'). Kant did hold that—to believe that the morality with which we are to conduct our lives *can* be fulfilled—we humans, indeed, need to believe in God. Yet it is not our

urgency inhering in the ethical conduct of democratic politics along the dimensions discussed in this book is in a consequentialist mode of thinking, in that some of the chapters seem to concern themselves utmost with the outcomes, implications, and consequences of actions, such as the ones that touch on ego and ethos (Williams), on trust and markets (Kleindorfer), on ethics, morals, and the state (Mulhern), on exclusion and fear (Spinner-Halev), and on the problem of a democratic ethic (Schuldenfrei) or on the urgent requirements for a global ethic of communication (Cooper and Christians). True, if heeded, these tenets might be capable of bringing about a more *just* world in the course of a new century that, sad as it is to admit, started with the deadliest of all nondialogues between the blind and the hard of hearing.

In this editor's opinion, intuitionistic decisions, taken on a case-by-case basis—such as 'act nonconsequentialists' tend to undertake, the more conclusively to decide what is "the right thing to do" under very specific circumstances—are so subjective that a general theory of action is far from achievable, to the detriment of theorizing with any universal applicability. For if all stakeholders were to engage in 'what makes them feel good', chances are that responsible democratic citizenship would be the first casualty as a mode of lawful practice apt to conduce to more egalitarian democratic governance. In a world where, for better or for worse, faith-based organizations have begun to assume a newfound importance, and where the jury is still out on the makings of any 'clashes of civilizations', the problem raised by a 'rule nonconsequentialist' (i.e., consequence-indifferent) mode of thinking, however, resides in its placing trust in divine command, conducive to the awkward secular doubt as to 'whose God's command prevails' on issues of public (not household) import. Clearly Kant's categorical imperative gains pride of place here, because it may insist on the basic immorality of an act that is decided upon, and undertaken as is, on basis of a rule (maxim) that is not universally *acceptable* to all stakeholders. One agrees with Paul Guyer, however, that the contrast between consequentialism and Kantian thought should not be overdrawn: for Kant, the moral principle is a *formal* principle, at least in its first formulation; through that principle, we are to treat all human beings as 'ends' in themselves, not as mere 'means' to our very own ends. This certainly specifies a

blind faith but our own reason that enjoins those tasks upon us. And when it comes to perpetual peace, Kant quite unmistakably leaves God altogether out of the picture: peace is a state of affairs to be realized in human history, by means of *human* good will *and* by the mechanisms of *nature*, but clearly not God.

'consequence' of our actions, albeit in a way that says nothing about 'happiness'. In modern settings geared to the pursuit of happiness by each and all, habitually in stances that often so closely resemble selfish altruism, whether being treated as *ends* in themselves will allow human beings to set and pursue *their own* ends (to the extent compatible with everyone else's doing so) in ways that will assure the happiness of one and all, is a very different question, however.

In the sense and to the extent that one's maxims for actions are not to be merely 'applicable' but, indeed, *acceptable* to everyone who could be affected by them—hence because it rules out the imposition on others of principles they could not *freely* accept—the categorical imperative serves as a conduit to covenanted justice, not as a vehicle for coveted joy, thereby offering but a beginning in its very own ends. Kant specifically distinguished the categorical imperative from the traditional Christian rule. For him, '*doing* unto others as thou would have them do unto thee' left out an important complement: '*not doing* unto others what they would not have done of themselves for themselves to themselves'. It is therefore in the very amalgamation of these two complementary principles that resides the serenity offered by justice, on which one just might found collective joy, and in which one also just might find personal happiness. We do not do unto others what they would not have done to 'them', and we do unto others what we would have done to 'us'—to the extent that, in so doing, we remain true to, and also consistent with, the first part of the principle, the limits and latitudes of our resources, and the primacy of our most intimate aims (which we should view as no more, if also as no less, worthy than anyone else's): not exactly a garden variety of selfish altruism insofar as—while it does include the achievement of one's own aims among the aims of all—it allocates to one's aims no self-arrogating weight. Inside that mentality, if in a somewhat different sense, the argument finds its echo in Bourdieu's suggestion that "a point of view that perceives itself as such, that is, as a view taken from a point in a space of contending positions, is in a position of overcoming particularity" (Bourdieu 1991, 384).

Our discoveries from this critically edited book thus resonate with an *almost*-Kantian thinking that, while hoisting the categorical imperative to a zenith, wants it not least to coexist symbiotically with *reasoned altruism* in a mode of 'ecumenical' syncretism—do's and don'ts *because* already, and all too well, we *can* reason what is good and not bad for one and all. For some, this might seem to amount to a much too simple political ethic, although it does provide a basis for an eminently

nonsimplistic code of societal behavior that, through a practice of sagacious politics, may come closest in its wider effects to the uncommon achievement of actually straddling religious charity and secular humanistic generosity, and therefore becoming conducive to liberty, peace, and the pursuit of happiness—albeit in the company of one’s others. Buttressed with a robust dose of *political* ‘free will’, this code also should help to dissipate any lingering languor, much residual reticence, and many hampering hesitations to embark in one’s humane duties to build—hand in hand with one’s others—a more humane world for one and all, starting not a year from next epiphany, but right here and now.

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