Ethics in Politics

Why it matters more than ever and

How it can make a difference

Benoît Girardin

Globethics.net

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Content

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Acknowledgements

Preface

Politics is an essential human activity – essential in building societies and communities based on rules, laws and a balance of conflicting interests. Politics is complex and difficult. It requires a high level of responsibility and commitment from citizens, political parties, parliamentarians, government executives, the judiciary, the media, business, non-governmental organisations, and religious and educational institutions. But polls on all continents on the confidence of people in institutions show that people do not place much trust in politics and politicians. They are often seen as selfish and corrupt power-players, defending special interests instead of the common good and the different parts of the population. "Ethics in politics" seems to many a contradiction in terms, even though many politicians try to give their best for the common cause of a country or the international community.

Trust in and respect for politics and politicians is vital for living together in communities and societies – especially in democracies. Where it is missing, populist, fascist or dictatorial tendencies can easily grow.

In the financial crisis of 2008, the absence of trust in bankers and banking brought the global financial system almost to collapse; today, it is still in danger of collapse. In recent years the call has grown for business ethics, corporate responsibility and corporate responsible governance. Thousands of publications, initiatives, standards, labels and codes try to re-establish trust – not just as a marketing effort, but to really make a difference. Business ethics is in overdrive.

Not so political ethics. The literature is much less developed and the profound scepticism that ethics in politics is feasible remains strong. At the same time, many movements show the thirst for credible politics: the

Arab spring with its call for freedom and democracy, the Indian broad movement against corruption in politics, the European replacement of governments in Greece and Italy by technocrats and intellectuals whose mandate is to rebuild national unity, African initiatives for responsible leadership, Latin American movements for peoples' participation and citizenship (*cidadania*), North American social network campaigns and many others.

This book is an affirmation: Yes, ethics in politics is possible – and it pays off. It is not a naive dream. The author chooses a pragmatic approach and tests whether value-orientation can make a difference in politics. He presents practical cases and develops criteria for dealing with dilemmas. He singles out four fundamental ethical values to realise: limitation of power, effectiveness, accountability and justice. He develops a global and intercultural perspective, referring to Western and Eastern traditions and the various world religions. In a globalised, interdependent world of pluralistic societies, ethics in politics can no longer be merely national or based only on one cultural or religious tradition. Enough common ground exists in order to speak of *global ethics in politics*, while carefully respecting contextual ethical diversity.

This book is the fruit of lectures and seminars given by the author in countries as diverse as India, Madagascar, Rwanda, South Korea and Switzerland. With a doctorate in theology, and currently lecturer in ethics, political philosophy and international relations at the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations and interim rector of a Protestant university in Rwanda, he has the relevant academic background in ethics. The book gets added credibility from the wide experience of the author, who served the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs for decades in politics and development, as Ambassador in Madagascar and as Delegate of Development Cooperation in Romania, Pakistan and Cameroon.

This is not an academic book, with a scholarly apparatus and a lot of references, but it is solidly based on theories of political ethics as well as

observations of political practice in many countries. Its first target group is such practitioners – politicians, activists and interested citizens. Globethics.net is a global network of ethics with registered participants from over 210 countries and territories. It offers this book in its Focus series to stimulate debate, promote the search for credible politics and encourage political actors to work together to this end. In tandem with this volume, Globethics.net is also publishing the declaration on ethics in politics initiated by Benoît Girardin together with Professor Osvaldo Agatiello from Argentina and Professor Sangeeta Sharma from India.

Ethics in politics becomes herewith *a global ethics in politics*.

Christoph Stückelberger
Executive Director and Founder of Globethics.net
Geneva, 11/11/11

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Is Ethics Relevant in Politics?

1 Some Examples

A few examples may illustrate why ethics in politics matters.

1.1 Reconciliation after conflict and war. Different attitudes and institutional processes. Opposite results

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the political decisions and attitudes taken by aggressor states differed significantly.

Japan was reluctant to confess its wrongdoing officially and recognise the damage caused. No apologies were submitted to China, Korea, Indonesia, or the Philippines. Even today, bilateral relationships are still strained by the lack of a frank and official admission of past failures.

Germany showed itself able to carry out a work of remembrance, making official apologies for Nazi crimes and committing itself never to fall into a similar trap. German repentance healed relationships and laid the foundation for what became the European Union.

France and Italy were enthusiastic about the role played by their resistance movements but preferred to conceal the crimes committed by their fascist regimes. Few lessons were learned. The suppressed past continues to spoil their social relations and weakens their ability to prevent similar deviations.

In the last quarter of the 20th century, Zimbabwe and South Africa emerged from apartheid. Both were living under systematic and legally based racial discrimination. Both suffered under criminal laws that allowed and justified imprisonment, torture, and violence.

In South Africa, President Nelson Mandela deemed that crimes and misdeeds ordered and carried out under the apartheid regime should neither remain unpunished nor just be forgotten. He was also concerned to prevent a cycle of revenge.

The Independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission, chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, aimed to reach a sound level of justice without fuelling feelings of revenge and allow a form of punishment and an end to the cycle of violence. Amnesty was granted on certain conditions for crimes committed on political grounds. Public acknowledgements and apologies were submitted by former torturers in the presence of their victims or their relatives.

In Zimbabwe, there was no reconciliation, because no such process was set up. Feelings of revenge were exploited, when needed, for political advantage.

Experience[1] shows that public reconciliation mechanisms are effective provided they are independent and credible and can be put in place quickly. Political will and social acceptance are essential to their success.

Domestic conflicts oppose neighbours, former friends and even relatives. They breed violence, systematic mistrust, economic and social discrimination. The bad guy is not a foreigner. Violence leads to more violence. Escalation, tit-for-tat revenge, and vicious circles seem unavoidable. Traumas take even longer to heal than in conflicts between countries. The cases of Ireland, Palestine/Israel, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, and former Yugoslavia show how hard it is to settle domestic conflicts and how long this may take.

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[1] Similar attempts, not always successful, have been made in many other countries, including Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Chile, East Timor, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Liberia, Morocco, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, El Salvador, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, and the United States.

Solutions rely on a mix of political tenacity, confidence-building mechanisms, the presence of renowned leaders in civil society, social acceptance of the risks of peace, containing hawks and marginalising armed groups, and above all credible institutional mechanisms.

After decades of conflict between communities in Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement signed in 1998 led to new institutions and a higher degree of cooperation across Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the Irish Republic. The agreement involved various stages: decommissioning paramilitary forces (demilitarisation), the release of political prisoners, a reformed police service representative of both communities, reform in economic, social and political institutions, and acknowledgment of the principle of self-determination. The process was based on inclusiveness. The success of the agreement lay in transferring the conflict from the streets to genuine negotiations involving all parties, acceptable compromises, stable power-sharing formulae and constitutional reform. It was forged by decisive leadership and fostered by international backing.

Post-genocide Rwanda displays a mix of genuine reconciliation and judicial measures: trial of the Hutu leaders and militias who planned and committed genocide, return of former refugees, compensation, and post-traumatic support for survivors. Critical is the inclusion and naming of all victims: Tutsis, moderate Hutus who denounced genocide as a dead end, defenceless villagers, and refugee camp dwellers murdered indiscriminately. Politically, it is crucial to categorise the attacks: Are we dealing with individual or systematic cases, organised or not, decided locally or masterminded centrally? The responsibility of the international community cannot be excluded or underplayed.

When the desire for revenge after civil conflict overwhelms the desire for peace, sincere talks and power-sharing proposals become impossible. When the defeated party is permanently humiliated and marginal-

ised, the seeds of new conflict find fertile soil in which to grow and flourish.

When post-conflict systems are too complex, they lead to ceaseless incidents and delay the desired outcomes. Take the case of Bosnia, where access between the two parts of the Republika Srpska is possible only through the Brčko District, managed by a local government but jointly administered by the Republika and the Bosniak-Croat Federation.

Political leadership plays a key role in overcoming tit-for-tat violence. However it needs to be backed by a civil society that is willing to take the risk of peace. International backing usually helps as well. Reconciliation needs to be embedded in institutions. It takes courage to run the political risks.

1.2 Environmental challenges

Twenty years ago, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) – also known as the Earth Summit or Rio 92 – recognised the environmental challenges of climate change and the loss of biodiversity (species, ecological systems, genetic resources).[2] Strategies and commitments to tackle those changes and their consequences were adopted. Detailed commitments were subsequently fine-tuned and ratified by most countries. The Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions was ratified by 192 countries, although not by United States and others. The Convention on Biodiversity was ratified by 193 countries, again excluding the United States, but has failed to arrest the decline in biodiversity. High-level independent scientific bodies such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) were set up to further analyse causes and conse-

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[2] The Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 June to 14 June 1992. Rio+20 – the follow-up United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – will take place in Brazil on 20-22 June 2012.

quences and monitor the effectiveness of measures decided and their implementation. But the whole system is not running as it should.

Even if the exact extent of human influence on climate change is still disputed, it cannot be doubted that these influences have an overwhelming impact and are therefore an essential part of the solution and that a point of no return may be reached in a near future. The difference between those who scale up and those who scale down the risks is based not on knowledge but on a sense of political responsibility towards future generations, of prudence versus optimism and guesswork. According to the assessment made, higher or lower priority will be given, ambitious or minimal goals set, close or loose monitoring of processes and quick or late adjustment adopted. The precautionary principle may seem over-systematic and too focused on risk avoidance, but clear-minded risk management is nevertheless required.

Negotiations on climate change are and must be global. Individual and community commitments – as set out in Agenda 21 – matter, but national and international commitments will make the difference. Specific countries may well commit to and achieve more than average, but disparities that are too wide undermine emulation. Commitments should be balanced.

There is a huge difference in negotiations between an approach focused immediately on quantifiable national targets and fund-sharing formulae and an approach that starts from a set of common values. The ethical option chosen may foster or hinder the process. The Copenhagen summit shows that a premature focus on targets undermines the process.

To be successful, international negotiations and national policies need to sort out dilemmas and reach a sound mix between such ethical values as solidarity between developed and poor countries, equity between the past and present bearing of industrial development on the environment, responsibility towards citizens and taxpayers as yet unborn, effectiveness and impact, accountability to world citizens (and not only

one's own citizens), and sovereignty restricted by natural future limitations. In short, what is at stake is environmental justice!

Negotiations have been diverted from a strict commitment on targets to more-inclusive overall commitments and responsibility. In Cancun in December 2010, corporations and other emitters agreed worthwhile goals such as paying for adaptation, lowering rates of deforestation and building capacity in renewable energy. In the Durban Conference at the end of 2011, India and China – two big emitters – firmly committed to specify binding reduction targets by 2015 at the latest (which means that discussions should start soon). Values were able to unlock the process and focus on "common but differentiated responsibility".

The 10th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity, held in Nagoya in October 2010, agreed the Aichi Target: a voluntary rather than binding agreement to halt over-fishing, control invasive species, reduce pollution, minimise the pressure on coral reefs from ocean acidification, and halt the loss of genetic diversity in agricultural ecosystems. It also agreed a framework for cooperation and incentives in the Nagoya Protocol. According to Jim Leape, International Director of the World Wildlife Fund, "This agreement reaffirms the fundamental need to conserve nature as the very foundation of our economy and our society. Governments have sent a strong message that protecting the health of the planet has a place in international politics."

Frugality on the part of rich countries, and also of wealthy groups in emerging and poorer countries, is not very attractive politically. It must call on common values.

A wholehearted commitment to close monitoring and verification of local, national and international achievements and impacts that would be as objective, open, and fair as possible is a political risk that can be faced only through an ethical choice.

The relative importance given to long-term perspectives, interests and risks and short-term (and often short-sighted) concerns is at the

heart of international negotiations as well as national policies. A political solution to the environmental challenges cannot but rely on shared values! Politics without ethics, or with just a pinch of ethics, will lead humanity and the Earth we inhabit to disaster. One may gloss Shakespeare: To be ethical or not to be, *that* is the question.

1.3 Citizen rights. Information, freedom and respect

In 1984 the Indian city of Bhopal suffered severe air, water and soil pollution as a result of gas leakage from the Union Carbide factory. For decades, responsibility for damage was disclaimed and release of public information postponed. In other projects – dam construction, for instance – the public lacked adequate information on procedures. Civil society organisations under the leadership of Shekhar Singh, Aruna Roy and others demanded that information on public processes and decisions and the use of approved subsidies should be secured by law. The Right to Information Act (2005) stipulates that, provided 10 Indian rupees (5 US cents) are paid up front, any request for information has to be answered by the public administration within 30 days. Should a civil servant fail to provide a response before that deadline, he will be fined. Passing the Act was based on values. It was politically risky but proves today an added value in accountability, acceptance and risk-sharing.

Similar systems flourish in several other countries: Bolivia, Kenya, Chile, Greece, the USA, etc.[3]

The recent uprisings in Arab countries cannot be reduced to economic demands by jobless educated youth. Common to these upheavals is a political-ethical dimension: citizens demand to be treated with respect, their vote not rigged, their freedom of speech and opinion secured, their initiative and responsibility awarded; they expect their rulers

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[3] See *www.transparency.globalvoicesonline.org*, a network launched in 2010 by Global Voices Online.

to be fair, to refrain from capturing whole sectors of national economy, organising privileges and developing patronage. They want a servant state and not a self-serving clique of state managers.

Now the transition from the former autocratic regimes has to face the translation into political rules, processes, and institutions of such an ethical framework. Protest has to turn into new rules of the game and in-dependent referees. If the Arab spring has been provoked by a manifest lack of ethics in politics, the solutions that need to be developed must themselves be ethical.

2   Some Statements For or Against

Scepticism about the relevance of ethics in politics has been widely shared for a long time. Some well-known sayings include:

"Morality has nothing to do with politics."

"Ethics and politics are poor bedfellows."

"Even worse, in political matters, ethical considerations can but compound problems, worsen processes, derail policies; they are rarely part of solutions."

"Morality in politics means naivety and naivety is dangerous: it underestimates difficulties and conflicts, it prefers not to believe in cruelty or wrath."

"There are many men of principle in both parties in America, but there is no party of principle." Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859)

"In order to become the master, the politician poses as the ser-vant." Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970)

"We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office." Aesop (6th century BCE)

"Good laws have their origins in bad morals." Ambrosius Mac-robius (5th century CE)

It would be unwise not to take such objections seriously. Ethical analysis of political situations and processes has an interest in listening to them: at stake are clear-mindedness, professionalism and the credibility of its approach.

On the opposite side, some statements are also well known:

"There are in mankind more to be admired than despised." Albert Camus (1913-1960)

"One should not undervalue human beings." Jakob Kellenberger (former President, International Committee of the Red Cross).

"Politics is war without bloodshed, while war is politics with bloodshed." Mao Zedong (1893-1976).

In his mission statement in May 1997, Robin Cook, Foreign Secretary in Tony Blair's New Labour government, advocated an ethical dimension in British foreign policy and put human and democratic rights at its heart. When Blair declared war on Iraq, Cook resigned.

3 Mapping Positions on Ethics in Politics

The main positions on political ethics may be simplified as follows:

- Scepticism: a strong hesitancy to apply ethics to politics, although it would be nice. Amoral.
- Cynicism: declares as a principle that ethics is not only irrelevant but damaging in politics. Immoral.
- Moralism: projects ideal ethical values as goals for any politics and considers them as normative, or at least inspiring.
- Pragmatism: considers ethics as a possible added value for politics and checks case by case whether or not this is true.

Readers may position themselves at any point between the four corners. The author's view would be close to the centre, in the quadrant of pragmatism, but with an eye on moralism and not insensible of objections raised from the two other corners.

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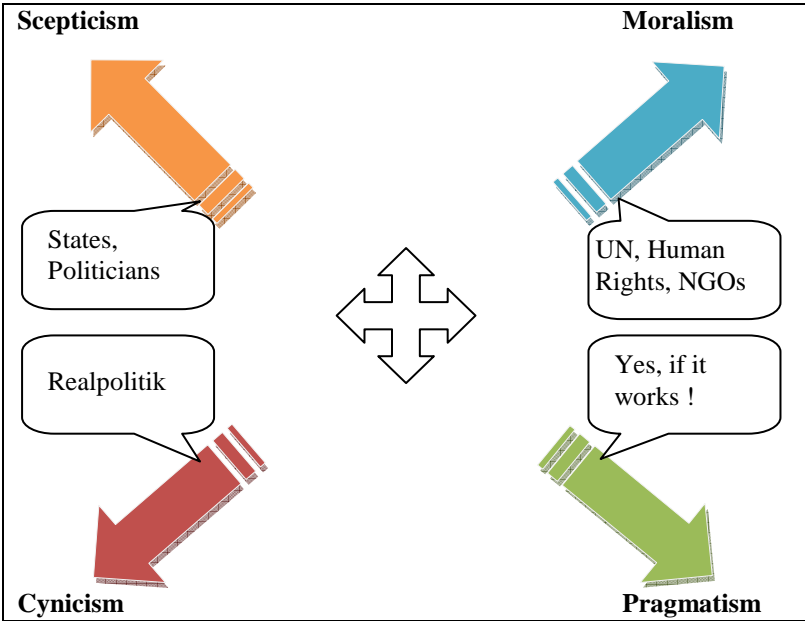
Taking Stock of the World's Main Traditions

A rapid survey of selected political philosophy traditions worldwide shows that in most – if not all – traditions worldwide ethical challenges to politics are made, but rarely settled! Our journey through India, China, Africa, Western Europe, and Judeo-Christian and Muslim traditions allows us to collect insights and identify limitations. It does not claim to be exhaustive and accepts some degree of superficiality.

1 Statements from Several Heritages

1.1 Indian traditions

Indian traditions crystallised in the sixth to third centuries BCE, with Gautama Buddha, Manu and his *Code of Manu*, as well as Kautilya's exhaustive *Arthasastra*.

Gautama Buddha (484-404 BCE) highlights personal detachment from illusions such as lust for power and asserts as well a kind of mirror effect: the ruler who kills is bound to be murdered.

"One may conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, yet he is the best of conquerors who conquers himself." *Dhammapada* VIII, 4

"When the ruler of a country is just and good, the ministers become just and good, […] the people become just and good." *Anguttara Nikaya*[4]

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[4] See Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda Maha Thera "Buddhism and Politics": *www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/buddhism/dhammananda/229.htm*

Manu emphasises the ruler's ethical virtues that allow him to keep and expand power. Justice plays a key role. A code of war aims at containing cruelty and treachery.

> "Within his realm, the king should act in accordance with the rules. […] When a king is addicted to vices stemming from pleasure, he is cut off from law and wealth, but when he is addicted to those arising from wrath, he is cut off from his very life." *Code of Manu*, ch.VII, 32, 46

Kautilya (350-283) justifies everything that is needed to take, keep and extend political power, without any moral hindrance. This realist considers a just regime the most effective defence against foreign onslaught because subjects will fight wholeheartedly to keep a just and cherished ruler but give up quickly when defending an unjust prince.

The Mogul emperor Akbar in the fifteenth century CE is hailed as the first to delink politics from religion. Advocate of tolerance, himself a Muslim, he is seen as the founding father of secular states.

Later on, Indian thinkers under British rule positioned themselves for or against values such as rule of law, impartiality, equity considered as universal (or British), as well as for or against implementation of political systems and measures by the British Raj.

Gandhi saw non-violence as an effective political way:

> "Non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practiced by the individual for his peace and final salvation, but a rule of conduct for society if it is to live consistently with human dignity." *Collected Works* II, 237

According to Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen, Indian tradition still avails today of two concepts of justice – *niti* for organisational patterns and behavioural correctness, and *nyaya* for their actual outcomes for a given society – and moves between those two poles.[5]

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[5] Sen, Amartya, *The Idea of Justice*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009, xv, 210-214.

1.2   Chinese streams

Chinese traditions also originate mainly from the sixth to the third centuries BCE, when chaos prevailed: The empire fell apart, rival kings fought each other for control of territory, and moves towards political integration were launched.

Ancient schools of thought shaped the curricula of senior administrative careers up to 1900 CE. Some concentrate on individual ethics and call human beings to take a distance from emotions and passions such as wrath and greed. Taoism belongs to such a line of thinking, where political ethics is limited to ruler's ethics and the political will to shape reality and force events is viewed with scepticism.

"A ruler should be first a master of himself." Tao texts, trans. Barfour

Confucius (551-479 BCE) also highlights the exemplary virtues of kings: just, clever, sincere, patient and detached; those hopefully will inspire people. But questioned by his disciple Tse-kung (Zigong), he makes a stunning statement on trust as a key political value. This deserves to be quoted in full:

> The Master said: "[The requisites of government are] that there be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler."
>
> Tse-kung said: "If it cannot be helped and one of these three must be dispensed with, which of the three must be foregone first?"
>
> "Military equipment," said the Master.
>
> Tse-kung again asked: "If it cannot be helped and one of the remaining must be dispensed with, which of them must be foregone?"
>
> The Master answered, "Part with the food. From of old, death has been the lot of all men; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, there is no standing for the state." *Analects* XII, ch.7

Two centuries later, Men Zi (Mencius) takes stock of Confucius's legacy and goes even further, declaring that the quality of laws matters. Effective rule requires not only humanity but also just laws. An equitable land division is the basis for sound fiscal policy and income tax. Corruption is nurtured by loose land laws and fiscal rules, and the state becomes unmanageable.

Later, Men Zi even turns hierarchy upside down:

"People are the most important element in a nation; the spirits of the land and grain are the next; the sovereign is the lightest. Therefore to gain the peasantry is the way to become emperor."[6]

Even the famous strategically minded *Art of War* of Sun Tzu underlines that war remains a last resort and peace is preferable. (Compare the Roman "*si vis pacem para bellum*" – if you wish for peace, prepare for war). Defence is mainly dissuasive. Winning without bloodshed remains *the* strategic goal.

Legalist schools in China as everywhere focus on laws and obedience to laws, conditioned by punishment for non-observers. They rarely question the laws' relevance, make ethics subordinate to law, and assume that compliance to law bring order and thus peace.

1.3   Greek and Latin schools of thought

Greek traditions, in a context of small sovereign cities, appear to be the first to focus on political systems and rank them in order of preference, already in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Socrates considered politics as irreconcilable with ethics and paid for it with his life. Plato, labelled an idealist, set in first place aristocracy based on wisdom rather than blood or wealth, whereas Aristotle deemed democracy as the most effective way to tackle tyranny. For him, human beings are in essence "political animals". Justice combines the good, right and useful.

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[6] See *The Works of Mencius,* trans. J. Legge, Oxford: Clarendon, 1895, 3.A.3 and 7.B.14.

"The end or good in politics is justice and the common advantage. Justice is equal shares for equals." *Politics*, III.12, 1282b17[7]

In a context of a large cosmopolitan empire, Roman traditions put first law, the rule of law and individual responsibility as basic principles of living together, in other words of politics.

"Law is the king of mortal and immortal beings." Plutarch, following the Greek legal thinker Pindar

They also developed political institutions. Around 160 CE Gaius invented new concepts, dividing law (*ius*) into public and private law and breaking down the latter into several laws for persons, goods and contracts. From now on, public and private life were deemed different. Law is based on the people's will.

"The law is what the people order and establish." *Institutiones*, 1.2.3

It is worth noting that political power was never made sacred except under autocratic rulers.

1.4   Judeo-Christian traditions

Judeo-Christian traditions oscillate between the importance and the abuse of political power. Unjust kings exploit people and pretend to be God (Ezekiel 28), but are regularly called to greater justice by prophetic voices.. Times when the people are under foreign rule are interpreted as challenges to repentance. Justice and solidarity are key political values. Institutional mechanisms are devised to limit the accumulation of wealth, in particular through a principle of redistributing land every 49 years (the Jubilee year).

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[7] Simpson, Peter L.P., *The Politics of Aristotle: Translation, Analysis, and Notes*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press: 1997. Ernest Barker's classic translation (1958) proposes a somewhat different rendition: "Justice is the political good. It involves equality, or the distribution of equal amounts to equal persons."

The Christian message reiterates that political power is an inherent part of the world. It is not taken but given and thus some fundamental limitation is imposed on it.

> "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Mark 12.17 and parallels, Revised Standard Version

Not only is politics limited by ethics, but social hierarchies are turned upside down, since the greatest shall be the servant. Violence needs to be exposed – the other cheek available for a second slap – so as to have some chance of ending escalation.

After its recognition as the religion of the Roman empire, Christianity developed the idea of a spiritual power checking political power, but with similar political means. In the sixteenth century, the Protestant Reformation stressed the responsibility of political rulers and citizens, and political laws as well as church governance were shaped by more participative models. Anabaptist traditions emphasised pacifism and commended laying down arms. The Roman Catholic tradition was late in acknowledging democratic patterns. Claims against injustice remain unabated.

1.5   Muslim traditions

Muslim traditions originate in a context (620-660 CE) where political power is somehow endowed with religious authority. That explains future divergences on mechanisms of succession. Strengthening administrative capacities will improve state management and bind it less tightly to the political and religious power of the caliph, seen as God's shadow on earth, and to sultans at a lower level. Political power itself is difficult to question or limit from a legal perspective. Power is answerable not to law but to wisdom and ethical virtues that rulers are asked to reflect. Models for outstanding rulers are worked out in the tradition known as Mirrors for Princes. The legal tradition focuses on norms that allow the community to live together, whereas the philosophical tradi-

tion stresses human betterment and good. In the course of the eighth to seventeenth centuries these three traditions are interwoven with each other. The Mirrors of Princes derive mainly from Al-Jahiz, Al-Mawardi, Avicenna and Al-Ghazali, legal tradition from Al-Mawardi, Al-Juwayni, Al-Ghazali, and philosophical tradition from Al-Farabi, Averroes, Ibn Khaldun. The extension of the Muslim Umma beyond Arab countries required special care in managing diversity, to avert threats to states.

Political ethics focuses on rulers' ethics, although Averroes also assesses how the four Aristotelian systems might contribute to a virtuous society, or at least stable living together. Ibn Khaldun, often considered a state philosopher, ranks three types of political power, the first based on strength and honour, the second on rational governance and worldly happiness, the third on religious principles and heavenly happiness. In India, Shah Wali Allah (1703-1762) seems to be the first to clearly delink public affairs from religious life. He highlights how the individual ethical qualities of political leaders help them in taking and keeping power.

While political management owes a lot to Muslim traditions, political power remains difficult to check, limit and share through constitutional and binding provisions.

1.6   African practices

African political practices, although less written, are not less effective. In general, they bestow a large array of powers – executive, legislative, judiciary, military – on chiefs. In part, this is symbolic. Chiefs are checked and balanced by councils of elders, where important families voice their interests and visions. Respectful and coded criticism of the chief's plans can be effective. So far as implementation is concerned, the "administration" keeps an eye on the rules and a hand on the brake. Regulatory mechanisms – representation and thorough consultation – work well. Locally, informal institutions play an important role in arbi-

trating disputes and maintaining community harmony. In some regions, blacksmiths enjoy political influence because in case of a lengthy war they may pretend that the supply of weapons is suffering from an imaginary iron shortage and so foster peace negotiations!

1.7   European Renaissance and Enlightenment

In Europe from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, political philosophy was distinguished by Machiavelli, pleading for political realism (rather than cynicism), and Grotius dealing with war.

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) stresses the means of taking and keeping power, without moralistic limitations: the ends justify such means as manipulation, threats, guile and treachery. *Raison d'état* comes first; sticks come before carrots.

"[A prince is] often forced, in order to maintain the state, to act contrary to faith, friendship, humanity, and religion." *The Prince*, XVIII.

Like Kautilya, however, he recognises that justice and welfare are a trump card for political leaders facing foreign pressure or the threat of conspiracy.

Thomas More (1478-1535), Lord Chancellor of England, later dismissed and beheaded, highlighted greed as a cause of political failure, developing in utopian terms an ideal view of an egalitarian and prosper country free from power addiction.

More realistically, Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) focused on rules and attempted to specify under which conditions a war might be considered just: if defensive, proportionate, limited.

The European Enlightenment was triggered in the eighteenth century by huge fatigue due to autocratic regimes claiming to be of sacred origin and endless wars legitimated by religious competition. Many thinkers developed criticism of autocratic powers and the influence of the churches, either by idealising pre-political (natural) organisations or by emphasising the contractual nature of states. They targeted the separa-

tion of powers (setting executive, legislative and judiciary under independent heads), accountability and elections.

Divergences on the spring of the ethical drive still prevailed between advocates of the criteria of usefulness (utilitarians) and those affirming an ethical stance beyond any particular interest (Kantians).

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) saw universalisability as key:

"Act as if the maxim of your action were to become through your will a universal law of nature." *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, cf. *AkademieAusgabe*, IV, 421

Such a basic principle then lays the basis for cosmopolitan culture, peace and trade.

Max Weber (1864-1920) reminded us that political ethics cannot base itself solely on motivation only but has also to take account of the consequences of decisions. That means: with responsibility.

Suspicions about the ethical agenda were raised by Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud. All three suspected that behind moral pretences and objective statements on values, other interests were calling the shots, such as economic vested interests (Marx), vital forces (Nietzsche) or self-assertive ego (Freud). After those waves of denial and dismantling, ethical considerations cannot simply claim to be genuine. They have to establish their actual relevance and independence as well as the concept of responsibility.

1.7   Today's approaches

Today, we observe that political ethics cannot get rid of the trauma caused by two world wars and in particular dictatorial and fascist regimes (Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, Jürgen Habermas...). Suspicions still prevail that powers conceal vested interests and technostructures assert themselves through symbolic, psychological or repressive practices (René Girard, Michel Foucault...). Disenchantment and excessive caution are part of the modern legacy.

As a result, realpolitik – politics driven exclusively by national or even vested interests – is deemed by many the right and proper way of making politics, without wishful thinking that ignores the reality of politics as a tough power game, with bargaining, double standards...

But questions of sustainability, responsibility towards future generations and remote areas as well as environmental justice, crimes against humanity cannot be ignored. In recent decades, they have taken centre stage. The emergence of a multi-polar world calls for negotiated norms rather than strength and muscle-flexing.

In the last third of the twentieth century, fresh and radical thinking sought a solid foundation on which societies might find a way of living together. Ethics and justice played a central role in this rethinking. A prominent leader of the revival, John Rawls, defines justice as fairness in his major works, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) and *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (2001). He proposes a thought experiment in which people select principles to determine the basic structure of their society, but from behind a veil of ignorance that deprives them of information about their own particular characteristics and situation. "Fair" is understood as equitable, unbiased and inclusive. Fair treatment needs to be echoed in institutions, procedures and legislation. Michael Walzer fine-tunes the approach, paying attention to the way equality is shaped in specific domains such as education, religion, trade, public office.

While building on this legacy, Amartya Sen has chosen to stress a different approach, rooted in pluralistic practices and living experiences. He suggests to begin from various experiences of injustice and refuses to give liberty overall priority. Consequently he emphasises equality of access to services and facilities.

We are thus at a crossroads. Politics can no longer reject ethical challenges, however it may handle them. We may also seek inspiration from several corners of the world and realise that we are all "minorities". Sticking to regional traditions alone will not suffice.

1 Main Lessons of this Legacy

2.1 Highlights

In all traditions, ethical responsibility in politics is constantly addressed. Some thinkers have even run personal risks. The pendulum swings between two extremes: ethics as a frame of reference for politics and politics delinked from any ethical accountability.

In all traditions, there is an underlying call for a "just politics". No tradition accepts systematic cruelty or the justification of impunity. Arbitrary rule is denounced (although often tolerated).

Laws are also often referred to or measured against values such as justice, solidarity, equity, responsibility. Such ethical reference makes it possible to challenge and change laws, adapting them to evolving contexts on behalf of the same values. It also reminds us that ethics cannot be prescribed by law.

In most traditions, legalist schools are found that focus on how political goals are turned into laws and why people are required to abide by laws. Laws themselves are seen as a framework setting limits to secure peace and order. They are taken as granted and seldom questioned from an ethical point of view. They should suffice.

Political realism (the ends justify the means), is always party to the debate. It refuses to be marginalised by ethical correctness. The stands taken by Kautilya, Machiavelli, or modern advocates of realpolitik cannot be ignored. Although they dispute the relevance of ethical norms in politics, realists may still see justice and welfare as assets in terms of political continuity, stability and sustainability.

Contingency and a real sense of opportunity matter: suitable timing, smooth and quick reaction, incidents occurring, words spoken or silence. Political failure may spring from unsuitable management of circumstances rather than in weak ethics or poor implementation. Explosive barrels are ignited by small sparks.

Ethics in politics has to do with the results and consequences of decisions and policies. Politics increasingly is oriented towards outcomes and results. Political ethics is rarely absent but often it is worked out in a rather underdeveloped fashion.

In short, political ethics is a challenge that requires serious attention, debate and dialogue within societies and between cultures.

2.2 Limits and pitfalls faced by the traditions

Experience shows how difficult, not to say risky, it is to advocate that political power be limited on an institutional basis: whether by laws or values, through institutional separation of powers, decentralisation or power-sharing formulae.

The ideological, religious or transcendental dimension of political power is hard to challenge. As a result, disreputable practices and autocratic regimes may even be justified. Criticism is limited to political management rather than the legitimacy of power.

Many traditions reduce political ethics to the individual ethics of rulers or citizens. They stress personal virtues, such as justice and wisdom, generosity and rigour, detachment from wrath and aggressiveness or greed and luxury. They see responsibility in terms of independent, self-controlled individuals. Political structures, laws, systems and institutions seem often to be immune from ethical scrutiny.

Efficiency and effectiveness in keeping political power in place is often the main yardstick to assess regimes and policies. This managerial approach is reinforced by a reluctance to draw a straight line of causality between morality, values, good will, laws, rules, enforcement, and outcomes, because of past failures and collateral damage.[8]

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[8] An extreme and often-cited example is the US Prohibition Act passed in the 1920s. It was based on moral motives to reduce alcohol dependency and its social consequences but ended up strengthening organised crime.

It is difficult to find a suitable mix of interests and values and avoid an "either-or" approach. It is difficult also to highlight the economic dimensions of ethical choices in politics.

We need a pragmatic approach, avoiding too theoretical and moralistic stands, and reflecting the concrete dilemmas posed to experienced politicians, social leaders, learned intellectuals or committed citizens.

2 Today's Challenges

Many of today's challenges are unprecedented. They require innovative approaches and cannot be answered by copying and pasting from previous policies.

3.1 Complexity and a systemic dimension

Many problems are so interdependent that no one can pretend that local, regional or sector-wide solutions will suffice. Consider how interwoven are economic growth, trade-related issues, environmental challenges, financial mechanisms, "too big to fail" banks, political regional and national constellations, social trust and respect of human rights, migration, corruption and security threats. These challenges are systemic, and the systems are as vulnerable as their weakest links.

Bringing all key actors around the same table, setting common priorities, deciding on phases, timing and funding is far from easy. To take just three examples:

1. The Great Lakes in Africa, where mineral resources, agricultural growth, governance and corruption, communication, security, human rights, political agenda, ethnic tensions... are interconnected parts of an intractable conflict.

2. The acquisition of fertile lands by foreigners in the name of their future food security or of streams providing water for irrigated agriculture, energy, industry, consumption. Competition between users,

between upstream and downstream riparian countries, between sides, may be observed on the Blue Nile, the Tiger and Euphrates, the Danube, the Mekong… Fair trade would require that real costs are part of the price, less social dumping, better wages and salaries, consideration for ecological consequences, all of which supposes a holistic approach and systemic handling.

3. Environmental justice, economical growth, welfare and livelihood, securing mineral resources, energy sources or food – none can be handled in isolation, whether at local, regional or international levels. The term "glocalisation", a recent Japanese creation, bears witness to this awareness.

The systemic dimension – the chicken-and-egg problem – makes political analysts happy but frustrates political players because no linear causality or responsibility can be traced. Where should actions be undertaken first, what kind of collateral consequences should be expected, how should short-term and long-term interests and risks be reconciled? There is no blueprint. Most of the time, the best bet is a trial and error approach, monitoring developments and keeping an eye on the ball.

Attention to shared values among key players may help significantly in political processes of systemic decision and implementation.

3.2   Environmental sustainability – ecological footprint

Ecological footprint analysis – in 1996 initially called "appropriated carrying capacity" – compares human demands on nature with the biosphere's ability to regenerate resources and provide services. It does this by assessing the biologically productive land and marine area required to produce the resources a population consumes and absorb the corresponding waste, using prevailing technology. Footprint values at the end of a survey are categorised for carbon, food, housing, and goods and

services, as well as the total number of Earths needed to sustain the world's population at that level of consumption.[9]

If every human being's living standard were at the average European level, three planets would be needed to secure resources as well as to absorb pollution – if compared to the US average, four and a half planets. Already, according to the World Wildlife Fund, total human activities exceed by 20% the Earth's resources and capacity of absorption. Without deep change, a point of no return will be reached. Even if we cannot date it precisely, such a red line is certainly a mere matter of decades ahead. We need to reverse course now: the clock is already ticking.

Climate change demonstrates yet again that no region of the world can pretend not to affect or be affected by other regions. The impact is of course differentiated. Some places – the Maldives, Tahiti, Bangladesh, or the Netherlands – will be first to suffer from rising sea levels. "Who will die first?" is a real question. The irreversibility of major developments such as the melting of the ice-caps requires urgent common decision and implementation.

Solutions will be systemic – or not! The time for pointing fingers or playing the blame game is over. Industrial pollution, CO_2 emissions and depletion of biodiversity are not caused by a single country, specific industries or individual behaviour. At the same time, responsibility is specific: individual, local and national as well as global.

Shared ethical values can make a difference. For the first time in human history, political responsibility and accountability needs to include citizens and taxpayers as yet unborn as well as those outside our sovereignty. There is only one Earth, and together we are responsible for what we make of it.

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[9] For a quick orientation, see *www.footprintnetwork.org*; the UK Carbon Trust, funded by the British government and its "Carbon Footprinting" 2008; the WWF footprint calculator *footprint.wwf.org.uk*

Long-term, even vital, interests may contradict short-term interests. Trade-offs cannot be agreed other than in terms of values. We need to develop comprehensive costing for human processes and products, covering the total cost of production, distribution, use and recycling (or storage in the case of slow-decaying or non-degradable materials). Real costing may contradict the logic of sale, profit or consumption but is demanded by values such as sustainability, responsibility, equity.

"Climate change is an ethical issue," says UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon, "with serious implications for the well-being of our generation and those that will follow. It requires a global solution that takes into account the views and needs of all who share Mother Earth."[10]

Quoting this statement, Christoph Stückelberger adds: "The basic ethical question today is how to invest and distribute limited resources for the threefold duty of prevention, mitigation and adaptation related to climate change in order to minimise the number of victims."[11]

Accepting limits and cuts in living standards and turning growth into a green economy that takes account of all the costs incurred (not to talk of a slowdown) requires a set of values shared by countries and communities internationally. Environmental justice is one of them.

3.3   Towards a multi-polar world

The cold war is over, and emerging powers now come into their own. The United States, Japan and the European Union cannot settle global issues without discussion with China, India, Brazil and Russia. Larger platforms such as the G20 offer seats to newcomers from South

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[10] "Only global cooperation can prevent runaway climate change", Message to the People's World Conference on Climate Change and Mother Earth Rights in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in April 2010: *un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/ sgsm12851.doc.htm*

[11] "Who dies first? Whom do we sacrifice first? Ethical aspects of climate justice": *christophstueckelberger.ch/dokumente_e/climatejustice.pdf*

America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. This may be a chance for less confrontational relationships.

Although complicated by nationalism and protectionism, the drive towards a more open and multi-polar world will hardly be stopped. It may take less or more time. It should widen its democratic constituency. The political culture is still too reactive and should learn to anticipate.

More and more, negotiated norms and agreed standards will resolve arguments and settle disputes. Specific arrangements for exceptional or minority situations will have to be accepted, without opening the door to unfair competition or permanent privilege. A good example is agriculture: Mountainous or other marginal areas will never be able to compete economically with large and fertile plains if environmental and transport costs are not taken on board.

Tough negotiations call for shared values such as equity, solidarity and sustainability. States lose some of their monopoly of power. Sovereignty is limited by international treaties, standards and conventions, regional unions, and an increasingly assertive civil society. Alongside economic and military clout, soft power (the ability of states to persuade other countries, forge alliances and frame the debate) gains in importance.

Many wars today are civil or domestic, rarely involving neighbouring countries. In response, a different kind of peace negotiation is evolving: see, for instance, the experience of the International Red Cross/ Crescent. Non-state players – paramilitary groups and civil society representatives – have to sit at the table.

3.4 Persisting poverty

Poverty reduction today seems much harder than anticipated. The gap between the rich and poor is still widening. In 1776, when Adam Smith published his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, no known country was more than twice as rich as any other. In

2010, the factor was 30. Similarly, in each country the gap between the richer and poorer groups is increasing.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aim to halve by 2015 the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.[12] Some countries – notably China and India – have made notable progress in poverty reduction in absolute and even in percentage terms; but many areas of the world – sub-Saharan Africa above all – are in danger of missing these targets.

Every five years, international financial institutions and aid agencies proudly announce that they have reshaped and reframed their approach to take into account new dimensions of development, from infrastructure to gender, governance, micro-credit, vocational education and recently agriculture (!); but neither economic, technical, political, institutional, nor cultural dimensions have so far brought large-scale and sustainable success.

Purely technocratic solutions that ignore values are bound to fail. Societies that are not trapped in violence – whether because of ethnic rivalries, drug cartels, corruption, impunity, distrust between rulers and citizens – do better in redistributing wealth. International cooperation works better when partnerships are the least asymmetric possible.

A capacity to unite key social actors – governments, business, NGOs, civil society – around values such as equity, justice, respect for minorities, cannot but build trust and improve cooperation.

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[12] Although the MDGs originated with the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) and were finalised only in 2001, they take 1990 as the baseline for measurement. For the background to the MDGs, see Hulme, David, *The Making of the Millennium Development Goals. Human Development Meets Results-Based Management in an Imperfect World*, University of Manchester: Brooks World Poverty Institute, December 2007.

3.5   Self-serving states and state capture

Self-serving states where citizens are seen as taxpayers, subjects, instruments and followers, but not as the democratic source of authority and legitimacy, are nothing new; but they are becoming more common.

Power is seen as private property, not as responsibility and service. Those in power seek to perpetuate their power. Security forces and intelligence agencies protect vested interests. Strategic sectors are captured by privileged groups. Public wealth is appropriated by a class of bureaucrats and rulers. Public programmes are distorted and do not meet real needs. Corruption is entrenched and builds a wall against newcomers and competition. Governments and administrations hide behind thick layers of bureaucratic procedure and red tape. Policies are not open to question or debate. Attempts at dialogue or reform are frustrated by evasive strategies. A frontal assault seems unavoidable.

The term "state capture" is now used widely to describe such states that are seized by a small circle of influential people seeking to protect their vested interests.[13] It is of course unrealistic to expect from every state the same kind of governance. Failed, fragile, patrimonial, or hybrid states cannot make the same commitments or responses as mature democracies. But progress is possible even from a difficult baseline.[14]

In all cases, negotiations should not pretend that institutions are 100% reliable but invest more in shared values and close interactions based on these values.

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[13] "When vested interests influence and manipulate the policymaking process for their own advantage, we speak of state capture." Declaration from the14th International Anti-Corruption Conference in Bangkok in 2010: *14iacc.org/wp-content/uploads/FinalBangkokDeclaration13Nov10.pdf.*

[14] A fragile state is an infant state, relying on charismatic but weak leadership and unprofessional management, fragile institutions (judiciary, administration…), conservative business and a loosely organised civil society. A patrimonial state is one of personal rule held together by patronage: the distribution of economical rents to clients. A hybrid state mixes formal democratic institutions – parliament, ministries, and a judiciary – with a real functioning that operates through ethnic clans, personal relations and vested interests.

3.6 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international criminal tribunals

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN in 1948, draws the core of its message from ethical and political philosophy. It starts from recognition of the inherent dignity of every human being, seen as free and responsible but exposed to manipulation and threats. This is then translated into a set of binding rights to be implemented progressively by every country. In 1966, the UN adopted two complementary covenants on civic and political rights and on social and economical rights, and in 1976, following ratification by a sufficient number of states, these became part of the International Bill of Human Rights. Other conventions were also agreed.[15] The World Conference on Human Rights, in Vienna in 1993, insisted that human rights were interrelated, interdependent and indivisible and highlighted social rights.

The universality of human rights was often challenged in the 1990s in the name of differences in cultural context or religious identity.[16] The arguments turned on the respective weight to be attached to individuals and society, men and women, rights and duties. The Arab spring and revolts in other autocratic regimes suggest that it is a matter not so much of cultural context as of state pretensions and the systematic abuse of power. Today, it is hard to take seriously the declaration in 2010 by Basil Rajapaksa, the urbane brother of the President of Sri Lanka, that

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[15] Conventions on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965), on All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), on Certain Conventional Weapons (1980), on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers (1980), against Torture (1984), on the Rights of the Child (1989).

[16] Some months before the Vienna Summit of 1993, regional caucuses submitted regional "interpretations": see the declarations adopted in Bangkok, Cairo, San José and Tunis. See also the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Western ideas of transparency, along with limits on presidential power and accountability, are not "relevant to Asian culture".[17]

International humanitarian law has also registered decisive progress in protecting civilians and captives in times of war and armed conflict. The increasing role in such conflicts of non-state actors – traditional authorities, guerrilla groups, civic associations – requires an adaptation of fundamental values to the changing context.

Following the genocide in Rwanda, the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), developed through a Canada initiative in 2000, was accepted by the UN World Summit in 2005 as a norm.[18] Its provisions were reaffirmed by the Security Council in 2006 (UNSC resolution 1674). The African Union also committed itself to intervene in a member state in case of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes.

Systematic and widespread disrespect of human rights in Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, former Yugoslavia, Sudan, the Ivory Coast, etc., prompted the creation of *ad hoc* international criminal tribunals and, in 2002, the International Criminal Court. This permanent, treaty-based court is intended to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes: genocide, war crimes and crime of aggression. The most severe violations of human rights and humanitarian law may now be prosecuted and punished, so long as the crime was committed in one of 114 signatory countries of the Treaty of Rome. This is a major advance in international law.

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[17] See "Beating the drum. A majestic moment for an ever more powerful ruler" in: *The Economist*, 18 November 2010: *www.economist.com/node/17527970*

[18] "The international community... has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means... to help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.... [W]e are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council... on a case-by-case basis... should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations....": *www.who.int/hiv/universalaccess2010/worldsummit.pdf*

In ethical terms, this means that sovereignty is no longer absolute. It is more a responsibility than a privilege. It may be limited when human dignity is at risk.

3.7 Communication and global information

Electronic information and communication are key factors in modern politics. Speed, easy access, fluency are essential ingredients in developing platforms of free exchange. Rumours also abound on the internet, and manipulation is not unknown. Providers come under scrutiny: let us mention Facebook, Twitter and other social networks, but also Wikileaks and Wikipedia.

Social networks played a significant role in mobilising people and organising demonstrations in Arab and African countries. Wikileaks helpfully revealed conditions of detainees and processes in Guantánamo; its revelation of diplomatic notes may have been less helpful. Al-Jazeera embarrassed Palestinian negotiators by publishing the Palestine Papers.

The main ethical challenge turns around responsibility and accountability. Wikileaks is accountable only to itself; governments for their part will certainly constrict their electronic communications. Imposed norms have little chance of working, but a kind of self-rule may well develop.

3

Political Ethics

1 A Common Mistake: Copy and Paste of Individual Ethics to Political Ethics

As we can see from our rapid historical overview, individual ethics is often transferred directly to the political sphere. It is assumed that if leaders are honest, just, and respectful of the truth, countries will be managed honestly, justly, and with due respect for truth and democracy.

Such an approach is appealing in its simplicity and makes a comeback today, at a time when politics is seen as highly complex and opportunistic and yet is highly personalised by media obsessed with political leaders. Puzzled by complexity, and feeling powerless in its face, citizens are also tempted to trust in charismatic leaders who present themselves as the "saviour" or "reformer" of their country. Then come frustration and disillusion, with poor achievement and promises endlessly postponed. Yet an increasing number of voters place their trust in the individual virtue of new leaders rather than teams or programmes. They distrust laws, rules, institutions, compromise, mediation. They downplay policy, management and structural dimensions.

Nothing is more misleading.

A fight against corruption that limits itself to individual honesty and moral virtue, for example, is doomed to fail. Without such institutional mechanisms as an independent judiciary, set fines and punishments, whistleblower protection, and fair competition among businesses, it may prove mere lip service, concealing a disastrous reality and opening the door to even worse and more systematic corruption than before.

Individual rationality may even end up in collective stupidity. Political problems require political solutions. Saving water by showering rather than bathing may remind us of the importance of caring for our environment and make us feel virtuous but by itself is devoid of ecological significance. The magnitude of the climate issues we face is beyond the reach of individual behaviour. Limiting CO_2 emissions through such mechanisms as carbon trading and clean development will surely be more effective.

Copy and paste fails, first because interpersonal relationships are different in nature from living together in an organised society. Direct responsibility, face-to-face interaction, consequences kept under direct control, proximity between intentions and actions – all these features belong to the personal and interpersonal field of action but cannot be copied and pasted into politics.

In a classic essay on the *socius* and the neighbour,[19] the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) points out how face-to-face and social relationships differ. Neighbours meet face-to-face. "The *socius* is the person I attain through his social function; the relation to the *socius* is a mediate relation; it attains man in this or that capacity" – as citizen, member of an association, worker, disabled, sick... Therefore it always works through mediations, such as laws, institutions, third parties. Fiscal fairness, for instance, has nothing to do with personal relations. But it builds up a society, materialises solidarity and sustains human living together.

Inversely, laws and rules should not be reduced to some personal utilitarian perspective and limited to subjective use or benefit. They should enjoy some objectivity – the rule of law – and not be treated as a wax nose. We see this risk in movements that demand that families should substitute for public schools and take over the full responsibility

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[19] Ricœur, Paul, "Le socius et le prochain" in *Histoire et verité*, Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1955, 1964; ET, "The Socius and the Neighbour" in *History and Truth*, Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 98-109.

of education, substituting a closed circle of the like-minded for a social mix. Laws are not meant to be a menu *à la carte*, where everybody picks only what suits her or him. Living together in society, meaning pluralistic societies, is here at stake.

When politics is seen in personal terms, declared motivations, intentions and promises are put in the limelight, whereas the merit of ethics in a social context is measured mainly by consequences and results – as Max Weber reminded us. Laws are respected or criticised because of their outcomes and impact, not their broad objectives.

2 Structural Ethics Bears on Laws, Institutional Mediations, Compromises, Results

As soon as it comes to large groups, associations, communities, regions, countries, relationships are structured, and ethics must reflect this. "Structured" means embedded in institutions, rules, laws, policy objectives, provision of resources. Such "mediations" are the heart of politics.

Constitutions often invoke ethics, since they are laying down principles, values, basic rights and higher norms. The preamble to the Swiss Constitution of 1999, for instance, specifies principles of freedom and solidarity to be realised down the road:

"And in the knowledge that only those who use their freedom remain free, and that the strength of a people is measured by the well-being of its weakest members…"

A constitution as a consolidated, written and published document is not a must – so far the UK has no such constitution. However, whatever the form, a set of principles, prerogatives, and hierarchies needs to be specified, covering sovereignty, the rule of law, a unitary or federal state, the respective prerogatives of the executive, legislature and judiciary, tenure, modes of designation, etc.

A voting system may favour leadership through winner-takes-all or diversity through proportional representation. There is no perfect system, but a choice needs to be made.

Policies and laws are not to be assessed merely by their intention or purpose. They aim at being broadly equitable, acceptable and just. Some laws that are overambitious in seeking equity are poorly implemented and end up in even less tolerable inequities. Laws inspired by some extreme solidarity – such as positive discrimination[20] – are justified in specific cases to reach a critical mass and a sustainable threshold but may end up in inequitable privileges and reduced responsibility for marginal groups. A time limit should be set up front and act as a challenge. Laws should avoid being over-complex, inapplicable or poorly accepted. Some compromise at the expense of full justice may be accepted if that makes the law acceptable and enforceable.

Systems are meant to address average or typical situations and will always fail to be tailor-made for unique individual situations. Social security systems try to balance overall risks, accepting inherited diseases or economic constraints and calling on the margin for personal responsibility in diet, hygiene, or stress management.

Institutions are supposed to address the problems of individuals, but not at a personal level. Fiscal policies if tailored to each individual situation would result in over-costly administration and lengthy procedures. This is why in so many countries VAT and taxes on petrol have become so widespread: implementation is simple, quick, undisputed. In countries with a low literacy rate and a wide informal sector, where income taxes mainly affect formal-sector and public-sector employees, they may even prove to be the only effective method of taxation, and not so unjust.

When roles and responsibilities in a political decision-making process or in institutions remain unspecified or are left to individual influ-

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[20] Examples from the Black community in the USA, outcastes in India, and other minority groups bear witness to this.

ence and power games, then the door is open to concealed decision-making and an endless blame game.

Compromises are part of politics. They are inherent in families and associations also. But in politics there is a greater risk of settling for the minimum that can be agreed by all or most parties. To reach a suitable level of acceptance, decisions or laws have to take on board diverging interests and views. Some solutions may be counterproductive, paralysing or self-defeating. Corrective measures may be delayed or blocked by some or all parties, each fearing to lose even more in a new round of tougher negotiations. Nevertheless, compromises may also prove effective and yield constructive results.

Let us look at two instances:

1. How should transport infrastructure be paid? By users, the state (present and future taxpayers), or both? Through which mechanism: fuel taxes, tickets and fares, a yearly lump sum, or a bit of each? Should investment be financed separately from running costs or jointly? How to organise fair competition between road and rail? How to rank criteria and political priorities? By whom?

2. How should town and country planning be managed and priorities set? Should a preliminary consultation to reach tradeoffs be prepared by experts, politicians and the final decision communicated to all concerned? Or should the whole process start with an open and all-inclusive consultation, at the risk of endless time-consuming objections?

Experience shows that many laws are better accepted if civil society organisations (social associations, professional organisations, trade unions, political and religious movements, etc.) have been involved in a consultative process and their views and practices taken into account.

3   Political Ethics: Vision and Process

Politics is not philosophy but practice. It is not enough to specify political goals that satisfy an ethical political vision. This needs to be explored, tested and reconfirmed in processes. Consistency between vision and process is an essential ingredient of political success.

In politics, processes are the proof of the pudding. Processes are more than just a realisation of vision; they are an integral part of political vision. It is essential to set the limits of living together, but these limits should themselves be set together, through broad and inclusive consultation.

Smart processes are self-correcting: like precision-guided missiles, they home in on their target. Politics is a social laboratory. Political systems, tools, roles, are invented through trial and error.

We need only think of Mahatma Gandhi or Nelson Mandela to realise how vision and process are intimately linked and how their consistency may fuel political success.

Some leaders and citizens may confine ethics in politics to vision, declaratory politics, programmes, and intentions, but it is through systems, rules, and decisions that ethics in politics takes on real weight and influence. The reproach of double standards points to a deep discrepancy between principles and values on one side, implementation, decisions, and risks on the other.

The devil lies in the detail: ethics in politics is realised in the processes of implementation, tools, systems, and individual decisions.

What we have said so far does not mean that individual and interpersonal ethics and political or institutional ethics should be seen as polar opposites. They may indeed differ in kind, but some convergence and consistency may prove beneficial. Political leaders who are committed to ethical values may be the engine of long-term vision, lucidity, tolerance. Political courage is often linked with personal courage. On the other side, interpersonal relations and openness to our neighbours fuel

social life in towns, neighbourhoods, villages. As Ricoeur argues, it is the same attention to the neighbour[21] that gives meaning to the social institution *and* to the event of the encounter. But in the last analysis, it is charity that inspires and governs our relationships to both the *socius* and the neighbour, giving them a common *intention*. Most social laws and systems have been promoted by voluntary associations imbued with ethics: this can be seen in the abolitionist movement, in many environmental associations, in the development cooperation agenda.

4 Ethics of Conviction and Responsibility

Ethics in politics has to do with vision. Statesmen and women prove themselves by lifting the eyes of their people from petty or parochial interests to the far horizon of global and future interests. They are able to coalesce around shared values and principles a common political will and project. Those who make their mark in history are visionaries with their feet on the ground.

After extensively studying charismatic political leaders in cultures and societies all over the world, Max Weber, German sociologist and himself a leader of political opinion, concluded that conviction and motivation were not enough. Particularly in modern times, political leaders have to take responsibility not only for their decisions but also for the consequences, even if these contradict or defeat the initial purpose. Weber reminds us that in politics, responsibility has less to do with motives than with consequences. Ethics in politics should therefore dovetail conviction and responsibility. Responsibility even appears as the most distinctive feature of ethics in politics.

Politics is the realm of uncertainty. Political decisions and policies may result in unexpected or adverse consequences. Leaders are expected

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[21] In Christian tradition, charity is key; it does not mean paternalism. The Latin word *caritas*, translating the Greek *agape,* means attention, compassion, respect, paving the way for a common future.

to think through the full implications of what they decide as well as how they handle the unexpected.

The financial and economical crisis that broke out in 2008 found its origin ten years earlier in well-intentioned mortgage policies aimed at easing access to housing for low-income families in the USA, even beyond reasonable repayment risk. Risk was downplayed. The results were disastrous for many low-income families who lost their homes. The politicians who reaped the benefit of their rash decisions were not around to accept the blame and take responsibility.

Let us remind ourselves that the term "responsibility" comes from the Latin verb *respondere*, which is slightly distinct from "to respond" or "to answer". *Respondere* means first to guarantee, to vouch for something, to be responsible or to be blamed for something, acknowledging one's own acts and decisions, being accountable, answerable. Responsible was the person who could be admitted to court.

Politicians bear full responsibility for the consequences of policies, laws, decisions they support, including what is euphemised as "collateral damage".

Utilitarianism reminds us of the importance of actual results, the yardstick being what is useful for the greatest number. Even if the utilitarian school's statement that the general interest and common good should be considered as the driving force of ethics is disputed, it is not acceptable to consider consequences as irrelevant.

5   Politics is not Identical with Social and Economic Processes

Politics is also specific and not just a reflection of social and economic processes.

First, states are more than communities. To enable social living together, a regulatory framework is required that allows and protects social ties, interactions, contacts, solidarity, status, clans and social identi-

ties. Politics organises historical, concrete communities so that decisions can be taken and history made. Politics shapes social actors into citizens. States are neither artificial, as for Hobbes, nor necessarily repressive. The experiences of failed or fragile states deliver clear lessons in that respect. Obviously social communities lacking a framework of enforced rules are not performing satisfactorily.

Then laws need to be enforced, disputes settled and fraud repressed. Institutions for public management and unbiased trials are needed, power and lawful force also. The rule of law is another feature that distinguishes states from communities. States comprise the two elements of force and law. Last but not least, states can persist over time because reasonable compromises and alliances with former opponents are part of the game and because they have to be answerable not just to the citizens of today but also to future generations. Environmental threats and challenges but also intergenerational solidarity ingrained in social schemes bear witness to the width and depth of politics.

With economics, the link is more subtle and more complex. The deficiency of the Marxist approach was to conflate political and economical factors and consequently miss the specificities of politics, including political pathologies.[22] However, politics goes beyond economics, and ethical choices in politics go beyond economical rationality on prospects and costs, although they have to take those into consideration. But economics helps to assess policies, their costs as well as their yields, to prioritise agendas, and to make political choices explicit.

Economics forms a privileged bridge between ethics and politics or offers a necessary path from politics to ethics. Cost factors cannot be ignored in any ethical questioning of politics.

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[22] Paul Ricoeur (1985) considers it tragic that autocratic and dictatorial regimes have been endorsed by Marxist groups simply because the means of production means are nationalised. On the other side, a free market economy and political freedom are not to be equated.

6 Political Ethics Differs from the Ethics of Associations and Businesses and the Personal Ethics of Rulers

Associations and civil society organisations are akin but not identical to politics. States are not free associations. They do not result from free opting in, although states also include some element of social contract. Associations may influence, inspire, suggest, or recommend but have no responsibility to set and enforce laws. They are akin in that what they do has met social requirements or expectations and has been processed through debates and arguments. They differ from societies in that opponents may be invited to leave an organisation when they no longer agree with its objectives or processes, whereas citizens dissenting from the majority ordinarily remain citizens of their country.

Businesses may display some organisational complexity and require strategic leadership. Nevertheless they differ from states in that they are accountable to selected groups – first to owners or shareholders and second to customers. A company also makes choices and may decide not to go for a product or tender for a contract. States are accountable to all citizens and cannot easily reject key dimensions of living together. Again, people may opt or not to buy a share or a product, but citizens cannot opt out or in of their society. In their country of residence, they cannot choose their level of taxation. In India or the UK, they may not elect to join a group of drivers who prefer to drive on the right. Business people usually do not perform so well in politics. Institutional cultures differ. Compromises may kill a corporation and save a society. A corporation may lay off staff, but a state cannot treat its citizens as redundant.

Rulers as individuals are ethical subjects. They are expected to be not too dishonest, not too unfair, even not at all dishonest and unfair. They are supposed to resist adversity, to firmly hold their course but adapt when necessary, to drive and manage processes. They are expected to be imbued with vision, leadership and management: good strategists and professional tacticians, with both a profile and a style.

Many rulers are sailors: they steer a sailboat and know how to deal with winds and waves. Their profile is a mix of personal ambition and programmatic consistency. Virtues are a political asset for leaders. Personal ethics matters but does not exhaust political ethical requirements.

"I clearly say that never so far have I been inconsistent with my prior commitments," a European prime minister declared recently. That speaks in favour of his consistency but does not mean that his decisions were always right and just, or even politically opportune.

It therefore needs to be clearly affirmed that responsible political leadership is not only a matter of individual virtue. Sensitivity to community expectations and responsibility to electors is also a matter of political commitment and political culture, irrespective of individuals.

With respect to social values, political ethics is not limited to but goes beyond political parties, which resemble associations. It should provide common ethical platforms on which parties or institutions may stand together and join hands.

7 Political Ethics Extends from Rulers to Citizens

Political ethics is not limited to top political rulers – presidents, ministers, or state secretaries. It extends to parliamentarians, the judiciary and civil servants, businesses, civil society organisations, the media, and last but not least, citizens.

Most sound political choices are based on large consultative processes that take on board diverging interests, make compromises and bring together individual commitments.

These compromises do not simply result from taking an average or choosing a middle way. Based on shared values, they may transcend the mathematics of finding the least resistance or the most convergence.

It is important that conflicts and diverging interests are handled through open and fair negotiations and without resort to hijacking, vio-

lence or elimination. When community relationships do not fulfil such requirements, then tensions can grow dangerously.

Political ethics is consolidated at a point of convergence between rulers, associations and citizens.

Fighting corruption provides a good example of cooperation throughout this wide social array. Fighting corruption effectively requires that all social spheres pull together in a consistent and coordinated manner:

- political ethics: laws, judiciary, institutions, political will
- social ethics: citizen associations, professional self rule, media, faith communities
- personal ethics: political leadership, citizens as individuals or members of associations

8 Summary

The three ethical spheres – personal, associational and political – are not identical. They differ from each other in nature, although there are overlapping areas where two or three interact and influence each other:
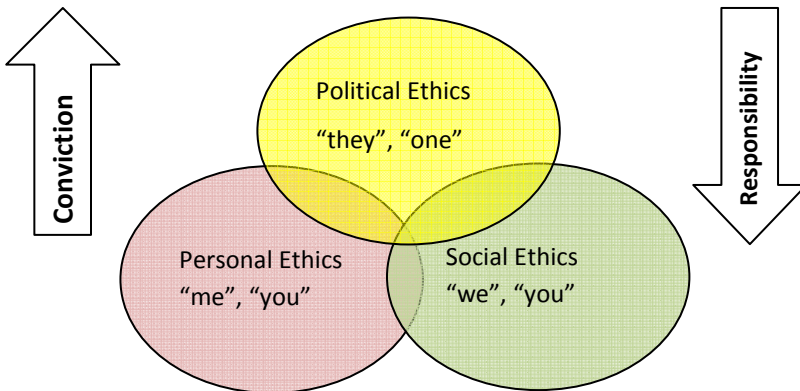
Political ethics does not consist in a copy and paste from individual or social ethics. Copy and paste can even result in negative consequences or oversimplifications such as:

- overlooking political and institutional mediations
- equating citizens with relatives, friends or colleagues
- extending the principle and uses of free membership or beliefs from association to state level
- limiting responsibility for consequences to intention
- limiting the fight against corruption to personal honesty

The following table illustrates how values may resemble one another while varying by context.

Situation	Personal	Social	Political
Violent conflict	Tit for tat. Hate The other cheek	Exclusion Fair competi- tion	Defensive war Imposing sanc- tions
Post-conflict	Forgiveness Healing	Confession Reintegration Solidarity	Amnesty but no impunity No harm
Intergenerational	Filial liking Love	Consideration Respect	Pension schemes Incentives
Relationships	Trust. Faith No lies	Equity Fairness	Rule of law
Free initiative	Transparency	Declaring	Accountability
Risk disparity	Compassion Free cooperation	Sharing risk Mutual relief	Solidarity Cross-subsidy
Adversity	Endurance Tenacity	Resilience	Sustainability

4

A Conceptual Framework

1 A Threefold Foundation

Three factors are fundamental in politics: limitation of power, effectiveness and accountability. They can be found everywhere, in varying degree, even in autocratic regimes. Where they reach a satisfactory level, the quality of politics is improved.

1.1 Limitation of power

Lord Acton (1834-1902) famously said, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." He spoke of absolute power, but strictly speaking, no power is unlimited or absolute. Political power is always limited: it always has to reckon with other forces, foes, associate players and risks, all limiting factors. But limitation of power accepted or even welcomed from the outset, deliberately and through institutional diversification, makes political power more credible, acceptable, longer-lasting and secure. Structural limitations on power help in handling conflicts and making them negotiable. Limitation is then organised and enjoys a binding force.

Political style or culture matters: a regime may handle limitation openly or reluctantly. It may accept limits to its power as a necessary evil, or it may deem it more appropriate to compromise with other views without being forced by law to do so. It may pretend that limits are established, although it follows an opposite path. It may prove smart

enough to listen and compromise, but such a style depends on its "good will".

Governments nowadays cannot claim absolute and unquestionable sovereignty. They do better to accept a limited sovereignty and take advantage of it in requiring reciprocity from others. Political conditions of good governance set on fragile governments by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union and others should not be rejected in the name of sovereignty but accepted, provided that such a requirement is accepted on both sides. Good governance, yes! – but with reciprocity, for example, in lifting trade barriers, without open or covert subsidies or soft barriers imposed by one side.

Political systems may employ constitutions and laws to establish rules that set limits through institutions governed by checks and balances. Limitation of power is then no longer a matter of goodwill but of compulsory basic rules and legally binding provisions. Such regimes achieve greater stability and predictability, although it will never be complete.

Another key limitation of politics relates to the widespread expectation that politics can or should "change life". Politics has to resist such a "religious", "utopian" or "messianic" expectation, which it cannot fulfil.

Several schemes are possible and not exclusive. Executive power may be limited by legislative power and both by an independent judiciary. Devolution or decentralisation sets institutional limits to central power. The principle of subsidiarity put forward by the EU means that central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed at a more local level. Everything better handled by local or intermediate powers should be devolved to them. Article 3 of the Swiss Constitution stipulates that "The cantons [that is, member States] are sovereign except to the extent that their sovereignty is limited by the Federal Constitution. They shall exercise all rights that are not delegated to the Confederation."

Interestingly, and importantly, delegation here is seen from the bottom up rather than from the top down – its most frequent meaning.

Rules and institutions are then created that will bind and limit power and provisions in case of abuse, excess or infringement are specified.

De-densification of power that allows for checks and independent assessment should be encouraged. Committees, for example, should be open and transparent and include representatives of all stakeholders, not just some. Consider how WHO in 2010 was forced to respond publicly to criticisms of its handling of the swine flu (H1N1) pandemic, including allegations that it declared the pandemic to boost the profits of the pharmaceutical industry.

Political mandates that are time bound and renewable also set limits to power. Although considerable energy and money are devoted to campaigning, this is still preferable to unlimited or indefinitely renewable mandates.

Civil society may also be seen as a limitation of political power. Civil rights and freedom of opinion, belief, expression are not advantageously encroached upon. Policies or programmes first developed and tested by civil society groups, associations, businesses or media may subsequently inspire or enrich government policy. Politicians may be tempted to view civil society as some extra-parliamentarian third party, but by listening to and learning from civil society political power comes out strengthened rather than threatened. Consultation enshrined in law or based on trust and civic commitment is the best wall against anarchy.

In direct democracy, on the other hand, the sovereignty of the people needs to be limited by human rights embodied in constitutional provisions or international commitments. There is no reason why the people should be considered infallible, any more than rulers.

Turning upside down Lord Acton's dictum, we may say that limited power tends to be less corrupt and more effective. True, the manner of limitation may vary between cultures: a traditional council of elders in

Africa may follow the same principles as a senate debate, although they are not laid down in writing. Claims and appeals may be received by an official mediator or just by a sensible minister.

1.2 Effectiveness

Governments aim to be effective. No rulers are happy to frustrate their own political purpose and destroy their ambitions. Political goals once set are supposed to be achieved. Efficiency is a basic political requirement, and effectiveness – reaching relevant targets at a reasonable cost – even better. In a country obsessed with security and control, police and intelligence services are given the means to be as efficient as possible. In regimes based on regular elections, incumbents try their best to show how promises made have been fulfilled and explain why external factors have hampered implementation, while opponents try to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the incumbent regime or their own prospects of doing better. Acceptance of regimes is fuelled partly by satisfaction, partly by fear of change. In both cases, a certain degree of expected effectiveness or feared ineffectiveness is referred to.

Effectiveness may spring from a charismatic leader supplemented by a smart planner. It may also result from professional and lean organisations focused on skills and competences, a culture shaped by commitment, results orientation and problem solving, an administration endowed with managerial capacities, professional skills and cost awareness, and good governance. Systems are not equivalent. Some perform better and more effectively. Some are suffocating under their own complexity. It belongs to political responsibility to secure effective systems, lean set-ups, and traceable processes and to bear the costs attached.

Effectiveness should not ignore the living conditions of the majority or the bottom half. Political effectiveness also requires some closeness between citizens and decision-makers.

Effectiveness may still vary between cultures: here brilliance and policy formulation are highly prized whereas there modesty and sobriety are at the top.

1.3 Accountability

Accountability means that political power is answerable for decisions taken, policies defined and implemented, in front of the whole nation, the parliament, an assembly of councillors, a smaller group of wealthy and influential families, its own constituency, or even the conspiracy team of coup makers. No political power can live in isolation. Reporting is a must. When a decision is disputed, it becomes essential to assess its pros and cons in a group or in a structured team; when implementation stalls or fails, the reasons for failure need to be identified and analysed. Then explanations are asked for. Those who have taken the decision are accountable.

Accountability may vary: it may be restricted to a narrow and confidential group of technocrats, wealthy families or coup makers; it may be open and public with information widely disseminated.[23] It may have to go into details or remain general. The point here is to improve accountability in terms of systems and culture. Transparency does not require that everything is put on government website systematically and in real time. Negotiations often require a degree of confidentiality and secrecy. Good governance supposes that responsibility and traceability are given high priority. Subsequently lessons can be drawn and political experience enriched. The quality of accountability is therefore critical in political life. Political power benefits more from identifying failures and successes than from masking its decisions and concealing responsibilities. Political risks are much higher in a culture of clouds and obscurity.

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[23] See the 2010 Open Budget Survey reflecting the quality of public accountability: *www.openbudgetindex.org*

Once political power accepts the limitation of power and sees this as positive and essential, once systems are lean, effective, and solution-oriented, once decision-makers are made accountable, then policies have much a better chance of being stable, accepted, and sustained, and risks anticipated. The road is then open for some kind of ethical politics. As Robert Kennedy once said, "The problem of power is how to achieve its responsible use rather than its irresponsible and indulgent use – of how to get men of power to live for the public rather than off the public."[24]

2   Justice as the Trunk of the Ethical Tree

Justice is at the heart of ethical politics and policies. It may embrace several meanings:

- Equity, equal access to resources, information, influence or equal capabilities
- Fair distribution of common and public wealth, assets, services etc.
- Same rules for everybody, impartiality
- Fair proportion between the gravity of crimes and their punishment
- Compliance with laws

Down through the centuries, philosophical schools have argued hotly whether the good, the right, the just or the useful should be seen as the chief end of politics – its main aim. In fact, political justice should pay tribute to each of these and prove itself inclusive.

Justice should also accommodate some part of magnanimity. A tit-for-tat politics driven by revenge does not lead to sound and sustainable developments.

Justice is never perfect, and the judiciary never fully independent. Nevertheless a reasonable level of justice works like a cement, binding a society together. Justice, or perceived justice, nurtures trust in the people into authority and political power and binds citizens to each other, once

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[24] Robert F. Kennedy, "I Remember, I Believe", in: *The Pursuit of Justice*, 1964

they feel that the rule of law will equally apply to all. In the absence of minimal justice, a society may fall apart "physically" or "morally". Basic respect is gone. Trust has vanished. Common goals are subverted by particular, vested interests. Society is close to suffocation and death.

Indian Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen calls us today back to basics: discussion about justice should not exhaust itself in dreaming of a justice related to an ideal but focus mainly on daily injustices – large or small – that should be eliminated. He advocates a dimension of justice that focuses on mitigating injustice and fostering the freedom of everyone to choose his/her own life: equity of capabilities.[25] People may tolerate some failures or judicial errors but will never trust a political power that promotes systematic arbitrariness and impunity, unnecessary cruelty, or excessive privilege.

Justice as reciprocity is the trunk of the ethical tree, allowing political regimes to find a sure foundation and people to live together peacefully in a pluralistic society. Impartiality, fairness and proportion are integral parts of reciprocity.

The trunk expands into six clusters of values, related to inward and outward perspectives and basic political requirements for social coherence.

The trunk sinks its roots into a soil made of three parts: limitation, efficiency, accountability.

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[25] Sen, Amartya, *The Idea of Justice*, Cambridge MA: Belknap Press, 2009.

3 The Ethical Tree
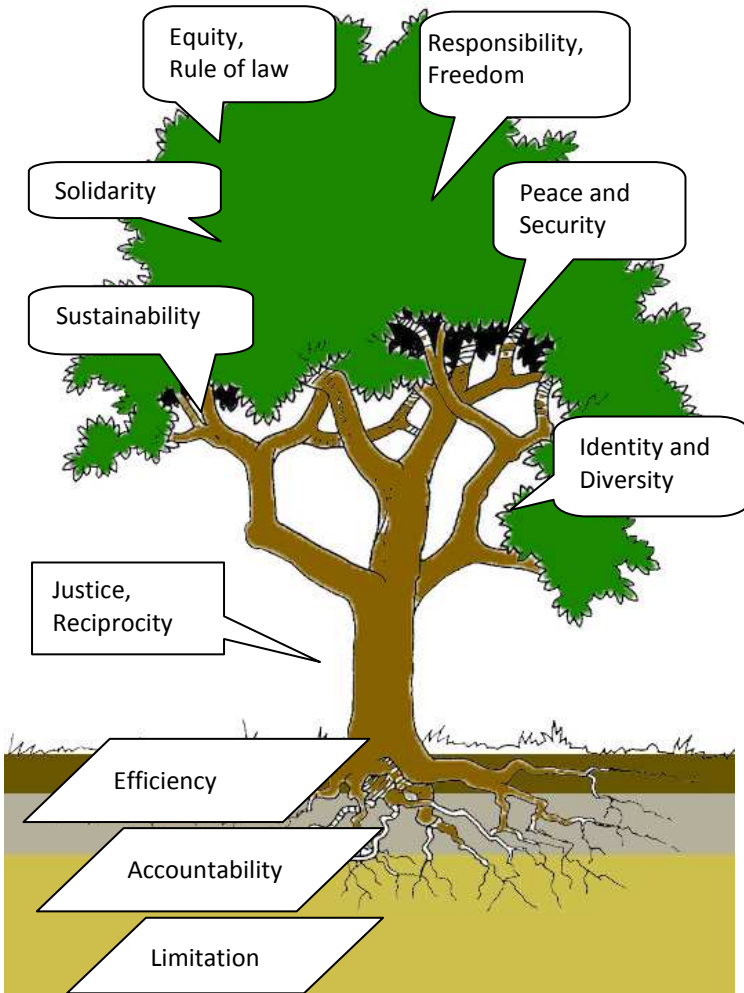
The term "values" is preferred here to "norms", in that values point to what is suitable, better, more effective – the order of the good. Values are the kind of principles people are not ready to compromise on. Norms refer to prescriptions, imperatives.

Furthermore "values" make conceptual reflection in political ethics more open to theories of game and decision, of preferences, of motivation, of investment and, last but not least, of conflict management.

3.1 The ethical hexagon – six clusters of cardinal values

3.1.1 Identity and diversity (features of modern sovereignty)

Politics and political culture retain a deep feeling for sovereignty and independence: witness the demand in political rhetoric to be master of one's own ship. It nurtures a feeling of pride in one's own history and culture. Sovereignty is of course important, but today it cannot but be pooled and limited by international agreements and global challenges.

Modern sovereignty is the ability to blend own interests with universal dimensions, internationally as well as domestically. More and more, diversity comes high on the political agenda. A state that wants to steer its own ship has to show a solid ability to manage a diversity of cultures and behaviours as a social asset, within a set of social reference values that keep society together, coherent and united. It is politically risky to focus on unity at the cost of diversity.

Healthy societies find equilibrium between centrifugal and centripetal drives. They live between the poles of identity and diversity.

Laws, policies and institutional frameworks secure diversity of opinions and freedom of expression, belief, rights to associations. They avoid discrimination or exclusion and minimise polarisation. They discourage turning ethnic groups, foreigners or specific trades (money lenders, outcastes) into scapegoats for any failures or problems and do not fall into the lethal traps of ethnic purity and populism. It is dangerous when national pride is deviated into chauvinism and a superiority complex. When social diversity is properly managed, avoiding disintegration at the cost of unity, then social creativity is enhanced and social sclerosis avoided. Solid results are yielded.

A clear set of agreed principles provides a sound basis to accommodate the diversity of faiths, customs, practices, as long as they do not undermine social coherence. Fundamentalisms of all kinds in many part of the world, which claim that truth needs no interpretation, represent a risk for a vibrant diversity.

Acknowledging that the global and local dimensions are closely linked, politics may dovetail patriotism and cosmopolitanism, domestic affairs and international concerns, traditional habits and respect of the other. It is indeed because most young states have been unable to dovetail inclusiveness and multiplicity and imagine a shared and limited power that they face domestic ethnic or religious conflicts and struggle with instability. Older states are not immune either, as witness the growth of populist and xenophobic groups.

3.1.2   Peace and security (along with liberty)

Politics and political culture intend to ensure peace and security in the interest of social coherence and coexistence with neighbours, restraining external threats and internal violence, repression and recurrent blackmail. Organised crime and ethnic purity are as big threats today as foreign armed forces, if not bigger. Peace is high on domestic as well as international agendas. The activities of criminal organisations are a threat to security and peace but also to equity, responsibility, sustainability. The instances of drug cartels that are making Mexico ungovernable or the Mafia onslaught on garbage collection, water distribution, real estate and transport speak for themselves. Blackmail, manipulating tendering processes, money laundering, etc. may throw a country off balance.

Laws, policies and institutional frameworks are meant to ease economic exchanges and trade, facilitate genuine consultation and constructive compromises, promote reconciliation through dialogue, reach peaceful settlements of national or international disputes through arbitration and negotiation, and encourage reciprocal respect and tolerance.

States claim a monopoly of force, not allowing particular groups to pressurise others violently and punishing such behaviour. They secure access to basic resources and resort to war as a last option. They make use of regulated and proportionate force against individuals or organisations that violate rules. This should not be done at the cost of liberty. When a state of emergency persists for decades, something in the state is rotten.

Prevention is given priority over cure. Preventive policies work through promoting equity and the rule of law, securing the rights of individual citizens and associations, demonstrating the advantages of respecting each other. Fair access to education and basic health services is understood as a critical contribution to peaceful coexistence.

3.1.3 Freedom and responsibility

Political freedom may be delineated in four different kinds:[26]

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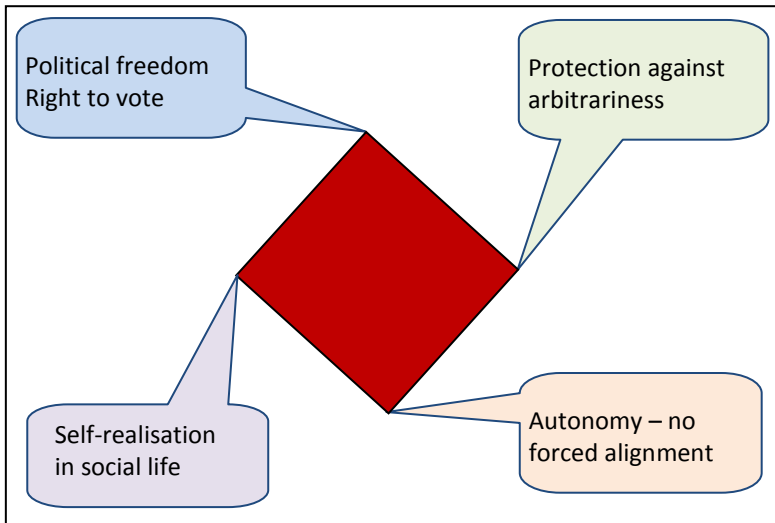
[26] Aron, Raymond, *Introduction à la Philosophie Politique* (a series of lectures delivered in 1952); see also the developments in *L'Opium des Intellectuels*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1955; ET: *The Opium of the Intellectuals*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1957.

Politics and political culture are designed to encourage initiatives without imposing any limitations other than accepting the consequences and paying for or repairing possible damage.

Laws, policies and institutional frameworks aim to secure the freedom to vote without any threats or blackmailing and keep arbitrariness at bay. But they should also foster free initiatives by individuals, associations, corporations, and even states, as well as keeping to an acceptable level group pressure by political parties, ethnic communities, and interest groups. Failure to do so can backfire.

When freedom is delinked from responsibility, principles such as "paying for consequences" or "the polluter pays" are undermined. Societies may shoot themselves in the foot, disintegrating into a myriad of small autocracies and losing their common ground. When responsibility is stressed without freedom, it ends up in weakening initiatives, creativity and imagination.

Political and administrative systems that are over-bureaucratic crush the initiative and encourage the passivity of citizens. Systems need to be lean and simple in order to easily trace back and report on responsibilities and to avoid constricting innovation.

Political philosophy backed by an ethics of responsibility states that

1. Responsibility and state sovereignty are two faces of the same coin
2. Dependence and submission are opposed to responsibility
3. States should limit their responsibilities to key domains, wherever possible delegate implementation, and focus on setting quality standards, accreditation and certification processes, so as to acknowledge initiatives taken by citizens and non-state players
4. Everything is allowed, unless prohibited, rather than the other way round
5. Self-rule is commendable to a large extent, until damages are placed on others

6. Delegation within clear contractual frameworks caters for enhanced responsibility

7. Supervisory bodies, as with sports referees, need to be guaranteed the largest independence from operators and vested interests[27]

8. Accountability at all levels and by every player is a must

On the other hand, when operating agencies are fragmented to the extreme, overall consistency and costs are bound to suffer: when roads are dug up four times, for power cables, then water system, then optic fibre, then drainage, tax payers are entitled to demand more coordination and savings.

3.1.4 Equity and the rule of law

Politics and political culture emphasise equity as a basic principle, although it is accepted that natural equality is relative. Equity relates to capability and access to services, information, resources.

Laws, policies and institutional frameworks are imbued with the principle of rule of law. Thereby is guaranteed that:

1. Law is similarly applicable to everyone, irrespective of gender, race, opinion, religious or political affiliation, socioeconomic position,

2. Access to resources, education, influence and information is equitably open,

3. Human rights are respected,

4. The rights of minorities are upheld,

5. Equal rights for lodging claims and appeals and equal treatment of those cases, claims, comments by administration and judiciary

Equity is essential if people are to live together peacefully in a pluralistic society.

Undue privileges, exemptions, bias and preferential treatment – in French "*passe-droit*", bypassing laws – fuel discouragement and re-

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[27] Recent examples in the financial and energy sectors (banks, nuclear plants) show how problematic it is when supervisory bodies have too-close ties with operators and their interests.

sentment that may turn into political demands on behalf of racial, ethnical, religious, regional identities. States have an interest in containing and correcting any systematic inequity.

Corruption appears as a breach of equity: merit is substituted by bribes or relations, fair competition is undermined, privileges strengthened, and impunity reserved for a select few.

3.1.5   *Solidarity without dependency*

Politics and political culture keep an eye on minority groups, living conditions in remote areas, groups that suffered past discrimination. Their status is an index of the present quality of society as well as its future coherence.

Poverty reduction is not moving at the expected pace and by 2015 the Millennium Development Goals will be far from completion. That shows how complex and difficult it is to dovetail aid and trade, macro-economy and micro-economy, formal and informal systems, support and initiative.

Laws, policies and institutional frameworks try to protect minorities and allow them to voice their concerns and their interests, to avoid a vicious spiral of ignorance, lack of dialogue, contempt, confrontation, raising the stakes, loss of trust, resort to violence, and finally repression. Tensions between minorities versus central power have been reported for centuries. Contemporary examples include the Basques in Spain, Catholics in Northern Ireland, Uighurs in China, and Tamils in Sri Lanka . These examples remind us how difficult it is to normalise relations within a framework of relative autonomy.

Smart solidarity is also required to correct North-South unbalances or find an equipoise between the generations in such domains as social insurances, pension systems, or unemployment. Domination by a majority group or a powerful elite, an age class, a clan or group of families, a club of the privileged, or a single party system runs the risk of political tension and a loss of enrichment through diversity. It is also exposed to

lasting confrontation because no trust has been created and no compromise recorded. In politics, diversity should be seen as a strength, building up immunity against one-sided sclerosis. Minorities must always understand at least two stands: the majority viewpoint and their own. When they do not turn in on themselves, they may often be more sensitive to issues and challenges than the majority in their society.

Solidarity may require positive discrimination under specific circumstances. However, clear time limits should be specified. When it lasts too long, positive discrimination may easily turn into privilege and feed a political culture of patronage, dependence and blackmail. When minorities feel respected, they may stand up, voice their claims and contribute as fully-fledged citizens, without any "inferiority complex" or violence.

Solidarity must not be at the expense of long-term equity and responsibility.

3.1.6   Sustainability versus productivity

Politics and political culture are coming to realise that the exploitation of natural resources inherited from our hunting, agricultural and industrial ancestors is reaching absolute limits and depletion is getting close to a point of no return. A long-term balance and respect towards the earth and the future is required. For the first time, responsibility towards future generations, that are not yet citizens and taxpayers, enters into political agendas. Accountability refers not only to present but also to future constituencies, with a certain tension between the two.

Climate justice is high on the international political agenda.

Laws, policies and institutional frameworks aim to curb overexploiting natural resources and overburdening the planet. They prepare for cautious and prudent management of public goods, stabilising the present disruptive relation between societies and nature so that future gen-

erations are not hampered in exercising their own responsibilities.[28] They also plan effective preventive and remedial measures to limit climate damage. Industrial countries and wealthy groups launch campaigns to cut living standards related to mobility, consumption, energy, water and soil. Frugality could become a political agenda! Even insurance companies make such pleas.

New models reconciling growth, sustainability and equity, under the motto of the "green economy", need to be actively explored. A mix of informative, preventive, mitigating, restoring programmes needs to be designed and implemented. States, non-state actors, businesses, and individuals are called to work together in the same direction.

Current international tensions about arable cropland acquisitions, water claims, strategic mineral resources are a warning signal. If nothing is done, tensions will increase and may end up in armed conflict.

There are markers that should warn us to go further. Biodiversity is one such marker: it matters not just for the sake of diversity but predominantly because bio-systems that are diverse provide natural caring services such as water purification, strengthening resistance to sicknesses and epidemics. When biodiversity falls, the quality of those services falls also. Those services are so far free but should be "monetised" to realise their importance. The ecological carbon footprint is another marker: it measures the consequences of living standards on renewable resources and energy, for a person or a country, but also for a product, an industry, travel, services.

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[28] "Sustainability is about stabilising the currently disruptive relationship between earth's two most complex systems – human culture and the living world." Hawken, Paul, *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming* (New York: Viking, 2007), p. 172.

3.2 Ethical hexagon – rating and ranking
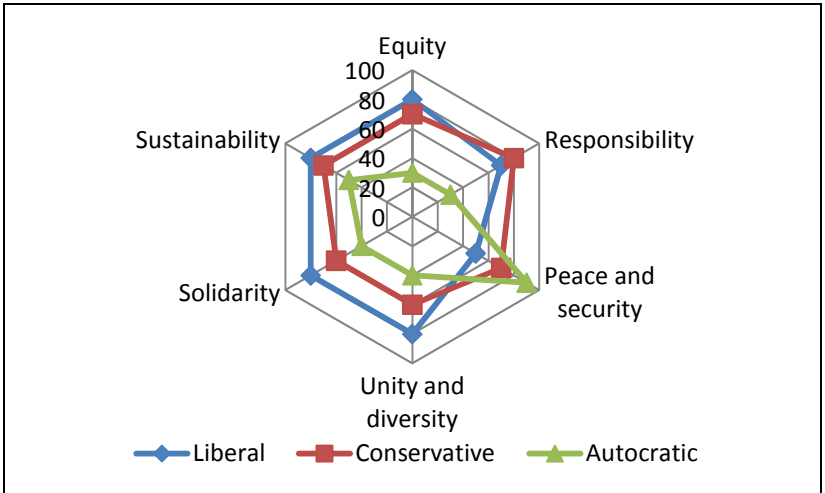
The six clusters organised as an "ethical hexagon" are summarised on this radar chart that helps to visualise the six cardinal values and their respective rating and ranking of achievements – depicted here indicatively – as well as to gauge overall balance.

The hexagon shape reminds that six cardinal values form a system. Each one influences the five others and the other way round.

Marks here set are indicative but display the conventional wisdom that autocratic regimes are stressing security and sovereignty rather than solidarity or equity. Conservatives usually emphasise responsibility, security and sovereignty whereas liberals pay higher attention to solidarity and equity. It runs around respective poising of each rather than some "either or.

Rating has to be based on a set of measurable indicators for each of the six values. It is preferable to focus on some precise and relevant indicators rather than too many. Steering a sailing ship should not require the complex on-board monitor an Airbus requires. It may prove politically stimulating to organise platforms where assessments are ex-

changed between diverse players and then consolidated. Wide divergences in ratings may serve to identify basic conflicts of position and assess potentials for compromise. Indicators may be differently selected, and the selection openly debated.

The approach submitted hereunder refers to global issues and national challenges. Sources need to be selected so as to reflect those two. The sources here specified are institutions that operate worldwide and can compare country-specific ratings. Local or national challenges require data collected by local, national or regional institutions. The selection of domains and key factors is of course open to debate, as it is far from being neutral.

Cardinal values	Domain	Key factors	Institutions
Identity and diversity	Sovereignty	Pooled sovereignty Alliances	European Union, African Union, Mercosur UN General Assembly[29]
	Religion Belief	Freedom Protection Pluralism	UN Human Rights Council special rapporteur US Freedom Report[30]
	Cultural diversity	Bilingual skills Tolerance and change	PISA Surveys World Values Survey[31]
Peace and security	Defence	Percentage of national budget	National statistics SIPRI[32]
	Police	*Habeas corpus*[33] Duration of lawful arrest	Carnegie Foundation Open Society Foundation[34]
	Violence	Crime	National statistics UN Office on Drugs and Crime International Committee

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[29] *www.europa.eu*; *www.au.int*; *www.mercosur.int*; *www.un.org*
[30] *www.ohchr.org/en/issues/freedomreligion*; *www.freedomhouse.org*
[31] *www.pisa.oecd.org*; *www.worldvaluessurvey.org*
[32] *www.sipriyearbook.org*
[33] The right to challenge arrest and protection against arrest without charge
[34] *www.carnegiecouncil.org*; *www.soros.org*

			of the Red Cross/Crescent[35]
Freedom and responsibility	Freedom of expression, opinion	Access to information	Reporters without Borders Open Society Foundation Freedom House[36]
	Business entrepreneurial creativity	Creation of small and medium enterprises Global competitiveness Economic freedom	World Bank (IFC) EBRD /World Bank BEEPS Commonwealth Business Council World Economic Forum Heritage Foundation[37]
	Citizenship	Social creativity	Afrobarometer Asian Barometer Eurobarometer[38]
Equity	Economic disparity	GINI trend Labour market Workers rights	UNDP Human Development Reports ILO GAPS[39]
	Corruption	Corruption perceptions index	Transparency International Global Integrity UNDP Oslo Governance[40]
	Civil liberties	Appeals rights Citizen rights Ombudsman	National NGOs Civicus Citizen Access[41]
	Human rights	Enforcement Violations	UN Human Rights Council International Law Observer[42]
	Gender fairness	Gender equality Economic empowerment	UNESCO International Centre for Research on Women[43]

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[35] *www.unodc.org*; *www.icrc.org*

[36] *www.en.rsf.org*; *www.soros.org*; *www.freedomhouse.org*

[37] *www.gcfg.org/ifcext*; *www.doingbusiness.org*; *www.ebrd.com/pages/research*; *www.cbcglobal.org*; *www.weforum.org*; *www.heritage.org*

[38] *www.afrobarometer.org*; *www.asianbarometer.org*; *www.ec.europa.eu/public_opinio*

[39] *hdr.undp.org*; *gaportal.org/global-indicators/gaps-workers'-rights*; *www.ilo.org*

[40] *www.transparency.org*; *www.globalintegrity.org*; *www.undp.org/oslocentre*

[41] *www.civicus.org*; *www.adviceguide.org.uk*

[42] *www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/upr*; *www.internationallawobserver.eu*

Solidarity	Minority rights	Rights protection Affirmative action	Minority Rights Group International UN Human Rights Council[44]
	Develop-ment aid	Diversity of partners Untied aid	OECD Development Cooperation Directorate UNDP World Bank[45]
	Disparities	Regional disparity Migration	UNESCAP, UNECA International Organisation for Migration[46]
	Conse-quences of resource ex-ploitation	Climate change Ecological foot-print	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change World Wildlife Fund Global Footprint Net-work[47]
Sustain-ability	Pollution	Carbon market: volume, outco-mes, exchanges	World Business Council for Sustainable Develop-ment World Bank[48]
	Biodiversity	Biodiversity index and trend	Convention on Biodiver-sity World Wildlife Fund[49]
	Social involvement	Agenda 21 initiatives	UN Division for Sustain-able Development[50]

Regional and local fine-tuning is of course needed and local sources therefore mobilised.

Scoring adequately on all six values

Political power may face a big risk when it fails to reach a minimal threshold on all six values – as with fragile states – or on some of the six. A satisfactory average score is not sufficient. When outstanding

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[43] *www.unesco.org*; *www.icrw.org*

[44] *www.minorityrights.org*; *www.ohchr.org*

[45] *www.oecd.org*; *www.undp.org*; *www.worldbank.org*

[46] *www.unescap.org*; *www.uneca.org*; *www.iom.int*

[47] *www.ipcc.ch*; *www.assets.panda.org*; *www.footprintnetwork.org*

[48] *www.wbcsd.org*; *www.worldbank.org*

[49] *www.cbd.int*; *wwf.panda.org*

[50] *www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21*; *www.bgci.org/global*

marks on some values are cheek by jowl with extremely poor rates on others, a regime is strongly unbalanced and therefore at risk. Better to perform adequately on each of the six values that to focus on only some of the six. Better to score within a range of, let us say, 35and 75 on the six values than between 10 and 90. Imbalance is not offset by high marks on some values only.

Less important is a snapshot view, or absolute numbers, than the overall trend and development over time, the percentage change against previous years.

Competition among cardinal values. Tradeoffs. Dilemmas

Politicians and citizens every day face situations where values conflict with one other, each claiming priority. Austerity versus growth, reduction of emissions versus transport or heating, and so on.

On the environment, we need a permanent trade-off between sustainability and solidarity, responsibility, equity, security and identity. Addressing disasters caused by climatic changes cannot avoid setting priorities i) between prevention (most effective), mitigation (most urgently needed) and adaptation (most helpful) and ii) between affected flooded or arid regions. The dilemmas faced are serious. Behavioural changes in living standards need to be balanced by visible progress at global levels. What should come first?

Who dies first? Who do we let die first? We need just imagine a competition between three low-lying countries – Fiji, Bangladesh and the Netherlands – to realise how sharp this question is! Should selected criteria take into account the will and the capacity of peoples to repel threats or recover from damage, as well as their chances of success and the costs?

Possible solutions are emerging through innovative forms of institutionalised solidarity: international funds for risks, private insurance

schemes, bilateral help, may reduce the dilemmas but cannot eliminate them.

In trade, the Doha Development Round negotiations are stalled. Countries are torn between equity (free access for agricultural products, no hidden subsidies and no free copies) and responsibility. Security, justice and sustainability will not be reached without settling the first trade-off; on the other hand, economic wars once regulated could remain peaceful.

Domestic conflicts, with some international implications – such as in Kashmir, the Basque country, the Great Lakes, Ireland, Sri Lanka – switch between security, identity and diversity, and freedom and responsibility, to the point where equity is at stake. The more security is prioritised, the more equity and solidarity suffer. Then it becomes a daunting task to re-establish trust. Suspicion becomes pervasive, spoiling each initiative of dialogue. Accommodating minorities and resolving ethnic tensions requires equity and security but also unity and diversity to be secured. Some local competences, behaviours and values cannot be bypassed, others that can be accommodated.

Acquiring land in other countries – a growing phenomenon – is a way for a country to secure future access to food or energy resources, taking sustainability seriously. It conflicts with sovereignty and may undermine equity with local inhabitants, mostly peasants. Processed without consultation and out of any agreed framework, – for instance, long lease instead of acquisition, jobs and benefits for the local population – such arrangements have proved politically risky. Madagascar provides a clear illustration.

Moral dilemmas are the daily bread of politics. Efficiency versus freedom. Solidarity versus responsibility. There is no point in denying this. The critical question is how to proceed. Some "ethical methodology" on how to handle such dilemmas needs to be explored.

Arguments about social security systems point to a clash between equity and solidarity: younger generations may well have to pay twice, for their parents as well as for themselves later on. Health insurance issues pivot between responsibility, equity and solidarity. Effectiveness and financial sustainability lie on the horizon.

Dilemmas between action and inaction. Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan analysed the genocides in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia – admittedly different in scale - and showed how terrible the consequences of inaction can be in the face of mass murder. The dilemma lies between quick and efficient action and the need for international consensus and clear legal authority. Is it legitimate for a regional organisation to use force without a UN mandate? Is it permissible to let gross and systematic violations of human rights continue unchecked? The responsibility to protect is a recently stated principle that needs greater and more committed backing.

Political decisions are quite often caught between efficiency (speedy processes under strong leadership) and legitimacy (a lengthy process of consultation and negotiation). Decision-makers prepare themselves to be blamed in case of failure. People would much prefer to eat their cake and have it. Dilemmas are not liked! They remind us of limitation.

Some politicians would prefer to outsource responsibility to the private sector. Some citizens would prefer not having to choose. Responsibility cannot be abandoned. It should be taken up, and then others may be called to join in. Passing the buck is no long-term solution.

Ethics is at the level of soft power (influence, incentive), and not of hard power (military force). Working with the ethical hexagon does not suppress dilemmas but helps us to work them out in a responsible and transparent manner.

5

Values, Interests and Risks:
An Uneasy Encounter

1 Wishful Thinking, Hampering, Promoting

"Politics is about nothing but interests": such a statement is widely made to explain the purpose of politics and justify decisions taken. No surprise that realpolitik makes it the flag of its belief. Pragmatic politicians are also keen to weigh pros and cons and consider mainly interests and risks. British economist Adam Smith is often called the advocate of self-interest and self-love, discarding any other motives. It should not be forgotten that he did consider sympathy, generosity, public spirit as alternative reasons to justify public and private decisions.

Values are usually considered as the cherry on the cake, an ornament of secondary importance that does not harm but does not help either. Some sceptics refer to values as window dressing.

Values are often seen as wishful thinking, a "would be nice" followed by a big "but" and "let us now go back to business and reality!" Pragmatic politicians like to refer to values in fair weather but revert to interests only as soon as the wind starts blowing. Cynics see values as a tool for communication designed by spin doctors to camouflage political motives and conceal real decisions.

In some cases, an appeal to values may hamper or even harm the political process and confuse or spoil decision-making. Decisions taken in the name of protecting or restoring democracies – such as the military coup after the Algerian elections in December 1991, or the US invasion of Iraq – are eloquent enough. Values de-linked from political feasibility

may encourage political idealism that will end up in frustrations or lasting conflicts.

Let us quote here, however, the nineteenth-century economist and philosopher John Stuart Mill, who declared: "One person with a belief is equal to a force of ninety-nine who have only interests."

Three considerations may be of help to sort out the relevance and positioning of values with respect to interests:

1. When interests are in conflict, – for instance, when soaring public health costs compete with budgetary constraints – how, by whom and on which criteria is a decision taken? On clout? on votes? In many cases, arbitration between interests is done implicitly or explicitly in the name of values.

2. When discussions are caught up in technicalities and ignore power relations or exempt them from questioning, making values explicit may help to call a spade a spade and focus on what should justify this choice rather than another.

3. When long-term interests, that are not yet tangible and paying off electorally, are taken into consideration, are they not akin to values? Some people treat values as equivalent to interests seen in the long run, as they cannot be determined by a chain of petty interests. A far-sighted perspective is required, rooted in values.

True interests are always key elements in political decision-making. Real costs and foreseeable damage cannot be downplayed. But their relation to values is not an "either-or". Both interests and values are to taken into account. The "only" stressed by Mill rebukes any kind of exclusivity.

Values add value all along the decision chain down to final implementation. They enhance arbitration and strategic decision-making, as in this Australian example:

Australia, once the third cotton producer in the world, realised the cost of water – 1kg of cotton needs 11,000 litres of water – and the com-

ing scarcity of water in inlands: between 2001/02 and 2006/07, the cotton crop fell from 3,401,000 to 1,171,765 bales, a 61% reduction because of insufficient water! In 2007 Australia took a strategic decision to set clear limits to production, go for sustainability, and develop recycling methodologies. Negotiations between the government and Australian cotton referred to interests and facts but could not ignore values. Interest that takes scarcity into account gets close to a value such as sustainability. Values have been built into incentives packages as part of the Australian deal.

When interests become less vested, less particular, they turn into the "common interest" and into values. As in the case of social security systems – pensions, health insurance, unemployment, the handicapped – long-term interests are operating as values such as sustainability, security, equity.

In politics, values without interests are as dangerous as interests without values. Both are necessary. There exists a creative tension between the two.
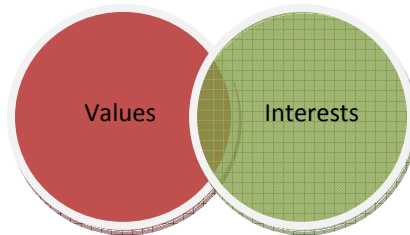
Politics and ethics do not merge but intersect.

2 Consistency rather than Alignment

Full alignment between values and policies is never possible. Political programmes, political instruments never fully overlap with values. Delinking them is also unsatisfactory in terms of effectiveness.

What is required is overall consistency allowing for some deviation – as with a constitution that provides guidance for law-making without imposing the path and the tools. Diverse political programmes may call on similar values. Convergence, coherence, consistency are key motives.

Stating clearly interests *and* risks *and* values is not unproblematic, but it is to be preferred to values projected without regard for interests or interests projected without regard for values.

Contradicting values proclaimed by values implemented can backfire. In April 2009, UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown anticipated pressure and fired a senior advisor, who had devised and prepared messages aimed at discrediting opposition leaders, on the basis of false allegations regarding personal orientation and private relationships. The prime minister recognised the political risk of duplicity.

The Durban Review Conference, convened in Geneva, April 2009, was meant to approve a document seen as a valuable convergence platform between Western and Muslim countries, based on shared values. During a provocative speech by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran, many Western diplomats left the room. Unlike UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon, they failed to confront the speech. Concessions made by Muslim countries were disregarded, publicity and media appearances overplayed, and attention to statements made by the delegates coming next undermined. Their attitude compounded the difficulties of further progress.

Convergences between politics and ethics remain fragile and never fully secured.

Setting ethical platforms for easing convergences between conflicting parties is badly needed nowadays and will be addressed in chapter 8: cases and issues.

6

Three Dimensions of Politics and Political Ethics

1 Symbolic, Framework, Management

Politics may be seen as a vector with three dimensions.

The symbolic dimension has to do with imaginary representations of power and authority, ruler's qualities of age and gender, national identity, flags and anthems but also of governing style, the manner in which conflicts and conflict-resolution is envisaged and perceived, foreigners or migrants, left and right. Political "culture" includes but is not limited to this symbolic dimension.

A second dimension has to do with the regulatory framework for political processes. It is composed of a principal or constitutional frame, of laws, rules of the game and even customary uses. It shapes politics but may sometimes be mere window dressing, lip service or political ritual, far from concrete processes.

The third dimension has to do with day-to-day management, setting priorities, settling conflicts, negotiating tradeoffs, processing and implementing policies and decisions, securing and delivering services, taking risks, mobilising resources, interacting with non-state actors.

Political failures are often attributable to overestimating, downplaying or ignoring one of those three dimensions. It is not unusual to mix them up in order to play on people's emotions. Recent migration policies provide an impressive instance of how the symbolic, regulatory principles and real behaviour interact (see below chapter 8.5.3).

Principles of Politics
- Constitutional framework
- Rights
- Limitation
- Territory and resources management
- System: democracy, autocracy...

Symbolic Politics
- Reverence or de-monisation
- Consensual or abso-lute
- Interpretation of history
- Foes and friends: perceptions

Implementation of Politics
- Conflict of interests, war
- Priority setting; arbitration
- Taxes, minorities…
- Long-term/short-term

The symbolic dimension exerts an even deeper influence than gener-ally recognised. It is usually not addressed within political management. Projected images of a country as like a family often hide a paternalistic and autocratic ruling style or downplay conflict to the detriment of weaker or minority players. Homogeneity is then emphasised beyond

actual diversity. Symbols and principles may diverge. For historical reasons, symbols and rituals that belong mostly to monarchy may coexist with a well-oiled parliamentarian democracy, serving its citizens. Symbols of autocratic power may be blended with long-established practices of negotiation. Not losing face in a public negotiation may well be followed by technical compromises that display a much greater and unexpected flexibility. A participatory and bottom-up democratic culture at local level may coexist with heavily centralised and top-down systems in the capital.

With respect to the symbolic level, a sound ethical approach has to drive out any pretence that political power is unlimited. It has to ensure that real problems are not handled only at symbolic level.

Set of laws and rules may be approved, without resulting in real changes and actual decisions at management level. For instance, a country may well serve the citizens in an appropriate manner and enjoy their trust without availing of explicit public service law, whereas a country with a detailed law on civil servants may continue to behave with arrogance, mistrust and even contempt. A country making loud claims to equity and solidarity may well include in its parliament or government fewer women or representatives of minority groups than other countries that do without emphatic declarations. More legislation is not necessary the way to improving actual implementation.

Still, basic principles of freedom of association and opinion, when supported by an independent judiciary, do change situations and concrete behaviour, as evidenced for instance in South Africa on the verge of dismantling apartheid.

Consequently, it is essential to reckon with all three dimensions. Reducing politics to a technocratic alliance between political principles and managerial implementation – ignoring the symbolic dimension – may result in unpleasant surprises. Dovetailing symbols and management – setting principles to one side – may pave the way for populism.

Resistance to change is often due to a confusion: for instance, minor improvements in the quality of administrative services are linked to general principles of public administration but fail because the symbolic and imaginary dimension is neglected, while conservatism is rooted in and may appeal to that dimension.

Political ethics demands that we acknowledge all three dimensions, recognising their limits, and not mixing them up. To ignore or play down any of the three dimensions is bound to backfire. To treat symbolic questions as operational or managerial, or conversely, is also counterproductive. Symbols, once unleashed, are difficult to control. Trial and error at the operational level is politically less risky than tinkering with symbols.

In short, an ethical politics calls for

1. not downplaying or even silencing one dimension: all three are equally important although diverse,
2. not confusing dimensions, so that each problem is handled at the proper level or levels
3. aiming at a flexible and effective consistency among the three dimensions, rather than mechanical alignment, and limiting gaps and inconsistencies
4. pragmatic solutions based on limiting power, as in the case of migration, for example, where neither the host country judiciary nor community arbitration tribunals should claim unlimited competence

2   Categories of Player: Diverging Ethical Perspectives

Politics is mainly the responsibility of the state: policymakers, rulers and administration. But in governing modern societies, market and civil society are more and more influential, from local to international levels. Private sector businesses and organised associations enjoy an increasing say and are able to advance their own interests and values. Jan Kooiman

speaks of "interactive governance", to emphasise the interactions be-
tween these different social entities.

What kind of interactions? To what extent is influence getting close
to quasi-binding decision? Under whose arbitration and according to
which criteria? According to law, government, legislature and admini-
stration should retain the leadership. In fact, many encroachments by
business or NGOs are recorded, whether through direct pressure or in-
fluence.

Sharing values is therefore critical if interactive governance is to
serve the common interest.
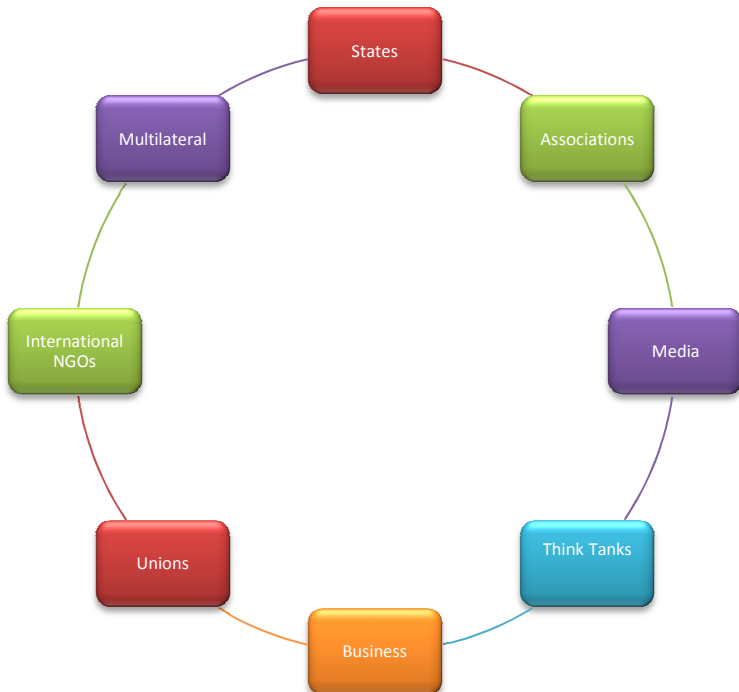
Patterns of interaction are open, complex, and volatile. Governments
may have short- or long-term perspectives. Corporations may seek quick
profits or strive to secure resources and markets in the long term. Civil

society may demand an emotional quick fix or embody an awareness of long term-sustainability. International organisations may have far-sighted objectives or become the plaything of conflicting parties.

To depict different actors as good or evil, realist or idealist does not help. Critical is to keep open the diversity of perspectives and interests and go for compromises without downplaying or dismissing one set of interests. Inclusiveness is a modern political value.

Even natural systems are players, silent but real. Silent in that they need human advocates to voice their interests and demands; real because melting ice, desertification of overexploited soils, depleted marine zones send a physical and undisputable "message", demanding a reaction.

Governments should listen before setting criteria, allowing weight to each set of interests so as to bring the overall system into balance. They should also call the main stakeholders around the table to identify the problems and elicit solutions. For global issues, multilateral institutions along with international NGOs have to play a convening role.

Instances to promote interactive governance are many and various, and their ethical standpoints diverse.

- At the international level:
  - The UN Climate Change Conference, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the WTO (Doha Development Round)…
  - International business councils and trade unions
  - International NGOs (International Committee of Red Cross, World Wildlife Fund, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Transparency International, Amnesty International, Médecins sans Frontières, Forest Stewardship Council, World Economic Forum...)
  - Universities
  - Religions, faiths
  - International courts

- *At the national level:*
  - o Government and administration
  - o Judiciary and courts
  - o Political parties
  - o Business associations, trade unions, NGOs, citizen coalitions, consumer movements…
  - o Ad-hoc and instant communities of the like-minded: hunger strikes, processions, protests
- *At the local level*
  - o Local authorities
  - o Businesses, NGOs and community-based organisations
  - o Instant communities of the like-minded
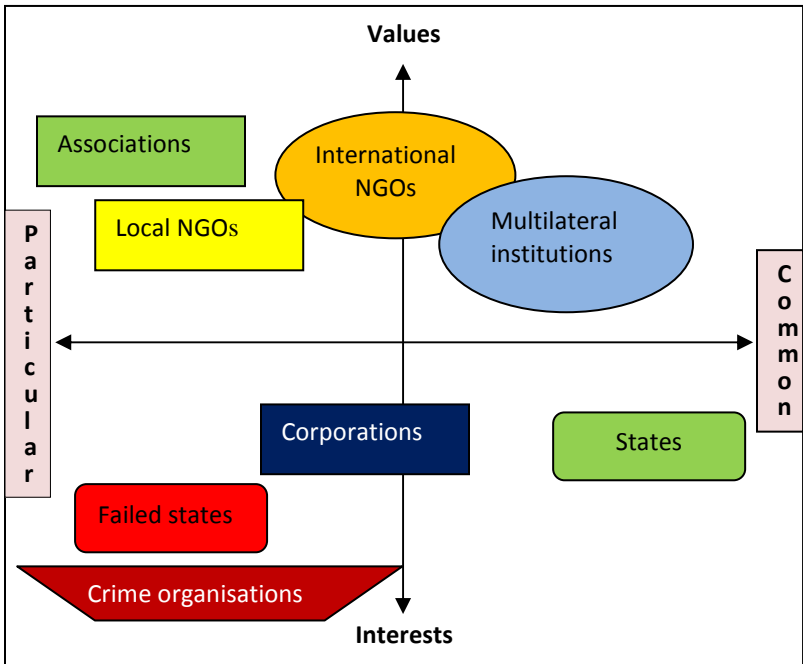
On the x axis: particular versus common; on the y axis: values versus interests

Each player will articulate specific values and interests, with more or less emphasis on particular or vested interests and common and global interests.

UN agencies, international bodies and NGOs focus mainly on values, principles, norms. Their growth helps to explain why ethics is given a higher significance, as in the words of the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to the UN General Assembly:

"I have called the report "In Larger Freedom", because I believe those words from our Charter convey the idea that development, security and human rights go hand in hand. In a world of inter-connected threats and opportunities, it is in each country's self-interest that all of these challenges are addressed effectively. The cause of larger freedom can only be advanced if nations work together; and the United Nations can only help if it is remoulded as an effective instrument of their common purpose."[51]

States for their part look to their own interests but begin to understand that sharing values and sticking to them is also in their interests, internationally as well as domestically.

Citizens advocate for their interests and on behalf of values.

Public-private partnerships and multi-stakeholder approaches are more and more proving relevant and effective.

Compromises reached through interaction should be equitable and sustainable – balancing advantages and risks, costs and benefits, as a whole as well as for each party. Feasibility and accountability also enjoy priority. Justice as a whole is *the* reference, and fair is better than biased.

Globalisation creates an opportunity for political ethics. The growing number and diversity of stakeholders requires the establishment of platforms for negotiations based on justice and its associated values.

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[51] Secretary-General's statement to the General Assembly on his report *In Larger Freedom*, New York, March 2005: *www.un.org/apps/sg/printsgstats.asp?nid=1355*

As Kooiman has convincingly shown in the case of red tuna and the need to put a ceiling on the catch, the "governability" of a social sector or a complex system turns on a convergence between three analytical components: "the system-to-be-governed, its governing system and their governance interactions".[52] Convergence results from the interaction between key players, within set rules and with interventions by referees (as in team sports, where rules, organising bodies, referees, coaches and players build a whole system).

Such systems of governance shelter conflicting interests. Settling such conflicts of interest calls for new processes of value-based governance. The complexity and unpredictability of outcomes, consequences and impact means that all the players need a seat at the table. If agreements consist only in a balance of interests, they are bound to be short-lived. Sustainable solutions cannot but rely on shared values, shaped through a process run by actors respecting governing rules.

3 Ethical Values versus Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and subsequent UN Conventions are turning ethical norms into legal rights that may be brought before a court. Core human rights focusing on civic and political rights (freedoms of opinion, expression, belief, and association) as well as the next generation of economic and social rights are built on a solid ethical foundation. They focus on individual rights but require political will and backing.

In the 1990s, the universality of human rights was severely threatened by cultural relativism. Calls by regional clusters of states that human rights be interpreted through regional cultural lenses have been seen as largely opportunistic. Claiming to celebrate and defend regional cultural identities against Western dominance, states were actually try-

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[52] Kooiman, Jan, *Governing as Governance*, London: Sage, 2003.

ing to limit individual rights and expand their own room for manoeuvre. Such hidden agendas were clearly exposed in 2011 by the Arab Spring. The slogans of the widespread uprising in Arab countries can be interpreted as a one-to-one translation of universal human rights, along with a strong desire that power be less concentrated in the hands of authoritarian states.

Political ethics is of course much larger than human rights because it also encompasses political decisions, international pressures, and institutions that do not resort directly but indirectly to individual rights. It also has to secure an environment that is larger than human rights as such, an environment that is conducive to self-realisation, keeping social group pressure or pressure from rulers and administration at a level where freedom and responsibility are not undermined. Still human rights are the core of political ethics, its red line. States have a long-term interest in laying down proper foundations – a legal framework, political atmosphere and culture where conflicts are handled through peaceful confrontation – but also in setting up a judiciary, institutions and social infrastructure that will be able to implement policies inspired by human rights – basic health provision, education, freedom of opinion, elections and so on.

The UN Human Rights Council on Human Rights, launched in 2007, is putting pressure on states by subjecting the human rights record of all UN member states to periodic public review. Human security, crimes against humanity, welfare societies introduce human rights as a new political horizon. Means of pressure and mechanisms of peer review are developed.[53] International NGOs such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International, the International Coalition against Torture, Terre des Hommes, use diverse tools and communica-

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[53] Lefort, Claude, *Essais sur le politique*, Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1986, 33-62; ET, *Democracy and Political Theory*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988.

tion strategies with a common goal to denounce abuses and secure respect for human rights.

Signing on values does not mean fully abiding by them. The laws of war have been enshrined into Conventions, starting with Hague Convention in 1899, Geneva four Conventions and three Protocols (1949). The ICRC has played a leading role in bringing states to the table. But ratification does not mean actual full-fledged implementation. The chasm still seems quite wide between its values and war theatres.

Values have not proved able to change world over night. But it is undisputable that international guidelines have been set, opinion leaders felt backed, some mentalities changed, and the ground set for International Criminal Courts. The approval in Geneva on 9 Nov 2010 of a Code of conduct for private security companies involved in war-torn areas is a recent instance.

When President Obama in 2009 decided to put an end to an interrogation method called "water boarding"– a euphemism for "torture" – was he opposing human rights value to national security interests? Was he expressing doubts about the efficiency of torture based on large evidence? Was he trying to improve the image of the USA in the world? He was certainly not trying to advocate values at the expense of interests.

4 Values versus Governance

4.1 Basics

Governance is a professional, effective and accountable way of managing collectively and making decisions throughout the whole chain of designing, planning, implementing, and evaluating. Originally developed by private enterprise, it has been applied since the 1990s to political and administrative processes and institutions.

Governance in this political sense consists of the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised. This includes the

process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to formulate and implement sound policies effectively; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interaction.

Political governance is an effective, fair and accountable way of managing four main political domains: i) designing policies, strategies and programs, ii) running and managing public administration, iii) specifying decision-making processes, iv) organising elections, consultations, and votes.

Key features of optimal governance in politics are as follows:

- Following vision and strategies rather than rules
- Steering rather than rowing
- Funding outcomes not inputs
- Earning as well as spending
- Empowering communities versus delivering services
- Decentralising authority
- Encouraging competition rather than monopoly
- Meeting customer rather than bureaucratic needs
- Preventing rather than curing
- Leveraging the market place rather than spending on public programmes[54]

It requires, not necessarily a smaller state, but a better state, thank to a focus on sovereignty domains, key roles of the state in a given context, and a significant amount of delegation and outsourcing.

Governance does not question the legitimacy and reach of political power but focuses on its way of operating and on securing quality. Governance is downstream of political ethics, focusing on one part of the stream.

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[54] Adapted from Osborne, David/ Gaebler Ted, *Reinventing Government, How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1992.

4.2 Patterns of governance

Management styles may be divided roughly into three patterns: top-down, collaborative, self-governing:

1. The top-down style focuses on instructions set by the head: laws and policies are made compulsory. Its purpose is efficiency. Hierarchy is given priority.

2. The collaborative style is based on consultation and negotiation by the main stakeholders who decide together how to specify the rules of the game. Responsibility, mobilisation of resources, delegation, sustainability are foregrounded and given preference. Examples: Private-public partnerships, the UNDP COMPACT programme

3. Self-rule is found in many trades or corporations as rules or codes of conduct set by the professionals themselves. Its purpose is to be operational and easily monitored.

In most contexts, there is a dominant and driving style, mixed in varying measures with the other two.

What are relevant for ethics are not styles as such, but patterns, and the way these take cardinal values into account. When negotiations are inclusive and a certain protection of minority groups is secured (solidarity), then an optimum is reached.

4.3 Ethics and governance

The ethical dimension of governance has to do with effectiveness and accountability, and the philosophy of delegation pays tribute to the limitation of power. Thus the three ethical prerequisites are taken into account. Good governance aims at reflecting justice in the public sector, the rule of law, equity and equitable access to resources, capacities and opportunities. It cannot ignore security, sustainability and solidarity.

Comprehensive governance is today at the heart of different international measurements.

Scheme	World Bank Worldwide	Mo Ibrahim Africa	OECD Government at a Glance	Global Integrity
Domains of achievement	Voice and Accountability	Safety and rule of law	Capacity to address complex problems and strategic challenges	
	Political stability and absence of violence	Participation and human rights	Efficiency	
	Government effectiveness	Sustainable economic opportunities	Transparency and accountability	Integrity Accountability Citizen oversight
	Regulatory quality	Human development		
	Rule of law			Anti-corruption laws Implementation
	Control of corruption			Citizen access to laws and information

The many systems – World Bank governance indicators, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the OECD Governance index, the Global Integrity index and others (see Appendix III) – focus on specific aspects, domains and performances.[55] This diversity is positive in allowing us to compare results and avoiding ideological monopoly.

Underlying these different criteria are the values of political ethics, not measured as such but serving as founding stones.

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[55] Global Integrity Indicators is an independent organisation established in Washington DC in 2001 that does not measure corruption as such but only assesses the existence and implementation of laws, regulations, and institutions designed to curb corruption, as well as the access that average citizens have to these mechanisms.

Governance devoid of political ethics heads towards a dead end. A crystal-clear instance is the fight against corruption. Experience shows that fighting corruption takes a decade of strenuous effort to reach a point of no return point, although success is always fragile. It means mobilising a range of stakeholders: the government, the judiciary, businesses, media, NGOs and civil society, churches or other religious communities, opinion leaders, and individual citizens all working in the same direction. A fundamental prerequisite, a sine qua non, is a shared platform of ethical values, encompassing individual, social and political ethics. .

Good governance does not limit itself to fighting corruption, of course, and political ethics is wider and deeper than governance, but political ethics should serve as its driving and inspiring force.

4.4   Institutions

Good governance and justice are carried out through institutions. Institutions are never neutral, but even just institutions do not necessarily ensure social justice, as Amartya Sen reminds us.

International institutions focus more and more on setting standards, surveying and comparing performance. They encourage peer reviews and highlight the need for approaches that are global and inclusive, interdisciplinary, interactive and involving many stakeholders.

Institutions need some consistency between their core mission, their competences, their organisational structure and processes, their resources and their culture.

If the office of ombudsman is deprived of resources or can handle only a small part of complaints made, it is bound to fail, yielding mistrust and frustration. If an independent electoral commission is financially too dependent or if its mandate to track redundancies (doubles) in lists is limited only to district level, it defeats its own purpose. If a tax

administration rejects all complaints, on the grounds that they contain some criticism, it will never learn and improve.

Institutions may be ritualised and routinised, serve as a smokescreen, or discourage citizen initiative and responsibility. Institutions that were useful when first created may lose their usefulness over the years but still persist, to no good purpose other than providing jobs.

The size of institutions is critical to their effectiveness. Massive bureaucracies collapse under their own weight; offices that are too small have no weight and remain in the role of a gadfly or mosquito. Too complex or badly designed institutions dilute responsibility so that the buck never stops anywhere. Fragmenting institutions may result in reduced consistency and efficiency. Over-centralising them may demotivate those working at the lower levels and slow down the flow of information so that it becomes opaque.

Reaching a sound mix between over- and undersizing, between complex and lean, between opaque and responsible, has partly to do with organisational design and professional smartness but also with the political and managerial will to emphasise responsibility, efficiency, service and equity. Similarly with setting up, maintaining and discontinuing institutions. These are political ethical challenges.

4.5 Political Parties

Although it is possible to have politics without political parties – as documented in history –a party system gives political diversity a shape and frames political debate within a set of rules. It helps to express conflicting or diverging interests and to avoid the trap of an artificial national homogeneity, which never exists to the extent that rulers pretend.

Political parties help citizens to position themselves on political issues, organise pressure, and influence political decisions. Freedom of choice is easier as each party sets out its wares. Political parties are designed to fight and conquer power rather than actually rule. Acting ag-

gressively but also forging compromises and unexpected tactical alliances are part of their culture. They may succeed or suffer reverses, rise or decline and fall. Volatility is part of the game.

Political parties are like characters in an opera or a play. Nowadays, all the world's their stage. Successful parties are flexible: their characters are neither too loose nor too rigid. Successful politicians learn to win and lose and make a comeback. Political conflict needs to be staged and ritualised to avoid violence and civil war. Fairness and fine rhetoric make the game more trustworthy and appealing.

It is dangerous when political parties serve vested interests or ethnic identities. Slowly but surely, they destroy both themselves and the society. They capture and confine political discussion and use the organisational machinery of the state to promote ideological purification or ethnic cleansing. Ethnic loyalty overrides loyalty to the political system, social debate dries up, and programmes turn into empty shells.

It is also dangerous when a ruling party is too dominant or the range of political parties is too constrained. Dissent is suppressed. Opposition movements have no means to express themselves – or may unexpectedly erupt and get out of control.

Political conflict needs a code of conduct. Debating issues, positions and programmes needs to stick to solid, verifiable information and focus on interpretation, prospects and values. Championing or challenging candidates for office has to focus on leadership and management capacities rather than on religious beliefs, ethnic status or private life. Responsibility is at stake. Resorting to violence or buying votes is self-defeating, as shown in Kenya or Myanmar (Burma). Accepting real defeat gracefully instead of making spurious claims of electoral fraud is another part of such codes of conduct that are definitely rooted in ethical standards and fairness.

The ethical quality of political parties can be assessed by observing how they debate internally, select leaders, challenge their competitors

and take, use and relinquish power. Party programmes are not on the same level as political ethics. They rest on certain assumptions about political, economic, and social changes. Are these changes desirable? And for what reasons? Programmes raise ethical questions mainly when they set up mechanisms of exclusion, call for violence, or reject political alternation.

The number of political parties is not an ethical issue as such, although the values of equity and freedom of choice should be secured. When micro-parties demand too much power and turn kingmakers in bargaining over coalition, this raises questions about equity – the proportion between their constituency and their influence – as well as political effectiveness. When parties are too big or too few, the issue is the array of real choices and freedom. Experience would plead for a range of parties between three and six.

Political ethics could successfully inspire

1. an optimal threshold for parliamentary representation, neither too low to avoid micro-organisations nor too high to undermine competition and thwart newcomers,
2. rules of proportional representation versus a "winner gets all" system,
3. avoiding political manipulation of electoral district boundaries, known as "gerrymandering",
4. allowing for some structured political participation of minority groups as well as non-national groups, especially at the local level.

4.6   Public administration and ethics

The ethics of public administration concentrate mainly on ethical rules and institutional behaviour that reduce political risks:

1. Quality of services delivered to citizen and tax payer: fair treatment, respect, efficiency, professionalism, fair handling of claims and appeals

2. Recruitment of staff based on merit and competencies – and within that framework favouring candidates from underrepresented minorities

3. Career development based on merit, acquired competencies and responsibilities assumed

4. Tenders assessed on quality and cost: the best rather than the lowest offer; technical offer opened first and assessed on merit before financial offer is opened and assessed

5. Impartiality, legality, transparency, integrity and honesty, efficiency, professionalism, as listed by OECD in its programme "Government at a Glance".

6. Regular surveys and comparisons documenting how values are translated into delivery of public services and which progresses have been achieved.

Such fairness in processes requires in addition an independent unit, mixing the roles of ombudsman, auditor and strategic advisor. It would be advisable to keep it small, chaired by a senior civil servant or public official whose career is no longer at stake and who is therefore outside the administration. This is how limitation of power can be secured with sound political advantages in the long run.

<center>**7**</center>

Methodology of Implementation

1 How to handle instruments and processes

Political ethics is not limited to declared values or setting explicit values. It encompasses the targets set on each of six clusters of values as well as the political processes through which they are realised. What needs to be examined from an ethical perspective are not only political goals, policies or decisions but also the process through which they have been designed and arrived at, and how they are implemented.

Political objectives, as with project objectives, are supposed to be SMART: simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

Political processes are supposed to be inclusive, focused in their purpose, working out possible options with their pros and cons, transparent in their path and stages, distinguishing consultation from decision, and documented with proceedings. That does not preclude secrecy or confidentiality for the time necessary.

As in some philosophical traditions, one may say that here the path is the goal, the way the end.

In most political processes, inclusiveness helps in taking realistic decisions and in finding political acceptance.

Post-conflict reconciliation in Sri Lanka or Rwanda, for example, has much better chances to succeed in the long run to the extent that the process takes all innocent victims into account.

Again, fiscal justice lies between two extremes: a linear relation between taxes and incomes plus assets and an exponential one. The latter scheme is certainly more equitable, but it puts pressure on rich people

and corporations. Setting a tax ceiling for the wealthiest may be deemed unjust and opposed to solidarity, but not setting a ceiling might cause the rich to go into tax exile, yielding less solidarity because the national cake has shrunk. A fiscal amnesty for tax evasion may also seem unjust but prove effective enough to help in funding social services or regional redistribution and development.

1.1 Steps in designing policy or making political decisions
- Identifying the magnitude of problems and their bearing on future
- Assessing the risks and advantages of moving and of waiting
- Sorting out possible solutions and drawing on the experiences of others
- Drafting systems to limit concentration of power and foster operational consistency
- Keeping a sound balance between all six cardinal values, without fostering some at the expense of others
- Calling on a roundtable of the main stakeholders
- Fine-tuning details, mechanisms, processes, procedures, tools for better acceptance and more effective and efficient implementation
- Fine-tuning processes of implementation in society through contracting with civil society associations
- Monitoring implementation and evaluating outcomes and impacts as well as unintended effects
- Deciding the further course of action

Fiscal schemes that are too complex pave the way for tax evasion. Equity has to compromise with effectiveness, and both with solidarity and sustainability. Value added tax (VAT) schemes prove simple and effective, even if at some cost to perfect equity. Still they perform quite well.

Political dilemmas are politicians' daily bread. They need to be resolved with a certain level of consistency, and well-thought-out trade-offs, rather than ad hoc solutions that prove up hazard and ruinous in the long run. That way requires also a consultation of main stakeholders.

Process and instruments are better accepted when they prove not contradicting each other or even better display some sound level of consistency with set cardinal values.

2 Aiming at Consistency

A contradiction between the set goals of a policy and the values embedded in processes is not just wrong; it is politically risky and cannot easily be sustained. Consistency is of course less easy in a democracy than in a dictatorship (Ceausescu's Romania, for example). Dictatorial rule usually does not need to compromise; democratic rule has compromise as its bed-fellow.

Citizen and voters rarely believe in blueprints or mechanical implementation. They understand that change and adaptation are part of politics. But a certain degree of consistency is expected, both between policies and between policies and implementation. Ad hoc policies only are bound to fail. Optimal level of consistency is not necessarily maximal.

Responsibility and risk attached to it cannot be fostered in economics and banned from politics. Liberalism in politics and liberalism in economic affairs may differ a little but should not contradict each other. Democratic equity cannot be asserted in elections and undermined in inequitable access to education, when rules and procedures are de facto discriminatory or unjustly selective. A policy of fair competition cannot accommodate tendering processes biased by corruption.

Policies are not to be equated with policy implementation. Consistency is not understood as full alignment. Room for manoeuvre is required. Policies are mostly the result of consultation and negotiation.

Implementation is mostly the result of prudential interpretation, trade-offs and convergence between lawmakers, government and administration, lobbies, businesses, civil society associations and likeminded individuals. External factors cannot be ignored.

A suitable balance between all six cardinal values is sought. None is neglected, and all six are promoted to an optimum. Policies focused on security, for example, are hard to sustain when they ignore equity, responsibility, and solidarity or when they aim at unity without diversity.

3   Evaluation

Uncertainty and unpredictability are an integral part of politics. Political situations are unique. They can be neither replicated nor fully anticipated. Even if international or domestic experiences are available, they can never be applied on a one-to-one basis. Politics and policies necessarily realise themselves through trial and error. Unforeseen and unintended consequences are part of the game.

Evaluation is essential:

- to assess the effectiveness and political impact of processes and take corrective measures
- to learn from experience and identify what works and what does not work, as well as why.

Assessments are best done through professional independent evaluation.

And similarly with political ethics. Ethical evaluation in politics is akin to impact evaluation and fairness assessment.

Policies and political decisions cannot be simply equated with projects or programmes. Time duration but also complexity and influence by rapidly changing political contexts make them different in kind. Evaluation of inputs and outputs is part, but only part, of assessing political objectives. Evaluation of outcomes is not sufficient either.

Impact evaluation is often made in terms of effectiveness: reaching political goals with an optimal level of resources and relevance. Policies

are assessed not only in terms of outcomes and institutional changes but mainly in terms of justice and its six derivates. This is at the heart of political ethical evaluation.

Setting ethical goals in measurable terms, with agreed indicators, is commendable and useful. Sets of indicators should be easily verifiable and measurable and should remain manageable and simple (see chapter 4). Then lean institutions, systems and processes that secure proper evaluation of policies and processes and perform quality checks need to be set up. Evaluation units should remain as independent as possible from vested interests. They should also take stock of many existing indices and be able to translate them into ethical measurements. They should also consult records of claims and appeals received and handled by an ombudsman kind of service. Results need to be made public. Feed-back processes can be provided thank to the media.

The added value of an ethical audit is to assess to what extent equity, responsibility, peace and security, diversity in unity, solidarity, and sustainability are yielded.

Moreover, many political conflicts cannot be resolved without a close monitoring mechanism that is independent and based on non-disputable indicators. As will be presented in more detail in chapter 8, mechanisms of mutual accountability are critical in anticipating or resolving conflicts.

8

Case Studies

1 Climate Change and Environment

1.1 Climate change negotiations

The whole world knows that it has passed a critical threshold and is close to a point of no return. We may argue about the details, but the core conclusions of the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2007 are no longer open to question.[56] The Earth is warming, and we are warming it. Our human footprint on the Earth needs to be scaled down in all countries where it exceeds what the Earth can bear. Limiting and then reversing the voracious global growth in production and consumption is key for the future of human life on Earth.

Global warming results from more than one kind of emission: CO_2, methane, some hydrofluorocarbons, lower atmospheric ozone and dark soot particles. An exclusive focus on cutting CO_2 emissions may prove misleading. Fighting also on three other fronts may be more effective: methane is a quick additional source of energy and income, and reduction of ozone and soot contributes immediately to the quality of the air people breathe. Feeling the change makes for quick and easy victories in the battle. But the war on global warming needs drastic cuts in CO_2 emissions, which requires smart and less polluting production technolo-

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[56] The IPCC *Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* released in November 2011 confirms the analysis and deepens the warnings.

gies, curbing unsustainable lifestyles – gas-guzzling cars and planes, inefficient air-conditioning, suboptimal thermal isolation – and individual efforts – eating less meat and cutting energy consumption.

The Copenhagen Summit (the United Nations Climate Change Conference) at the end of 2009 brought together most of the world's countries, aiming at immediate action to hold the increase in global temperature to 2C° above pre-industrial levels. The summit was a disappointment. Discussions ended up in a loose commitment – the Copenhagen Accord drafted by the United States and the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China). An overemphasis on binding targets instead of starting with shared values and ethical commitments contributed to the failure.

Blocking a deal were disagreements about responsibility, equity and solidarity. Industrial countries stressed the responsibility of the new big polluters to limit and reduce their present emissions drastically. Emerging countries retorted that industrial countries had had the luxury of developing over centuries at the expense of environmental sustainability. Why should they now be forced to cut faster when their development had only just begun? Poor countries that will suffer most from climate changes demanded funds in the name of solidarity. In each case, effectiveness and accountability were a prerequisite: How to limit emissions effectively? But also equity: Who is entitled to decide the where and when and to establish trade-offs between reduction and adaptation measures? Sustainability was of course the main outcome at stake.

The UN Climate Change Summit in Durban at the end of 2011 recorded a first breakthrough at the level of values: a clear acknowledgement by India and China of their own direct responsibility followed by a commitment to curb their CO_2 emissions – albeit not immediately.

To be effective, global strategy has to rely both on values *and* interests. It has to mobilise governments and citizens, companies and civil society and show how their interests and values may be made to con-

verge; to marry local interests with the global good; to reach an international platform of reciprocal commitments and mutual accountability based not only on national contributions but also on reduction efforts per capita; to design frameworks that provide consistent incentives. Why should green technologies not be profitable? Why should consumers not become actors in cutting energy demand, in fostering fair trade, in supporting sustainable processes of production and exploitation? Pressure on and by institutional investors – "our" pension funds, social security funds, banks and shareholder-based companies – is critical and can work. Local contributions cannot succeed without global resolutions. A platform of globally shared values has to be set to boost and to limit particular interests.

This convergence between interests and values is needed in the short and the long run. Governments, citizens and the corporate sector need to be engaged. We need to sprint and run marathons, to take quick political decisions and implement long-term policies.

Already we witness the advance signs of environmental migration. Rising sea levels caused by melting ice could submerge Tuvalu, the Maldives Islands, and large tracts of Bangladesh and the Netherlands. Elsewhere, people face the threat of arid lands turning into desert. Should political advocates seek corrective measures or bend the rules because a rich country is affected? Responsibility is hardly to be separated from solidarity and equity.

As for the longer run, it begins today. Trust in international negotiations between industrialised, emerging, developing and poor countries has been damaged by broken promises and playing the blame game. Trust may be rebuilt on a foundation of shared values, without underscoring facts and figures, quantitative targets and responsibilities. Reciprocity – another name for justice – will play a critical role. Concretely, this means mechanisms for mutual accountability. Responsibility, equity and solidarity are at stake as well.

The Carbon Disclosure Programme initiated by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development shows how private sector interests and values can be reconciled with long-term ecological achievements. It needs to be welcomed – and challenged – by other key players.

The last critical question regards the need to reduce the overall human footprint on the planet while allowing poor and emerging countries to grow and consume more energy. Industrialised countries have to reduce their standard of living: less energy, fewer car emissions, less expensive beef, a more seasonal diet. Emerging countries should prepare to cut. Such changes bite on living patterns, attitudes, uses. Without an ethical upsurge and a values foundation, they may bite off more than can chew.

Today, there are well-thought-out and widely accepted strategies to:

- curb CO_2 and other emissions and slowing down the process of climate change
- mitigate damage already caused by and adapt to climate change
- avoid risks through information and sensitisation

But these strategies cannot appeal to interests only. Values need to be called in. The term "common but differentiated responsibility" has been widely used. Values are similarly needed to make a breakthrough on instruments: tax on CO_2 emissions and reforestation, independent scientific monitoring, financial resources, and funding mechanisms. Targets need international acceptance, mechanisms for reciprocal accountability, peer pressure and peer review.

1.2   Biodiversity

The need for a mix between interests and values is even more striking when it comes to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Biodiversity is a well of knowledge and a measure of the health of ecosystems, and large or sudden drops in biodiversity serve as a warning. But lip-service may be paid to commitments, and many species may

disappear almost unnoticed because they lack powerful advocates to plead on their behalf.

The Convention on Biological Diversity was opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 and entered into force at the end of the following year. 193 countries have shown their capability to reach an agreement that constructively blends interests with values.

The 10th Conference of Parties to the Convention, held in Nagoya in October 2010, aimed at amending some prior loose commitments and mechanisms and strengthening a convergence of diverging interests. Targets were set to increase protected areas – on land, from 13% to 17% of arable lands; on sea, from 1% to 10% – a value-inspired commitment curtailing national or trade interests. The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing compensates developing countries for the use of genetic resources in research could be worth billions of dollars. This is on the interest side, but aims to secure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Similarly, recognising the failure of past programmes where particular interests were considered as an end in themselves, leading only to a dead end was a good start. This is on the value side.

Of course, fine words count for little. What matters are binding measures and mechanisms of evaluation. Here also facts and values have to intermingle: reported facts and figures are bedfellows with independence and accountability, equity and responsibility.

When Inuit Eskimo leaders from Canada, Alaska, Greenland and Russia demand their due from offshore oil drilling and mineral extraction near their communities in the Arctic region they appeal to interests – their own but also their countries'; values such as sustainability, equity and solidarity, transparency; concretely, the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities; and international mechanisms to address risks of pollution. It is this mix of interests and values that makes their Declaration of

Responsible Resource Development in Arctic Regions in February 2011 acceptable.

When the Suruí Indians of the Amazon struggle to save their forests, their success is based on strategic leadership, wide communication, peaceful protest, alliance with NGOs, whether locally (Metareila) or internationally (Aquaverde), use of smart phones and a decisive partnership with Google Earth, and advocacy to and protection from the Brazilian government. Their interests have been boosted by values: solidarity, equity and respect, peaceful means, sustainability.

2   Natural Scarce Resources Management

2.1   Foreign land acquisitions

Many countries are short of arable soils and mineral resources. Worried that they will run short of food and energy by 2030-2050, they are starting today to plan how to feed their population and provide resources to their industry. Such a responsibility enjoys some political legitimacy. Land acquisition – variously seen as either "development opportunity" or "land grabbing" – is often run in a colonial manner: local dwellers are informed once every detail of the contract has been signed, then invited to leave or to find a living as day workers. Politically, the process may be risky, as in the case of Madagascar in 2009, where the elected President was overthrown by a coup prompted in part by such an endeavour.

Acquisition of farmland abroad by countries or companies is growing rapidly: a preliminary estimate of land deals in 2010-2011 amounts to 80 million hectares that have been sold or leased – equivalent to around 60% of EU farmland. Big buyers are the Gulf States, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt but also Taiwan, Japan, and Korea. China is by far the largest investor. "Suppliers" are found mostly in sub-Saharan Africa (63%), but also in Ukraine, Russia and Brazil. Most contracts are government-to-government but some are signed by private companies.

Contracts vary between purchase and lease. They include investment in developing communication and rural infrastructure. They also stipulate the part of crops that can be exported. The deals promise to enhance cereal yields, which have fallen in the last decades due to a decline in public investment, particularly in Africa.

From the perspective of political ethics, global justice may justify such foreign land transactions for the sake of securing food for people and resources for industry. Sovereignty and solidarity should not be opposed to food security. On the other hand, food security should not pave the way for land grabbing. Equity and sustainability are at stake, but also local responsibility. Fair trade and shared responsibility are prerequisite.

Codes of conduct should reflect a genuine win-win.[57] They have to consider local farmers or herders living on the land, their jobs and skills, their livelihood, food culture and responsibility. Subcontracting small local enterprises is preferable to contracting local labour. Long-term leasing is more suitable in terms of reciprocal responsibility, efficiency, equity, and sustainability. Lands contracts should avoid worsening the food market and benefiting well-connected big farmers. Long-term leasing should go hand in hand with issuance of formal property rights to customary smallholders. Specific provisions in case of a famine breaking out should drastically limit or even temporarily ban exports of food. Sustainability prohibits giving back exhausted farmlands at the end of the lease. Transparency is also desirable in any such agreement, in order to measure real efficiency and check its equity. Often the true cost is

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[57] Codes of conduct have been worked out by the African Union, the World Bank, and Switzerland with NGOs. See also IFPRI, World Bank African Union: *Rising Global Interest in Farmland. Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?* 7 September 2010; a study on land acquisition conducted in 2011 by Oxfam, CDE (University of Bern), International Land Coalition; *www.future-agricultures.org/index.php*. On governing the commons, see the pioneering work done by Nobel Prize laureate (2009) Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

kept secret, to the advantage of ruling elites, and efficiency cannot be measured. First experiences suggest that when benefits are not widely and equitably shared, the consequence is political turmoil.

Governing the commons in the past meant setting clear limitations, rules that fit with local conditions, collective deals monitored by stakeholders, proportionate fines, and conflict resolution schemes, all based on responsibility of land owners and land users. More and more, policy frameworks to settle conflicts about resources today resort to such common governance of those common lands. That makes policies much more effective and reduces the risk of conflict.

Here again, values need to play a critical role to make the land market beneficial and sustainable. Given some present uncertainties about future impact, it seems advisable however to impose a moratorium and watch carefully how deals already signed evolve, in order to design and implement corrective measures and balanced, fair, responsible and sustainable contractual frameworks.

2.2   Water use and management

Water is fluid. It is not so easy to make it part of a simple market transaction. Large rivers frequently flow through more than one country. There are tensions between those who dwell on the river banks upstream and downstream, even more when they belong to distinct societies divided by national boundaries. Underground aquifers may also cross national boundaries.

Water is getting scarce because of increasing demographic pressure and increasingly high patterns of consumption worldwide. To produce one kilogram of beef takes 15,000 litres of water; of cotton, 11,000 litres; of tea, 500 litres; of rice, 250. Annual consumption per capita varies a lot: in Algeria 475 m³ against 3,200 in France, for example. Setting priorities for water use, mainly between irrigation, agriculture, industry and households, can be neither neglected nor postponed. What criteria

should determine a reasonable sharing? How to ensure that the water in the aquifers remains clean?

Rivers already endow specific regions with strategic importance. By 2025, regions with a high level of water resources: Alpine countries (Rhine, Rhone, Danube), Himalaya (Indus Basin) and Tibet (Ganges-Brahmaputra, Mekong, Yangtze, Huang He), Turkey (Euphrates, Tigris), Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia (White and Blue Niles) will be regarded as strategic regions. Conflict over upstream water intakes are bound to sharpen. Technological advances in desalinisation, maintenance and leakage reduction, re-use and filtering membranes, etc. will be driven by the pressure of skyrocketing demand. Meats and vegetables that require large quantities of water will need dramatic changes in production methods or consumption patterns or both.

Aquifers are drying up in many regions, in particular in arid zones where they are the only source of fresh water. Under pricing means water is often used for low-value crops or inefficient irrigation. It is estimated that half of the world's aquifers cross national borders, putting them at risk of "unilateral" depletion. Following a UN General Assembly resolution in 2008, including draft articles, some international treaties or conventions have been signed: Franco-Swiss, Brazil-Uruguay-Paraguay-Argentina; Mali-Niger-Nigeria, testifying to rising awareness.[58]

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[58] See UNESCO, World-wide Hydrogeological Mapping and Assessment Program: *www.whymap.org/*
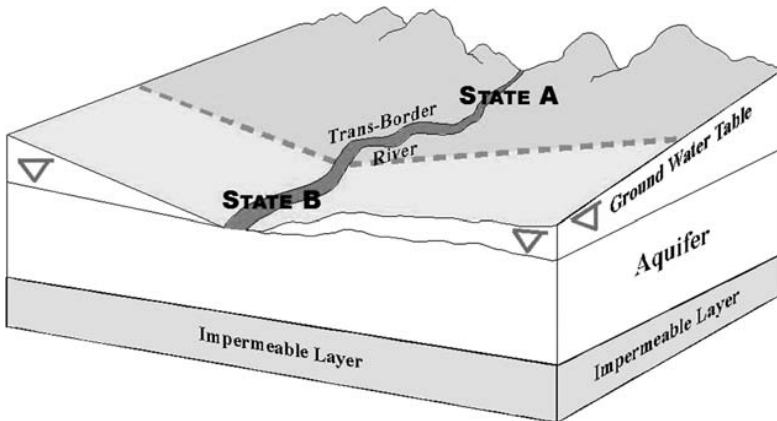
Successful negotiations reckon with limitation of resource and build on shared values of environmental sustainability, equity, reciprocity and efficiency (fulfilling needs to the extent possible) and use to set a ceiling – such as 5mio m³/y in a Franco-Swiss agreement on the Geneva region signed in 2008:

> The present Convention was established with the common goal of ensuring the future of the cross-border aquifer and hence to secure for the parties, as far as possible, the capacity to extract water destined for providing its people with drinking water.

Next to those values, a series of incentives for all of the stake-holders' interests proves useful. A pure technical, hydrological, solution is bound to fail. Only a technically sound and ethically articulated ap-proach proves successful. Stress should be put on joint monitoring, mu-tual accountability and jointly agreed risk indicators.

How to manage scarce natural resources needs tough negotiation and a foundation of shared values. Sustainability, solidarity towards arid zones, equity between social groups and sectors, responsibility about pollution and repletion: these values have to be expressed and clearly defined. Precise and workable mechanisms for settlement in case of di-verging interests need to be worked out in advance, then monitored and

completed. The devil is in the details: in balancing values and interests, and setting clear thresholds, indicators and rules for conflict settlement.

In both the cases of land and water, negotiations should be as inclusive and transparent as possible, and take into account equity, responsibility, solidarity and sustainability. Traditional wisdom highlights the effectiveness of rules and uses by communities on communal lands. Peer review and joint monitoring are essential to secure mutual accountability. This never works without some minimal level of mutual trust but can also build trust incrementally and offset existing mistrust and exclusive protection of interests.

3 Politics and Political Processes

3.1 Elections

Fraudulent elections deepen political conflicts and make them more intractable. The real winner has seen its victory stolen; the official winner knows that its constituency is more fragile than appears and will be tempted to bolster its position by patronage or intimidation. In subsequent elections, losers cry foul even when the vote is fair. A vicious circle is set up.

The cost of rigging or stealing elections is high in economic, political and human terms. Disincentives are advisable. A first step is a code of conduct signed ahead of elections by all parties and key players, and its implementation fairly checked. The second is an independent and neutral electoral commission: this job that can be performed by the administration provided independence is guaranteed, or if not by a body that reports to a multi-party committee and has secure financial means. Electors' lists have to be checked in advance by an independent body to avoid multi-registering. Easy and fair access to documents and communication channels is required and should be reported on. In many countries, a single-ballot system is an efficient tool to avoid discrimination

and bureaucratic harassment against dissenting candidates. Counting votes and reporting results needs to be done in the presence of several political parties, whose representatives should countersign result sheets. Local results should be displayed immediately before being sent to district and then central level. Checks all along the line are much to be desired.

Political effectiveness requires equity, fairness, ethics, as well as rules, checks and mechanisms for mutual accountability. Civil society should observe the process, in countries with meagre resources in particular.

"One person one vote" is necessary but not sufficient as a political and ethical principle. It is always blended with other principles, such as accountability or efficiency. In federal systems, for instance, a vote may not have the same weight, depending on the size of the member state. In winner-take-all systems, a vote might count quite differently depending on the side it comes from: winner or loser. In proportional systems, where parties win only their proportionate share, votes are quite similar in their weight. The first system stresses political leadership and thus accountability at the cost of representativeness. The other emphasises majority support but may promote strange alliances, and its greater openness to smaller parties may give an exorbitant weight to tiny constituencies and even end up turning micro-parties into king-makers. Preference for one system over the other may have more to do with political culture, however, than with ethics. Ethics comes to the fore in securing that all parties are present when votes are identified and counted: equity (inclusiveness) and fairness matter. So does unity with diversity. Opponents are not to be seen or treated as foes.

Setting electoral districts may become tricky. Manipulation is quite an old practice. Its technical name of "Gerrymandering" derives from Governor Elber Gerry of Massachusetts who in 1812 signed a bill redistricting the state for the benefit of his party: one district was said to be in

the form of a salamander. Such political manipulation may prove effective in the short run, but it undermines the credibility of the electoral system. Ethics in politics requires that drawing electoral boundaries is not monopolised by the ruling incumbent party but that all parties or local constituencies are part of the decision-making. Inclusiveness is here a synonym to equity.

It can be noticed that ethics may contradict short-term gains but definitely favours long-term political effectiveness.

3.2   Negotiations

Successful negotiations depend on

- respecting the other side in words and showing that its interests and its perception of risks and threats have been acknowledged and accommodated (this does not mean taking its presentations at face value, of course)
- showing understanding to the other side (the best way to ask for the same)
- declaring commitment to the values of sovereignty, security, equity, diversity with unity, solidarity, and sustainability; and inviting the other side to reciprocate
- improving the balance of interests between the two sides and reducing the gap between divergent interests.
- finding a sound, fair and consistent match between values and interests
- signalling that one walks one's talk
- translating values into rules, instruments and mechanisms (for instance, mutual accountability is an effective instrument to build confidence and restore trust)

When actors' interests conflict or diverge too much, clustering interests under shared values may be the most effective way to reach agree-

ment. The proposed solution is not seen as giving one party an edge over the other. This is often named the "spirit of the text".

Reaching workable solutions has better chances through groupings of countries or parties based on values and interests. Such groupings show themselves able to overcome conventional divides between blocs, free up dialogues and launch creative initiatives. Examples of such breakthroughs include the Mine Ban Convention in 1997 or the International Instrument for the Rapid and Reliable Identification of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2005 that was introduced by small countries from different regions and taken over incrementally worldwide. Proposals submitted by one bloc, by contrast, have fewer chances as they appear as the expression of a particular interest.

Similarly, initiatives backed by actors of different kinds have better chances to succeed as they appear more based on values than only on interests: in South Sudan, some peace initiatives were implemented by traditional authorities, encouraged by some states and NGOs. Religious leaders of more than one faith may also be successful brokers. In recent elections in Ghana and Guinea-Conakry, African Muslim and Christian leaders were able to persuade defeated candidates to accept the results in the interests of common peace. In other cases – natural disasters or environmental commitments to cut CO_2 emissions, for example – alliances between governments, the corporate sector, unions, NGOs, and opinion leaders have proved their efficacy.

In many negotiations, especially those expected to settle long-standing and violent conflicts, building trust is key. This results from values such as respect, fairness, and open-mindedness, but also responsibility, balancing costs and benefits. When interests conflict frontally, process is critical. When free and open negotiation is difficult because of the history of spilt blood, then secret or informal meetings or the fostering of political wings of armed groups offer ways forward. Confidence-building measures, different negotiation tables, twin tracks, mutual

monitoring, local solutions, incremental steps, or a direct phone line may prove effective. Reciprocity is at the heart of success. Equity is built in.

3.3 Settling conflict – the Northern Ireland Peace Agreement

The Troubles in Northern Ireland epitomise the conflicts, found in many parts of the world, that comprise an ethnic component, economic and political discrimination, and an international dimension. Think, for example, of the Basque country in Spain, the Berber peoples of North Africa, Burma (Myanmar), Kashmir, Kosovo, Kurdistan, Sri Lanka, or Timor-Leste. The peace agreement finally reached in Northern Ireland may therefore become a source of inspiration.

Tensions between the communities in Northern Ireland go back to the 17th century. The root causes of the modern conflict were many, mixed up and mutually reinforcing:

- questions of identity, expressed in ethnic and religious terms
- economic restrictions and political bias cemented in rules and institutions, with one community lacking full civil rights, excluded from some trades and occupations, discriminated against by the police and the law, and suffering socio-economic inequalities in housing and employment,
- majority/minority relationship: a Parliament dominated by the majority group, with the minority group permanently at a disadvantage; gerrymandering in local government
- an international political dimension, with the involvement of the UK, the Irish Republic, and eventually the United States

The Troubles broke out in the late 1960s, as the minority community demanded civil rights and the state responded with repression. Paramilitary groups were formed on each side, and both sides resorted to violence. Mistrust and hatred fuelled an escalating confrontation. Between

1969 and 2001, in a three-sided war also involving the British army, 3,526 people were killed and many more injured or traumatised.

A first power-sharing agreement reached in Sunningdale in 1973 did not succeed, mainly because it did not sufficiently address major concerns such as the principle of self-determination, recognition of both identities, and inter-island cooperation. Questions with a high ethical bearing were silenced. Lacking was a decisive commitment to build a sustainable peace and security on a foundation of unity in diversity, equity and responsibility.

It took a further 25 years to make a breakthrough with the Belfast Agreement (or Good Friday Agreement) in 1998. Thanks to pervasive fatigue about violence but also to sufficient trust – or sufficient lack of mistrust – a new round of negotiations could succeed, albeit with difficulty. An inclusive process opened discussions also to the more extreme parties.

This time, the concept of "consociationalism"[59] was more than on paper; it was beefed up by commitments on key values, translated into detailed institutional provisions and prepared by confidence-building measures that were effectively implemented.

Values were matched with interests and translated into measures within a consistent approach:

Values	Measures
Equity	Parliamentary representation (Northern Ireland Assembly) and power-sharing Institutions related to socio-economical issues Targets for less bias and proportionality in police, judiciary, and prisons

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[59] This concept, developed by Dutch political scientist Arend Lijphart, addresses how divided societies are to be governed where majority rule is untenable. See inter alia Lijphart, Arend, *Democracy in Plural Societies*, Yale University Press, 1977. See also Taylor Rupert, *Consociational Theory. McGarry and O'Leary and the Northern Ireland conflict*, London: Routledge, 2009.

Solidarity	More effective protection of minority rights Parliamentary decisions requiring a qualified majority of 60% and backing by at least 40% on each side
Unity with diversity	Flexibility on dual citizenship: British and Irish A grand coalition representing main communities Inclusiveness, open to non-moderate parties
Responsibility	Devolution of powers to district, communal levels Segmental autonomy
Security and peace	Decommissioning paramilitary forces, with each step being echoed on each side Monopoly of armed force by the state Stepwise release of political prisoners
Sustainability	Acceptance by a wider array of parties and movements Trust restored Stronger incentives to find a *modus vivendi* within the Agreement
Independence	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission International Independent Commission on Decommissioning

Nevertheless, agreement could have failed once again, in 1999, when the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons stalled. It required a lot of courage and conviction from some leaders who kept on betting on a better future, remembering that making no bet and taking no risk would prove fatal to the peace process.

The process succeeded because it was largely inclusive and able to play on several levels: local and international, formal and informal, with a two-track approach that mobilised political players as well as civil society, and taking into account interpersonal relationships. It owed a lot to the support and pressure of international actors. US Special Envoy George Mitchell, Canadian General De Chastelain and former Finnish Prime Minister Harri Holkeri brokered the multiparty talks that led to the Agreement. General De Chastelain also led the international independent commission on the decommissioning of paramilitary arms.

Although less in the limelight than his two colleagues, Holkeri encouraged the parties to think more, listen better and talk further with each other. In a speech in 2008, Holkeri cited several reasons the trio was able to guide the long-divided parties to a deal: small steps to build trust; not requiring parties to speak directly to each other; and not asking who shot first. He also mentioned "infinite patience."[60]

In all violent conflicts, political ethics is called to find a middle way between justice and selective amnesty. There is no blueprint as to the mix to be found between justice and truth in order to reach political reconciliation – obviously not of the same kind as interpersonal reconciliation. A public admission before victims may be preferable to a lengthy judicial process and allow for such reconciliation. But in the end inclusiveness is critical. As can be observed in the Great Lakes region, inconsistent or one-sided amnesties store up trouble for the morrow.

3.4   Ethical uprising in Arab countries

Since the end of 2010, rulers, outsiders and observers have been surprised by popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, Syria and elsewhere in the Arab world. Nobody would have forecast these events even weeks before they began. However the Arab Spring may develop, it marks a watershed.

The Arab uprisings are a convincing reminder of how effective ethical protests can be, in terms of aims as well as of methods – most protesters had recourse to peaceful means – but also of how an ethics limited to the individual and social spheres may fall short of what is needed when new political standards have to become institutional reality.

As with most mass uprisings, there were many triggers: economic conditions – jobless youth had no hope of finding work; weariness with

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[60] Douglas Martin, "Harri Holkeri, Northern Ireland Peace Negotiator, Is Dead at 74", New York Times, 10 August 2011. *www.nytimes.com/2011/08/11/world/europe/11holkeri.html*

bureaucratic harassment; a sense that nepotism and the privileges of the wealthy were escalating and curtailing competition; a revolt against routine torture; a feeling that parliament was confined to ritual endorsement of policies and could not call rulers to account.

However, a close reading of the expressed motives of the protesters reveals a strong ethical dimension: a pervasive feeling that the dignity of the citizens was undermined, respect was not due equally to all, responsibility was hailed before elections and then denied when elections had been rigged, the privileges of the few were sustained by spiralling corruption, that the security forces were lying and arrogant. The demand for freedom was a demand for dignity, respect, responsibility, equity and justice, a claim against the systematically unethical practices of the old regime.

That ethical dimension focused on the excessive behaviour of members of the ruling clan, the president and his entourage who should resign and be brought to court. It paid less attention to the institutional and regulatory dimensions of change, and that deficiency – hopefully provisional – explains why there are still great uncertainties as to the changes of political system, institutions, set of rules and laws. As in many transitions from authoritarian and bureaucratic systems, the protesters who force change lack political competencies. Members of the old guard still hope to make a comeback and play for time. Selective and wary compromises with the old guard should be therefore tolerated, mostly at a technical level and with careful monitoring and close supervision.

This means a turn from individual ethics to political ethics and an overall consistency between the values affirmed and political processes, institutions and tools.

4   Shaping Economics

4.1   Regulatory framework

The relations and interactions between politics and economics are complex. Between the ideal types of planned economy and laissez faire, the range of possibilities is wide. Economics is a key driver of societies and sometimes pretends to run the show. The blame game between politicians echoing their citizens' complaints on one side and business executives or bankers on the other works may easily run into the dead end of populism.

The first ethical aim in shaping economics must be to reveal and charge real costs, exposing hidden subsidies as well as hidden costs and externalities – the costs paid by others or the environment now or down the road. Health costs, infrastructure costs, the costs of administration remain imprecise and clouded by fog. Environmental costs – recycling, destruction, stockpiling – are often left for next generations. Social dumping, allowing employers to reduce wages and benefits or to bring in cheaper labour from abroad, proves appealing in the short run and costly in the long run. Accuracy in assessing true costs is not easy, because trade or short-term considerations may prevail, but should be aimed at in the interests of equity, fair competition and long term sustainability. Of course, it requires a level playing field internationally, at least among the key players.

A second ethical requisite would be to link macroeconomics to microeconomics as clearly as possible. Policy decisions are mainly macroeconomic, but their consequences are felt at the micro-economic level. Politicians focus on the macroeconomic vision, but voters focus on the results. Many times it could be observed how macro-economists ignore the possible consequences of their policies and are even unable to articulate the link. Living conditions and livelihoods are influenced by both. The interaction is often unpredictable, but the point is to anticipate better

the consequences for citizen of decisions taken at the macroeconomic level.

What about the role of politics? Where to find the optimum between self-regulation by economic actors and interventionist policies? We all know that it is necessary for the state to have a stick in the cupboard, in particular for those who bypass self regulation. Independent rule setters are needed. But players should be encouraged to play and to win.

The four main economic tasks of politics as set by Nobel Prize winner Paul Samuelson are still undisputed: i) improving economic efficiency, ii) enhancing the redistribution of revenues, iii) stabilising the economy through macro-economic policies, iv) conducting international economic politics. A fifth could be added, based on recent experience: developing a vision and leadership able to build confidence.

Nobody today doubts the necessity of an agreed framework, a set of rules and a level playing field for economic activities and actors. An independent external referee is also needed. Debate arises as to the kind of interventions, in particular during the match itself! Most interventions entail collateral damages or unexpected disincentives. Recent experiences show the consequences caused by petty political games or the lack of clear leadership. Speed in facing a situation is in many cases a more decisive ingredient than the details of policy. Vicious circles need to be ended as soon as possible. Good economic governance is critical: sound budgeting, checks on disbursement, keeping debt under an acceptable ceiling, managing risks. All this points to key political prerequisites – effectiveness, accountability, limitation – but also to values, in particular responsibility, equity and sustainability.

Risk management has so far proven rather weak. Governments seem more concerned to safeguard public health than to protect the health of their economies. They subject new drugs to rigorous checks before allowing them to be marketed. Why not do the same with financial products? One can ask why public health is seen as more risky for countries

than finances and whether rigorous checks before selling new drugs
should not inspire financial authorities before clearing financial prod-
ucts.

The financial crisis in 2008 originated with subprime mortgages that
came from too easy access to house credit as a result of political deci-
sions.[61] This was then compounded by the irresponsible decision of the
financial institutions to slice and dice these subprime mortgages in com-
plex derivatives and sell these instruments with a triple-A rating when
they were in fact as precarious as the mortgages they were based on.
Now, the massive investment of public money to save the "too big to
fail" financial institutions has exhausted the ability of more than one
state to face the following crisis. It is difficult to see the banks once res-
cued not only returning to "business (and bonuses) as usual" but subject-
ing the very states that rescued them to unbearable pressure. Players
turned referees! On the other hand, the debt policies of some countries
make them vulnerable to the banks'pressure. Consequences need to be
assumed.

Growth is the best trump card in reducing debt. The point is to reach
a sound trade-off between promoting growth and balancing budgets.
Limitation, responsibility and sustainability are involved.

The financial crisis in the euro zone – as wide and deep as in the
Asian tigers in the 1990s albeit quite dissimilar in its origin – laid bare
many ethical shortcomings that explain why so far purely technical solu-
tions are falling short.

1. In some countries in the euro zone, political patronage and tax eva-
   sion was widely accepted by both leaders and citizens and remained
   unchecked over decades, and the national debt was downplayed or

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[61] After the introduction in the US of the Community Reinvestment Act under
President Carter, a second Act was passed under President Clinton according to
which banks were rated according to the volume of loans made to housing in
neighborhoods that had previously been excluded from any real estate invest-
ment and circled in red on town maps.

its real level even concealed, while healthier countries turned a blind eye. Accountability was lacking partly because it was easier to continue to sell expensive oversized equipment to countries known to be fragile. With hindsight, it is hard to believe that no one was able to set out the truth.

2. Unsustainable indebtedness is a betrayal of future generations that future citizens would definitely reject if they could already vote.

3. Excess levels of debt drastically reduce the room for manoeuvre of states in their negotiations with banks and hence their capacity to be politically responsible.

4. As has been belatedly acknowledged, the crisis was set up by the lack of fit between a currency union and the diversity of national budgetary and finance policies. It was a disaster waiting to happen.

5. Scapegoating "problem" countries or threatening to expel them unless they swallow the medicine prescribed by their "virtuous" neighbours is an ineffective strategy that plays on the symbolic level of politics but does not pave the way for lasting solutions.

New rules for the euro zone have to build upon reciprocity, equity and responsibility among all members. Peer reviews rely on responsibility and put it to work. Values are linked to interests through detailed mechanisms and processes.

4.2   Fiscal fairness

Taxes, in particular proportionate or progressive taxes, aim at greater solidarity and effective justice. The philosophy behind tax systems refers to wealth redistribution in favour of remote areas, the less well-off, and specific categories in need. States allocate fiscal revenues for public purposes and common interests: infrastructure, management, social security, defence, foreign relations.

Taxes on revenue, property and wealth are progressive – the rates increase with the sum taxed, up to a certain level. Tax redistribution aims precisely at solidarity: infrastructure and services are indeed benefitting equally to all. Taxes based on value added and trade, taxes on gas are similar for every user, irrespective of salary or wealth, but a certain element of proportionality is still kept, because quantity or price effects a de facto selection. This can be seen everywhere where expensive or luxury goods are preferred by rich rather than modest consumers or in developing countries where only poor drivers turn off their engines on slopes to save some fuel. The principle of redistribution from the wealthy to the modest is de facto implemented.

Taxation systems need to be effective – a precondition of political ethics. When systems are too complex or perfectionist, the risk of losses is great. When tax levels are too severe, the chances of tax evasion increase. Simple and effective systems such as tax at source, value-added tax (VAT), or taxes included in the pump price of petrol and diesel fit even better for countries with a weak administration. Linking payments to services provided proves in many cases more effective in terms of frugality and sensitisation.

Tax exemptions for the poor and subsidies to social groups or regions are often carried out in the name of solidarity. But this can introduce a hidden incentive to remain in dependency, which in the long run may frustrate the values of responsibility and equity, not to say personal dignity. Is it really right that some people are fully exempted at the expense of their dignity? Is it really sensible that taxes cannot be paid in kind, in the form of work beneficial to the community? Subsidies require great transparency in terms of cost and of targeting lest they end up in the pocket of the not needy.

Now a question should be raised: What if the bulk of taxes were levied not on income or savings but on CO_2 emissions and stock exchange transactions? Such a tax, initially proposed by Nobel Prize laureate

James Tobin for currency transactions, is technically workable but for optimal effect requires a worldwide commitment by all countries. It could prove simpler, more effective, and also equitable when one considers that emissions are a major threat to societies and transactions are at the heart of the economy. It would need of course to be applied in the majority of countries that count in the world economy so as to dispel risks of unfair competition. Poor people would pay some dollars on CO_2 emitted for their food, heating, transport, lighting. It would be as simple as VAT, but taxing emissions and transactions rather than consumption.

Present taxation systems are reaching a limit in terms of complexity and subsequent potential for flaws and leakages. Obviously there is a need to rethink systems, keeping in mind key values of political ethics and reaching a sound balance between sustainability, equity, responsibility, solidarity. Peace and security would result from neither undue exemption nor corruption. Unity with diversity would be represented by a simple method and a diversity of corrective measures.

4.3   Fighting corruption

Fighting corruption is today recognised as a battle of immense importance. The World Bank estimated that in 2001-2002 corruption sucked USD 1,000bn from the world economy. Today the figure could come to around 3% of total gross national incomes worldwide. The UN assessed global money-laundering at USD 3,000bn in 2008. According to the World Bank and Transparency International, developing and transition countries are robbed each year of USD 20-40bn, that is 20-40%, of international official development assistance. Corruption threatens not only fair competition, but also sustainability (it goes for short-term and opaque solutions), efficiency (corrupt bureaucracies), security (threats and violence by organised crime and mafia groups) and equity (privileges and disparities increase).

Some observers call corruption a cancer of society. A 1% increase in corruption decreases the growth rate of per capita income by about 1.7% in OECD and Asian countries, about 2.6% in Latin American countries, and 2.8% in African countries. One million in bribes may end up in a loss to society of hundreds of millions.

Corruption feeds on a legal void, contradictions between laws, governance weaknesses, lack of political will and bureaucratic over-complexities. It is hard to track: money is laundered and hidden, thanks to bank secrecy; then no claim can be made as there is no direct victim.

Corruption works as a system and needs to be tackled systematically in a consistent, multi-pronged strategy. Tackling single elements in isolation is futile. Action is needed simultaneously on several fronts:

- legal: laws, punishments, whistleblower protection, accountability
- political: will, code of conduct, political parties, a culture of accountability
- institutional: judiciary, police and financial supervision, anti-corruption agency
- international: consistent definitions and legal framework; cooperation in tracking
- business community: self-regulation, peer reviews, advocacy for fair competition
- civil service or administration: code of conduct, culture of fairness
- media: investigation, reporting threats
- academics: to document size and patterns as well as progress on the way out
- civil society: professional associations, religious and voluntary organisations
- individual citizens, users, customers, purchasers, taxpayers
- individual politicians, opinion and moral leaders – artists, scientists, businesspeople

It has to be tackled in its national as well as international dimension because corruption and money laundering go beyond borders. Pressure from different corners needs therefore to be organised. Specific diagnosis as well as proper phasing is also important: legal, political and institutional action is required from the beginning

Recent battles show that political corruption concentrates on the run-up to elections (when political parties are seeking campaign funds), tendering processes, and the privatisation of state-owned companies. But corruption cannot be limited to these time spans. It is pervasive. With the growing number and influence of politically connected companies and lobbyists, there is a major risk of political manipulation. Agencies fighting corruption must be independent.

Fighting corruption requires the engagement of many stakeholders, working at different levels. Such a "rainbow coalition" has little chance to succeed if it is not based on shared values, implemented within all three spheres of ethics: personal, associational, political. Fighting corruption at the level of personal honesty is necessary because petty corruption paves the way for grand corruption, but it is far from sufficient.

Groups matter. Loyalty to one's own family, ethnic or social group, or political party is not as such blameworthy. But such loyalty should not increase the pressure for returning benefits or favouring crooks and incompetent staff. Such pressure paves the way for corruption.

Commitment and pressure from civic associations, media, faith and religious movements, social networks and business is necessary.[62] An independent media needs to bite as well as bark.

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[62] In 2011, civic associations in India even resorted to hunger strike – led by an ageing rural activist Anna Hazare, disciple of Gandhi, backed by a Facebook campaign – demanding that Parliament pass a long-stalled provision to install local anti-corruption committees. Eventually the government agreed that activists would supply the chair and half the members of each committee. The value of inclusiveness was given its due.

Laws, institutions and political will are key. Experience in Hong Kong, Mauritius, Singapore and elsewhere shows that it may take over ten years of tenacious effort in fighting corruption to reach a point of no return.

Such a long battle has no chance to succeed unless it is backed by a solid platform of values shared in every corner of society and sustained over time.

5 Social Disparities and Conflicts

5.1 Definition of poverty and poverty reduction

Defining poverty is tricky. The World Bank defines poverty as a daily income of less than 2 dollars at purchasing power parity, and extreme poverty as less than 1.25 dollars. Communities – and the poor themselves – may define it in social terms, as social and even political exclusion: confined to the margin of one's own society, remaining voiceless, unheard in village negotiations, deprived of influence. Lack of access to basic amenities (water, housing, sanitation), basic facilities (roads, transport), or basic assets might also be considered.

Perceptions of poverty may also be closely linked to some level of perceived inequality in a given society. They may differ between North and South. Diversity of interpretation is also rooted in diversity of philosophy and the relative importance given to growth, goods, property and income, and fate. Declaring our assumptions is useful.

Even economic aspects have been downplayed: informal sector outputs are often left out of consideration. This explains why poor countries often show unexpected resilience in severe crisis. Similarly, remittances sent back home by citizens working abroad or returns from capital invested abroad have long been ignored.

Econometric definitions of poverty have gradually been refined: Gross Domestic Product per capita has been substituted by GDP per

capita at purchasing power parity, then supplemented by a factor to measure inequality of income or wealth, the GINI coefficient.

Looking only at money or income while ignoring ethical considerations is misleading. Money-based measures are obviously important, but as the Human Development Report 2010 reminds us, other deprivations and their overlap also need to be considered, especially because households facing multiple deprivations are likely to be worse off than income poverty measures alone suggest.[63] The recently developed Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index has now been supplemented by a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) that identifies and measures multiple deprivations. Access to health and education, entering the labour market, escaping from domestic violence are in many cases parts of a whole. The MPI measures access to amenities such as housing, food and education and helps to uncover long-term trends because it takes into account future impacts of present decisions. True, there is still room for adding social perceptions, but the former economic bias is already rebalanced.

Measurement matters. If the poverty line is set at an income of 1.25 dollars a day, the number of poor amounts to some 1.44 billion. Should the line be lifted to 2 dollars a day, then the number of poor soars to 2.6 billion. The Human Development Report 2010 assesses the number of multidimensional poor at 1.75 billion. As with health, how we diagnose poverty determines the treatment. Measurement also reflects ethical assumptions or preferences.

As a result, poverty reduction strategies suffer from bias and many shortcomings. At the individual level, an overemphasis on individual ef-

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[63] UNDP, *Human Development Report*, Oxford New York 2010, p. 94. "The IHDI takes into account not only a country's average human development, as measured by health, education and income indicators, but also how it is distributed". But the IHDI has some limitations: it cannot capture overlapping inequalities. This is why it is now substituted by the Multidimensional Poverty Index developed by the University of Oxford. See *http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/*; *www.ophi.org.uk/policy/multidimensional-poverty-index/*.

fort to get rid of poverty points to lack of effort or laziness as the main cause. At the social or political level, paternalism is ambivalent. Its aim is not to empower the poor so they can stand on their own feet; instead, it keeps them in constant dependency, with their head just above the water. Bureaucratic management blends control and suspicion with subsidies and hardly addresses systemic hurdles and structural disparities. Frustration and mistrust are bound to spiral upwards.

This is not to suggest that poverty reduction is easy. Delays in attaining the Millennium Development Goals bear witness to the difficulty. Fighting against poverty has a relatively poor record. Huge efforts have not yielded the expected results: poverty keeps on affecting the Roma in Europe, black communities in United States, indigenous people in Mexico, Bolivia, Australia, and scheduled tribes and castes in India, – not to mention the many other social groups, classes or remote regions that find it particularly hard to make their way out of poverty and vulnerability.

Failure or ineffectiveness of policies and programmes stems from a serious imbalance between the cardinal values of solidarity, responsibility, equity, unity with diversity, with direct consequences for peace and security as well as sustainability.

An ethical perspective draws attention to three key requirements of poverty reduction:

Keeping the individual and social dimensions together is critical: when either is ignored, downplayed or isolated, poverty reduction leads into a dead end. Poverty is at the intersection between personal, social and political ethics and should not be addressed from one side only. Individual and social approaches by associations often focus on relief and are limited to short-term aid. Root causes are not touched.

Solidarity should not be furthered at the expense of equity. Similarly, freedom and initiative are to be fostered and challenged rather than offered in small doses. Solidarity needs to aim at reaching an equitable end

stage. Affirmative action, although it may be required, should remain time-bound.[64] Long-lasting subsidies tend to turn into privileges; free services are mostly counterproductive. A contractual approach with specific supports and results commonly specified seems the most feasible and effective. This requires that poor individuals or groups are invited to the negotiation table as partners rather than supplicants.

Systemic hurdles need to be acknowledged and removed: such as de facto incentives to remain jobless or dependent, disincentives to pass a certain line, cumbersome bureaucratic procedures, failing micro-credit schemes, lack of access to the labour market, weak cooperation between administration and associations. Tailor-made solutions should be negotiated and agreed. Fine-tuning is often implemented by associations; it nevertheless requires an enabling policy framework set by government.

Fighting against poverty presupposes a multi-stakeholder platform where representatives of government, administration, associations, businesses, professionals, and beneficiaries sit together to assess the effectiveness of programmes in terms of equity, responsibility, and solidarity. Social creativity, shared values and an orientation to results lead to policies that prove economically and politically sound, solid and profitable.

At the political level, the most efficient incentives are land reform and access to micro-credit, rather than subsidies, welfare programmes or reserved seats that last beyond certain time limits.[65] Land reform does not necessarily mean full land ownership. A secure long-term lease may be an effective incentive for investment and work. Dovetailing grass-

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[64] There are many instances of subsidies, tax reliefs, incentives or positive discrimination that end up as permanent privileges that undermine equity and fairness, in particular against the nearest social groups.

[65] The experience of Bhimrao Ambedkar, advocate of the outcastes and main writer of the Indian Constitution in 1947 illustrates the limitation of keeping reserved seats for minorities: he started by requiring that outcaste parliamentarians be elected exclusively by the community of outcastes before realising the risk that those so elected would not be taken seriously by the other social groups and their plea for breaking down walls would not being heard. He hesitated between a separate electorate and reserved seats as the more effective strategy.

roots saving schemes with the banking system is a win-win for both sides! Equity is then given a solid chance.

At the social level, charity should be dispensed with as early as possible, lest it perpetuate dependence and limits responsibility. For instance, landless farmers may be given or sold some pieces of land so that they no longer have to cede half their production to the land owner or seed provider. This may be decided at village level and seen as the best way to guard against outbursts of violence and consequent damage. Social creativity is encouraged when volunteers and associations are given their head. Decisive breakthroughs are often achieved by volunteers and associations, relying on personal commitment, before being given official recognition.

Poverty cannot be seen as one-dimensional. Ethics matter in diagnosis as well as treatment. Empowerment is a strategic key dimension. The fight out of poverty needs to be fought by the poor themselves.

5.2   Post-conflict reconciliation

The last quarter of the twentieth century witnessed social conflicts whose cruelty, destructive nature, and systematic organisation and implementation defy understanding: genocide in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in ex-Yugoslavia, ideological cleansing in Cambodia.

In each case a symbolic dimension was exploited for political advantage, scapegoating particular ethnic or social groups as the root of all evil, and denying the reality of mixed marriages and the presence of moderate and peaceful groups. Everyone knows from experience that nothing is solved even if the scapegoats are driven out of the society.

In the name of symbols, millions of people were killed in a systematic and organised manner. The bodies raped or tortured, the people injured, traumatised or slain, can never be forgotten. These facts are not symbolic.

In the aftermath of conflict, politicians and people have to decide whether revenge is an effective remedy. They have to choose between an all-inclusive justice and a justice of the victors. They have to set priorities between truth and justice to best promote reconciliation.

True and lasting reconciliation requires justice for victims. Offenders must be brought to court, sentences passed and punishment carried out. Traumatised individuals must be properly healed, claims heard, and reparation or compensation made.

But it requires more. In the long run, it is politically risky to limit justice to the interests of the victors. Justice needs to be all-inclusive. Although this may be difficult when wounds are still open and security is still at stake, an inclusive truth and justice should not be postponed sine die. To be shared by all, values must be put into practice similarly by all and for all.

Reconciliation as a social process has to be implemented at the local level, in villages, in faith-based communities, in associations and corporations. This is why the Justice and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and the Gacaca tribunals[66] in Rwanda have played such an important role. Although different in many ways, the two systems focus on restorative rather than punitive justice, aiming to be both independent and close to communities, building on confession and regret.

To put an end to impunity and build a deep and lasting reconciliation requires a process that is not flawed by corruption, particular interests or individual punishment. Revenge or victor's justice creates the risk of counter-revenge and a new cycle of lethal violence.

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[66] In Rwanda, Gacaca tribunals were established in villages to sentence perpetrators, accomplices, conspirators and deal with crimes against property: they were inspired by traditional ways of handling crimes, punishing offenders and fostering reconciliation through rituals involving confession, apology and compensation. Crimes of genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law were brought before the International Criminal Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania; the tribunal can now also order the accused to be tried in Rwanda.

Inclusive social reconciliation demands consistency between legal proceedings, support for victims and healing of trauma, and truth about violence, regardless of who committed it. This requires a sound and balanced mix of values: justice as fairness, and cardinal values such as equity, responsibility, sustainability and solidarity, peace and security, unity and diversity.

A difficult question is whether it is preferable to deny ethnic identities in the interests of citizenship or keep on affirming them while avoiding damaging consequences. Either way requires checks over time and corrective measures, if needed, that are based on equity.

5.3 Migration and integration

Migration is not a recent phenomenon. It dates back to the origin of humanity. Our countries are populated by migrants: with the exception of the Rift Valley, the native inhabitants are just migrants who got there earlier.

New trends are developing: geographic regions such as Asia become increasingly attractive. Come-and-go migration and multi-stage migration are growing. "The notion that migration is a one-way movement or permanent settlement is outdated."[67] Migration out of countries with an unbalance between males and females, due to gender selection at or before birth, is anticipated with some fear. On the other hand, migrant families in developed countries contribute to demographic stability.

Several countries – in Europe but also Australia, Canada, even China[68] – face a political dilemma when it comes to integrating foreign migrants. Migrants who are not integrated may present a risk of ghettos lacking ordinary amenities and shielding them from law and order; mi-

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[67] Philippe Legrain, *Aftershock. Reshaping the World Economy After Crisis,* London 2010. See also Migration Policy Institute, Washington DC: *www.migrationpolicy.org/*

[68] For instance, the province of Guangzhou, the economic engine of China, shelters some 100,000 African immigrants.

grants who are integrated may claim the right to live according to their own customs, which are not necessarily aligned with the national legal framework.

Uncontrolled immigration worries many host countries. Commitment and responsibility of immigrant families to their host country look at stake. Part of the problem is that immigration is driven on both sides mainly by economic considerations and that integration has been handled overwhelmingly as an economic and infrastructural question related to jobs, housing, social security, transport. Adherence to political values and principles for living together has been neglected; command of host country language(s) and knowledge of its history have been ignored. Religious specificities are addressed mainly in local, practical, everyday terms: the layout of cemeteries, holidays, and worship buildings.

Populists regularly draw on symbol and sentiment to criticise ineffective policies or weaknesses in their implementation instead of tackling the failures at the appropriate level. Scapegoating foreign migrants for problems of law and order is typical of such confusion. An appeal to national identity very often hides real problems of management and will not help in finding an effective solution. Celebrating a multiracial winning soccer team as a mark of successful integration is not the same as effective and full membership of migrants in their host country. Such symbolic statements may even deepen frustration, feed the feeling that double standards prevail, and widen the gap at the level of daily implementation and social behaviour. Symbolic solutions do not solve real problems!

States need to formulate consistent immigration policies and strive for transparent implementation. Countries have limitations and should welcome the number of migrants their economy can absorb. Clandestine immigration runs into bribes, frustration, exploitation, black markets. Integration, on the other hand, has to be explicitly demanded and consis-

tently supported. At the local level, voting rights or at least regular con-
sultation may promote reciprocity, trust and responsibility on each side.

5.4   Cultural diversity under a single legal umbrella

In a globalised world, more and more countries face the need to
adapt one-size-fits-all policies to accommodate a diversity of faiths, cul-
tures and customs.

It is easy to accept diversity of uses such as diet, cooking, dressing
and funeral rites. The arguments begin when it comes to matrimonial
rights, divorce and compensation, gender equality, inheritance, religious
tolerance, and freedom of religious conversion.

Divergences in social matters such as imposed marriage, terms of di-
vorce and legacy, polygamy, inheritance, conflicts within the commu-
nity, custody and violence, genital mutilation have been condoned or
concealed. Judicial issues with many symbolic dimensions have been
simply overruled by the principle of the equality of all inhabitants and
freedom of opinion. Such subjects are often not discussed openly with
community representatives, and no recourse to arbitration by the com-
munities themselves is allowed – even within precise limits set and
framed by principles. Such omissions result in ghettoisation and weak
inclusion. It is wise to make room for specific cultural exceptions and
institutional mechanisms that avoid clashes with high legal principles
and allow communities to feel affirmed as well as challenged by politi-
cal and legal principles. It is wise not to compromise on principles that
secure effective equity and responsibility.

The ethical challenge is about equity and responsibility but also the
most suitable balance between unity and diversity. Where to draw the
border between the private sphere and citizenship? When it comes to
drawing that line, what process is the most fair to all parties? Negotia-
tion between government and community representatives should be en-
couraged, but there is no reason why elders – in most cases, male and

conservative elders or religious leaders – should be given exclusive rights to speak on behalf of their community. Respect of a certain diversity, inclusive of minority groups and claimed by them, should not stop at their own gates.

Constructive solutions draw on the principles of delegation and subsidiarity. The government – central or local – may delegate some issues and the implementation of some rules to be handled within the community and according to its traditions or rituals. The mandate should be specified in clear and precise terms and should include the basic principles of the host country that are to be respected, in particular those regarding fairness to all, freedom and equity. It should also specify a process to monitor the delegation and set deadlines for revision in the light of experience. Special care should be given to secure that dissenting voices are heard in the name of diversity. Then may begin a learning and interactive process that pays respect to unity and diversity and aims at an optimal balance between community customs and consistency with constitutional principles.

6 Managing Information Ethically

Access to solid and reliable information is becoming critical in today's world. It gives an edge in competition between countries, regions, and cities, companies, producers and traders, associations and individuals. Sales of mobile phones in Africa are soaring, and the sight of a farmer in his village calling the trader in town to inquire about prices helps to explain the boom!

Challenges lie in both the scarcity and the excess of information. Some strive to discover information, others struggle in a flood of data to identify which information is relevant or reliable.

Politically it is hard to fully control the flow of information, even for authoritarian regimes. Closing websites or cyber attacks are partial and provisional measures. Laws on privacy are seriously challenged.

6.1 Right to information: the case of India

Secretive government corrodes democracy, encourages corruption, and undermines good policymaking. It is damaging to companies, associations and individuals. More than 80 countries have passed Freedom of Information Acts setting out the right of citizens to access to public information, so that governance is improved and corruption curbed.

The Indian Right to Information Act, passed in 2005, is one of the most comprehensive.[69] It forces public authorities and administration to open their files on solicitation by citizens and inform citizens about their rights, the stage of a claim made or an application submitted, the process of public tendering and parliamentary decisions. Deadlines are set and fines enforced in case of civil servants dragging their feet in complying. The Act was passed under pressure by citizens and NGOs, scandalised to see the industrialists responsible for the Bhopal gas leak – one of the world's worst industrial disasters – not held to account or dam-building companies and bureaucracy being protected after the tender process was rigged.

The Act has empowered individuals and communities. It has been positive in checking corruption as well as improving transparency and efficiency in administration. It has been preventive, in that administrative documents and processes are now formatted or circulated to meet RTI standards and avoid possible claims. A monitoring system is in place, and reports submitted allow corrections and improvements to be made.

Some abuses have been reported, such as launching slanders, paralysing the administration through dumping thousands of claims, or ac-

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[69] The Bophal tragedy in 1984 was a catalyst. The struggle for the right to information lasted some 15 years. NGO activists and eminent civil society leaders such as Sekhar Singh and Aruna Roy of the National Campaign for People's Right to Information played a key role in persuading the government to take action on that subject, as was done by the Congress Party once back in power. Civil society representatives are today involved in the commissions in charge of monitoring implementation of the law.

cess to restricted information for political advantage or professional competition. Age-old customs of concealing, bribing, and blackmailing have not vanished overnight and obstacles – not to say threats – are still put in the way. But the pressure on politicians from civil society, aided by websites and social networks, is mounting. The Act exerts a preventive role, even prior to implementation, as shown in a planned and now cancelled construction of a huge mall close to the Taj Mahal in 2009. Over three and a half years, two million requests have been submitted. And today Anna Hazare has developed a national citizen network tracking corruption, money laundering and fiscal evasion. Some ministers feel under heavy pressure, and unfair treatment of marginalised groups is more easily checked than before!

The values embedded in such information laws are political: rule of law, equality of all in front of the administration, public institutions serving the public, discretionary powers contained and limited, the responsibility of citizens and the accountability of politicians stressed.

The solution has not been limited to some more open and gentle attitudes of political leaders and civil servants. Formal freedom of media has been considered as necessary but not sufficient. Inclusiveness of the Act and its opening to average citizen as well as active Information Commission are critical ingredients of its success.

6.2   Electronic communication

A third revolution in communication is happening, following the first two: from word to scripture and from handwriting to print. The Internet is growing exponentially in speed, coverage and access, in many parts of the world thanks to smart phones. Both universal access to free information and the social utility of free information become a reality. Companies are invited to bid online for public contracts and meet transparency standards. Torture and other abuses of human rights may be documented online. Political violence and the suppression of dissent

may be reported worldwide in real time. Protesters who are updated and informed in minutes can interact more easily than ever. But messenger as well as recipient move forward masked, raising questions of authenticity and accountability.

These technologies are not only the conduit of communication but also shape communication in itself. They render communication fluid, immediate and interactive. They foster new ways of meeting and collaborating, transcending distance, nationality, ethnic identity and social class. They also allow immediate meta-communication, commentary on the communication process, so that blocking access to given information is immediately seen as a mark of its importance. A corrosive statement may be countered in a minute and lose its venom.

They are used for e-government, or at least for e-administration. They are used to bypass security systems and reveal what was hidden behind Official Secrets Acts, under embargo, restricted. They can save as well as spoil lives, serve as highways for hackers or equip targets with large shields, allow worldwide exchanges of knowledge such as Wikipedia, Britannica, World Book or Globethics.net. They can also blur communication. Open-source aficionados and "big brother" use the same spoon. Neutral observers and manipulators feed at the same table. Encrypters and hackers look like twins playing hide and seek. Blogging or chatting on Facebook or Twitter may say much or nothing at all.[70]

What cannot be disputed is that they improve transparency in exchange of information and mobilisation. They sustain globalisation but not at expense of diversity.[71] Such use should not be restricted because of abuses. Social networks cannot be praised when they feed Arab and

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[70] Facebook boasts over 800 million users, and Twitter 100 million and a billion tweets. Surveillance is carried out by the US Federal Trade Commission, checking to what extent both networks respect privacy law and imposes regular external audit, and monitoring by Center for Digital Democracy, an NGO that encourages activists to claim their rights.

[71] Wikipedia today has more than 20 sites in Indian languages. The Swahili site has 20,000 entries. Only 20% of the total Wikipedia material is in English.

other uprisings abroad and condemned at home when they expose tricky operations. Use of personal data and respect of privacy remain largely unchecked thank to the difficulty to check in such cases. A tighter regulatory framework needs to be set up.

Political management of these new media raises ethical issues. Some have to do mainly with political frameworks while others regard the protection of individual users.

To a certain extent, governments find it an advantage not to interfere and rely on self-regulation, as in the case of Wikipedia.[72] A lying statement will be rapidly flushed out and then lose its credibility. Wikipedia in its own domain has to avoid being turned into a hotchpotch. An editorial board is now screening accuracy when debated and eliminating slander.

But where should governments set the limit? For instance, if a call is posted to murder all members of an ethnic, political or racial group, should the police not look into this? What about indoctrination that may end up in addiction or mass suicide? What about websites that propagate child-pornography or cruelty? The value that comes first here is responsibility for the social consequences. Civil society seems here the most appropriate player.

With respect to security and peace, states have to cater for needed secrecy and restrict politically sensitive information but also develop protection against voracious worms. Laws should continue to punish defamation and incitement to hatred or murder and fine hoaxers for damage caused. The value that comes first here is responsibility for the political consequences. States need to lift up barriers and improve protection of restricted data of strategic relevance.

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[72] Wikipedia originally accepted all contributions but had gradually to set up a screening process in order to block slander and propaganda. Quality assurance is the responsibility of the community of contributors and only in selected cases that of the editor.

In political-ethical terms, new media pose a specific challenge in that they may spread false rumours or undermine secret negotiations in a second without being called to account. At the same time they may spread essential information at the same speed. Accountability, the capacity to check authenticity, and the protection of privacy are under pressure. The biggest difficulty occurs when great damage is caused but nobody can be held responsible.

Policies should also protect privacy and shield children surfing on the net. Privacy is invaded partly because people expect information about "celebrities" and politicians but should be more decisively protected. It becomes fashionable to expose oneself without knowing all the consequences. Children need parents' support to enhance their capacity to unmask cheaters or to tell game from reality, cloud from society. Civil society groups can sensitise, train, monitor, whereas blocking websites may end up in endless tracking. It could be more effective just to black list them, then mobilise associations.

An effective strategy should base itself on responsibility for consequences, set up mechanisms to sharpen accountability, and spread out consistently between and within the three spheres: political, associational and individual. Protection could be organised stepwise: International coordination of policies has to set common standards and enforce them. Then a mediator offering advice and succour to those whose private life is exposed against their wish. If attacks continue, some effective measures are called for – and in the end, the courts.

9

Conclusion. Lessons and Theses

1 Lessons Drawn

The main lessons drawn from historical experience in many cultures and schools of thought may be summarised as follows:

Questions about ethics in politics spring up everywhere, in each culture, whatever the terms used. Demands for a just politics or a stop to unjust politics can be found in every country. It seems arrogant just to declare the question irrelevant.

The relationship between politics and ethics oscillates between close alignment and almost complete mutual exclusiveness. For some, politics cannot but be spoiled by ethical norms, expectations or projections. The diversity of relationship bears witness to the complexity of the topic as well as of creativity of interpreters. Ethics appears to be more an art than a science.

Power and religion have long been bedfellows: power was close to divine authority and always tended to assume some sacred features, in particular when heavily concentrated. Religious and political leaders have often looked to one another for cooperation and mutual support. Desacralising politics was and still is a long struggle.

All traditions, even including realpolitik, concede some value to justice and fairness in domestic policies as well as international relations, in particular when it matters to rely on people's commitment.

It has been and is still disputed whether the main driving force of ethics in politics is public usefulness, public good, righteousness, fairness, or commonly contracted interests.

Scepticism about the relevance of ethics in politics persists, fed mainly by the experience of human failures and disasters but also by the constant gaps between declaration and implementation, promise and realisation. Scepticism may express a sense of modesty and realism. On the other side, idealistic policies serve ethics but are rarely implemented.

Legalist schools can be viewed as ways to remain modest about the goals and aims of politics and tough about process. They stress discipline and abiding by rules and laws so as to secure order and avoid war or other damaging conflicts.

Whereas an intense revival of ethics can nowadays be observed in domains such as health and medical interventions, economics and corporate business responsibility, the environment, and public administration, the political domain remains largely untouched, not to say ignored, by ethical elaboration. Politicians look paralysed or annoyed when the topic comes up for debate. Many scholars confine themselves to assessing the de facto interaction between political interests, or denouncing double standards, hidden agendas or unintended dissimulation.

Decisive steps are taken each time political power is subjected to binding limitations, such as constitutions, checks and balances, delegation of power to lower levels of government, time-bound political tenures and competing political parties' programmes.

Limitation of power may vary according to systems adopted. How it is limited is less decisive than the principle itself. Leadership and consultation both have to take into consideration, but the weighting of each varies with particular political traditions.

2   Fourteen Theses

1.   Ethics in politics matters more than ever. It does not strive for an ideal or perfect but merely optimal politics. Ethics adds a decisive value to politics by securing fair treatment of political stakeholders, stressing equity and fairness, reminding us that the limitation of

power is essential in politics, and adding a long-term perspective. By contrast, impunity, arbitrariness and cruelty cannot count on wide support, either in individual societies or in the community of nations.

2. Key for politics is to limit power by constitutions, checks and balances, an independent judiciary, devolution, delegation, political competition and mechanisms of accountability. Left to itself, power tends to remove or reduce limitations. Not limiting power paves the way to autocracy and dictatorship.

3. The core ethical value in politics is justice, interpreted as fairness and reciprocity. Six cardinal values articulate justice on six key axes: equity, freedom and responsibility, security and peace, unity along with diversity, solidarity without dependence, sustainability. A sound politics finds some optimal level of achievement on each axis, reaching a healthy balance rather than an average of minimal and maximal. Overall consistency is part of sound ethics in politics, resulting in more stable and less erratic politics.

4. Ethical assessment of politics may be summarised in the following question: To what extent are laws and rules, political institutions and decisions contributing to and producing more justice, deeper fairness, more sustainability, greater responsibility? Ethics in politics is measured by consequences and not primarily declared intentions.

5. Ethics in politics reminds us that policies, political programmes and actions to meet the challenges faced by societies, humanity and the Earth cannot be limited to technocratic approaches. Know-how is indeed necessary, but not sufficient. Goals and long-term objectives are assessed against values. The interests of the Earth and of future generations are taken as requirements.

6. Ethics is at the heart of a constructive tension between values and interests, keeping interests as well as values on the agenda rather

than preferring one against the other or making them mutually exclusive. The way conflicts are settled and compromises shaped is strengthened by referring to the six cardinal values, assessing in particular how each is taken into consideration and realised. Lasting and sustainable agreements are based on shared values combined with common interests. The interdependence of today's and tomorrow's world calls for shared values beyond parochial or short-term interests.

7. Convergence rather than strict alignment between principles, laws, systems, institutions and decisions is the goal. In a fluctuating and mostly unpredictable environment, ethics in politics cannot confine itself to implementing principles. Overall consistency and broad convergence is what matters, rather than a mechanical cascading.

8. Ethics in politics considers economics and in particular economic limitations and resources as essential reference points for any political priority claiming to be realistic. It seeks also to highlight sound choices related to economic policy and establish true costs.

9. It is not enough to copy and paste ethics from the personal to the political domain or to confine ethics in politics to the honest intentions of rulers. The road to hell is paved with good intentions; like anyone else, rulers may do dreadful things with a good heart and a clear conscience.

10. Ethics in politics takes advantage of the individual commitments of rulers, judges, civil servants and citizens. It takes into account pressure from associations and stresses stakeholder responsibility and commitment. Groups lobby to build a wide platform that may subsequently enjoy social acceptance. Shared platforms of values among stakeholders are critical, even if the government sets the framework, guides the negotiations, and acts as leader, taking advantage of good practices pioneered by associations.

11. Human rights are built on a solid ethical foundation and translate values into limits not to be exceeded and opposable rights. Ethics in politics is more than human rights. It is about negotiable policies, programmes, agency. It refers to future consequences and overall sustainability.

12. Ethics in politics is about process and agency as well as vision and political or programmatic objectives. Trust and confidence are built incrementally through processes that are respectful of stakeholders and open to dissenters and assessed jointly. Systems and processes are expected to match values. Consistency minimises political risks.

13. Democracy is better able than other systems to take into account the ethical requirement of politics. A functioning democracy is accountable and cannot but listen to citizen expectations.

14. Ethics in politics requires regular evaluation of consequences, learning from experience how ethics works out in practice and taking corrective or adaptive measures. Staying alert and constantly asking questions is a political advantage.

Appendices

1 Declaration on Ethics in Politics

Why it matters more than ever and how it can make a difference

Challenges

1. Lessons need to be drawn from the recent past. Decades of economic and political crises, scandalous behaviour, voices ignored and unheard, suffering and war have destroyed decent government in many parts of the world. In some but not all cases subsequent developments have built fruitfully upon constructive dialogue, international economic, cultural and interreligious cooperation, and joint political efforts to overcome crises and achieve genuine reconciliation.

2. The current challenges of a globalised, closely interdependent and polycentric world and their bearing upon future generations, together with the opportunities offered by grassroots governance, require political leadership imbued with vision and responsibility, careful of global goods and responsive to such challenges as climate change, the encounter of cultures, global migration, economic and financial crises, organised crime, and international terrorism.

3. We need a change of paradigm in the way politics is shaped and realised by both politicians and citizens.

4. Politics is about struggling for power, trade-offs and compromises between individual, local, national, regional and international interests. Although the opposite is widely felt to be true, power is not necessarily and unavoidably evil. Indeed, an idealistic politics may

prove deceitful, but ethics in politics may start with modest steps, even in difficult situations.

5. Ethics in politics requires the commitment not only of the executive branch of government but also of parliamentarians, judges, and civil servants, companies, banks and corporations, and civil society at large.

Principles on Using Power

6. Politics can evolve in a virtuous way once political actors adopt three basic principles:

- Power should be limited by institutions and procedures, the rule of law, power sharing, devolution and mandates, open and fair competition, and a sense of modesty;

- Power should be accountable to the common good, the community and its representatives, setting the ground for wider acceptance and commitment, securing smooth change and reducing retribution;

- Power should be effective and efficient, results-driven, turning assets into benefits for all and containing the corruption that captures common wealth for particular interests.

7. Power exercised in these ways serves sound governance, preventing populism, autocracy and dictatorial rule.

Cardinal Ethical Values in Politics

8. While freedom and equality before the law are the governing principles of higher forms of political community, it is justice, the ethics of reciprocity, and the refusal of arbitrariness that serve as the cornerstone of civilised life and promote the common good.

9. Human dignity requires inalienable respect, in particular by avoiding any kind of cruelty and arbitrariness. Contextual values may vary, but the ethic common to all human beings should govern political actors, political activity and political processes.

10. Those exercising political or administrative functions must accept full ethical responsibility for their decisions, actions and omissions – towards their own constituency, in the first place, but also towards neighbouring and future constituencies;

11. Politics for the common good must serve more than short-term, myopic interests and power positioning;

12. Equal access to resources, information and influence and sound governance are rights due to all human beings, regardless of their citizenship, cultural background, stage of development, religious affiliation or socioeconomic position;

13. Governance is enhanced by institutions that control and limit power in its various forms, encouraging pluralism of opinion, political competition and citizen participation;

14. In meeting the challenges of a globalised, interdependent world, six ethical values in politics are cardinal:

- Identity with diversity: combining national sovereignty, pride, and independence with diversity of cultures and backgrounds, avoiding the traps of ethnic purity and populism.

- Peace and security: maintaining a state monopoly on violence and managing conflicts through the regulated use of force, fostering self-rule, backing a culture of peace, respect, dialogue, reciprocal commitment, and reconciliation.

- Responsibility and freedom: focusing on the interaction between freedom and responsibility, promoting initiative and risk-taking, acknowledging human rights, being committed to open reporting.

- Equity: abiding by the rule of law, promoting equal access to resources, information and influence, tackling any tendency towards privilege or discrimination.

- Solidarity: developing fair mechanisms of cooperation with impoverished regions and underprivileged minorities or social groups, without paternalism or creating lasting dependency.

- Sustainability: securing an effective respect towards the earth and the future by refraining from overexploiting natural resources, limiting environmental damage and fining polluters, managing public goods prudently, and looking for reasonable trade-offs between immediate, long-term and earth-wide interests.

15. The six values in this ethical hexagon are interconnected and inter-dependent. All six need minimal realisation if every country is to play its part on the world scene and contribute as a partner to global progress. If instead global politics serves particular interests, defends privilege, or succumbs to self-delusion, policies and actions in the long run are bound to fail.

Fair Political Processes

16. The political process has to harvest inputs and commitments from diverse stakeholders before setting the direction;
17. It should avoid over-legislating and over-complicated systems where no-one knows who is responsible for what;
18. It should prefer simple systems of incentives and breaks; and governments should be able to acknowledge some degree of uncertainty;
19. Where shared values are first sought as common ground, political negotiations, at domestic, international or global levels, have better chances of success;
20. Introducing ethical analysis discreetly into the discussion of government rulings, laws and regulations, highlighting the processes involved, and evaluating them regularly can elevate the quality, legitimacy and accountability of public policymaking and improve its effectiveness.
21. We call on all responsible decision-makers and citizens to use ethics to nurture and enhance politics.

This declaration was developed by the Globethics.net online workgroup "Ethics in Politics", especially by Ambassador Dr Benoît Gi-

rardin, Switzerland, with Ambassador Prof. Osvaldo Agatiello, Argentina, and Prof. Sangeeta Sharma, India. The Globethics.net Board of Foundation acknowledged the declaration on 23 October 2010.

2 Glossary of Main Terms

Accountability: Requirement to assume responsibilities, exhibit processes and results, and report publicly to the main stakeholders

Effectiveness: Attainment of relevant goals with economic use of resources

Equity: Justice beyond mere legality; equitable distribution; just handling by judges; equity differs from equality

Equality: Equal basic rights, equal votes and welfare, freedom from discrimination.

Ethics: Sometimes equivalent to morality; mainly used for conceptual thoughts, or architecture of principles on which moral decisions are then based

Force: Strength**,** clout**,** capacity to impose, not by influence but through pressure, threats or weapons

Governance: Consistent management. Exercise of political authority and use of institutional resources to manage society's problems and affairs (World Bank). Good governance means responsible, effective and accountable governance

Justice: Fairness, reciprocity, equity – opposed to arbitrariness, cruelty. Alignment with laws. Fair resolution of disputes and punishment of wrongs

Morality: Sometimes equivalent to ethics; mainly used for applied ethics, concrete behaviour oriented to the good and the bad

Policy: Consistent framework of goals, objectives and priorities, strategies and processes, as well as expected results set by the government or proposed by the opposition, to address problems identified in a given public domain or sector

Politics: Art of governing a country and of struggling to retain power

Polity: A geographic area with a corresponding government

Power: Capacity to produce intended effect (Bertrand Russell) and to mobilise the resources of society to attain goals to which a general public commitment may be made (Talcott Parsons)

Realpolitik: Politics or diplomacy based primarily on power and interests, ways to defend one's own interests and positions and resort to power or influence for such a purpose

Responsibility: Assumption of consequences of decisions or actions. Means also responding to the courts or to peers

Rights: Entitlement of what is owed to people or allowed to them; moral claim for inalienable, equal and just treatment; legal rights enforceable in the courts of a specific legal system; rights limit the ruler's power

Rule of law: When government decisions apply known principles or laws with minimal discretion in their application – opposed to arbitrary behaviour.

Solidarity: Making concessions to a weaker party or group to offset too-serious disparities or reduce the gap

State: form of organised society in a given territorial area, able to deal with neighbours and peers, having a monopoly of legitimate use of force (Max Weber). States may be healthy, fragile, hybrid or failing

Subsidiarity: Principle that political decisions should always be made at the lowest possible level of government (Steven D. Tansey)

Sustainability: Feature of a system or process that makes it last and live on its own resources. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Gro Harlem Brundtland). Sustainability is about stabilising the currently disruptive relationship between earth's two most complex systems – human culture and the living world. (Paul Hawken)

Systems: Possible forms of the state, prevailing ways of settling conflict and keeping society altogether: feudal, tribal, dictatorial, democratic, parliamentary, aristocratic, royal, imperial, federal, etc.

Values: Guiding principles or stakes that are not compromised for financial gain or short term expediency

3 Indicators

A   Public governance indicators

World Bank Governance Indicators

Voice and accountability: political process, civil liberties and political rights, independence of media
Political stability and absence of violence: perceptions that government will be destabilised or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means
Government effectiveness: quality of public service provision, of bureaucracy, competence of civil servants, independence of civil service from politicians
Regulatory quality: incidence of market-unfriendly policies
Rule of law: incidence of violent or non-violent crime, effectiveness and predictability of the judiciary, enforceability of contracts
Control of corruption (exercise of public power for private gain)

www.worldbank.org/governance

Mo Ibrahim Foundation
Safety and rule of law: rule of law, accountability, personal safety, national security
Participation and human rights: participation, rights, gender
Sustainable economic opportunities: public management, business environment, infrastructure, rural sector
Human development: welfare, education and health

www.moibrahimfoundation.org

OECD - Government at a Glance

Government capacity to deal with complex problems and strategic challenges: percentage of senior workers in public and private sectors
Efficiency: public expenditure as percentage of GDP; fiscal consolidation; efficiency gains; public jobs as percentage of labour force; regulatory impact analysis
Transparency and accountability: frequently stated core public service values

www.oecd.org

Global Integrity Index

Focus: existence and effectiveness of anti-corruption mechanisms and mechanisms that prevent abuses of power and promote public integrity. Access of citizen and business to these mechanisms.

Civil society, public information and media (CSO, media, access to information)

Elections (voting and participation, integrity, political financing)

Government accountability (executive, legislative, judicial, budget accountability)

Administration and Civil Service (Regulations, Whistle-blowing, Procurement, Privatisation)

Oversight and Regulation (Ombudsman, Audit, Taxes and Customs, State-owned enterprises,..)

Anti corruption and Rule of Law (Anticorruption Law, Agency, Rule of Law, Law Enforcement)

www.report.globalintegrity.org

B   Social progress indicators

Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress: Report by Joseph E. Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, Paris 2009.

Economic Production: GDP

Well-being (looking at distribution of income and consumption rather than production; median rather than average):

i.   Material Living standards (Income, consumption, wealth; household perspective)
ii.   Health
iii. Education
iv.   Personal activities including work
v.   Political voice and governance
vi.   Social connections and relationships
vii. Environmental conditions (present and future)
viii. Insecurity of an economics as well as a physical nature

Sustainability (future well-being):

i.   Concentration of green house gases
ii.   Proximity to dangerous levels of climate changes
iii. Stocks of natural resources
iv.   Ecological footprint

www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr

Measurement of life quality and prosperity by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office 12 indicators linking social, economical and ecological areas, 2011			
Social solidarity	**Economic efficiency**	**Environmental responsibility**
Teenage reading skills	Investment	Built-up areas
Physical safety	Innovation and technology	Biodiversity
Health	Public sebt	
Cross-cutting Official development assistance Passenger transport Freight transport Material consumption Energy consumption			
www.bfs.admin.ch			

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Main websites

- *International Network for Ethical Governance: www.cfr.org*
- *Globethics.net: www.globethics.net*
- *Global Ethics. University of Birmingham:*
  www.globalethics.bham.ac.uk
- *Dictionary of Ethical Politics: www.resurgence.opendemocracy.net*
- *Transparency International: www.transparency.org*
- *UNDP Human Development Report: hdr.undp.org/en/reports/hdr/*
- *World Bank: www.worldbank.org*
- *Open Democracy: www.opendemocracy.net*
- *Open Budget Survey: internationalbudget.org*
- *Carnegie Council: www.carnegiecouncil.org*

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1   Christoph Stückelberger / J.N.K. Mugambi (eds.), *Responsible Leadership. Global and Contextual Perspectives*, 2007, 358 pp.

2   Heidi Hadsell / Christoph Stückelberger (eds.), *Overcoming Fundamentalism. Ethical Responses from Five Continents*, 2009, 212 pp. (232 pp. with additional Indonesian article)

3   Christoph Stückelberger/Reinhold Bernhardt (eds.), *Calvin Global. How Faith Influences Societies*, 2009, 257 pp.

4   Ariane Hentsch/Shanta Premawardhana (eds.): *Sharing Values. A Hermenutics for Global Ethics*, 2010, 340 pp.

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1   Christoph Stückelberger, *Das Menschenrecht auf Nahrung und Wasser. Eine ethische Priorität*, 2009, 78 pp.

2   Christoph Stückelberger, *Corruption-Free Churches are Possible. Experiences, Values, Solutions*, 2010, 250 pp.

3   Vincent Mbavu Muhindo, *La République Démocratique du Congo en panne. Un bilan 50 ans après l'indépendance*, 2011, 380pp.

4   *The Value of Values in Business. Global Ethics Forum 2011 Report and Recommendations,* 2011, 90pp.

5   Benoît Girardin, *Ethics in Politics: Why it matters more than ever and how it can make a difference* , 2012, 172 pp.

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Why it matters more than ever and
How it can make a difference

This book is an affirmation: Yes, ethics in politics is possible – and it pays off. It is not a naive dream. The author chooses a pragmatic approach and tests whether value-orientation can make a difference in politics and how. He presents practical cases and outlines criteria for dealing with dilemmas. He singles out four fundamental ethical values to achieve: limitation of power, effectiveness, accountability and justice. He develops a global and intercultural perspective, referring to Western and Eastern traditions and some world religions. In a globalised, interdependent world of pluralistic societies, ethics in politics becomes a global ethics in politics. A book for practitioners such as politicians, activists and interested citizens, for debate and orientation.

The Author

Benoît Girardin (1943-) worked for the Swiss Ministry for Foreign Affairs for many years, as Ambassador in Madagascar and Delegate of Development Cooperation in Romania, Pakistan, and Cameroon. He is a doctor in theology, lecturer in ethics, political philosophy and international relations at the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, and interim rector of a Protestant university in Rwanda.

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