

Globethics.net

# Global and Contextual Ethics

## Explorations for the Future Journey

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# 1. Personal Experiences: 50 years

1960 Childhood, village Neunkirch/Switzerland: uniform culture, open to the world

1970 High school Aarau: liberation, postcolonial injustice

1974f Studies Limuru/Kenya: prayer book, whichcraft, Muslim

1970-80: global solidarity in a bi-polar world

1980-90: aid and trade, environmental ethics

1990-00: globalization, open borders, internet, mobile

2000-10: global values, inter-religious, fundamentalism, protectionism

## 2.1 Global Developments: 1970-2010

	Geo-Politics	Economy	Environment	Religions	Ethics
1970-1980	Bi-polar USA-UdSSR post-colonial	Regulated, international and regional	Beginning of environm'tal movements	N: atheism, secularism transformatio	Inculturation Contextualisa tion
1980-1990	Bi-polar USA (-UdSSR) Post-colonial	Liberalization and new technologies	N-S, Env-Dev Conventions and laws	Regional shifts, increa- se/decrease	Growing ethical pluralism
1990-2000	Unipolar: USA/Europe	1989-2007 Neoliberal globalization	Green technologies	Revival of rel, multireligious +conservative	Global, multicultural, multisectoral
2000-2010	Multi-polar Asia, BRIC	2007 ff regulated globalization	Green economies	Revival, multireligious +fundament.	Global in globalised domains

## 2.2 Ethics Influenced by Society

Concepts of global and contextual ethics are strongly influenced by

- Geo-political trends and superpowers
- Economic trends
- Lifestyles influenced by economic devel.
- New technologies (information, medical, bio, energy)
- Shocks, crises, wars, disasters
- Cultural developments
- Religious, theological trends
- Political instrumentalisation of religions

## 2.3 Ethics: Re-active and Pro-active

Ethics is normally re-active and pro-active, but should be more pro-active:

### Re-active (legitimising):

- New technologies → changing values
- New economic levels → changing lifestyles
- New political models → adapted ethics

### Pro-active (transforming):

- New spirituality → new ethical behaviour
- Ethical benchmarks → de-legitimising policies
- Renewed values → new economy and politics

## 3.1 Global Ethics Models

Model	Description	Examples
<b>Domination</b>	„We have the truth“ one model valid for all	Some religious ethics
<b>Confrontation</b>	„You or me“ Clash of Civilisations	Fundamentalisms
<b>Syncretisation</b>	„All are the same“ Forget the differences	Mystic ethics, new age
<b>Contextualisation</b>	„Global values adapted to my context“	Christian Business Ethics in Kenya
<b>Regionalisation</b>	„We have the same values in our region“	„Asian Values“ „African Culture“
<b>Glocalisation</b>	„Think global, act local“	Global Climate Justice, local energy saving

## 3.2 Global Ethics Theories

### Essentialist Theory

- Morality and values are essentially determined by the true nature of (some aspects of) the world
- Moral order is the extension of the natural order/natural law
- Ethical values are therefore universal

### Convergence Theory

- Behind different contextual values is a convergence of principles
- Descriptive model: common principles exist, visible or invisible
- Normative model: common principles should be developed

### Contractual Theory

- a value/norm is binding for those who have consented to it
- People's consent is necessary and sufficient for the justification of a value/norm.



## 3.3 Global Ethics Efforts

*Four examples of international global ethics efforts and processes:*

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- Core fundamental values to be respected in form of rights
- Mainly contractual, agreed by community of UN member states
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and follow up conventions for economic, cultural and social rights, African charter, Islamic charter etc.

### Unesco: A common Framework for the Ethics of 21st Century

- „Unesco Universal Ethics Project“ 1996-1999
- Mainly convergence approach in philosophical and humanist perspective, with four principles based on „Universality in Diversity“.
- „A common Framework for the Ethics of the 21st Century“ (1999)

## 3.3 Global Ethics Efforts (continued)

### Hans Küng: Global Ethic (Weltethos)

- Five common basic values across cultures and religions build the foundation of a global ethic (not ethics) and is to be promoted
- Mainly essentialist, top-down, interreligious approach
- „Declaration toward a Global Ethic“ (1993, Parliament of World's Religions)

### Globethics.net: Global and Contextual Values

- Strengthen global values while respecting contextual diversity
- Convergence and contractual, bottom-up approach, through global networking and intercultural and interreligious research
- „Globethics.net Principles of Sharing Values“ (2009, 25 principles, Nairobi/Lukenya Conference)

## 4.1 Future: Scenarios (analytical)

### Scenario 1: Domination of Asian Values

- 21st century as century of Asia: China and India dominate economy
- Value systems dominated by Confucianism, Hinduism, Secularism

### Scenario 2: Regionalisation with partial protectionisms

- Economic competition and/or environmental challenges (energy shortage) lead to protectionisms
- Economic regional integration promotes regional, not global values

### Scenario 3: Confrontation of value systems

- Ideological movements promote war instead of peace
- Right-wing political parties against migrants promote local values

### Scenario 4: Global ethics respecting contextual diversity

- Global citizenship remains faithful to the diversity of value systems

## 4.2 Future: Vision (theological)

***According to the Christian trinitarian vision, God offers/sponsors:***

- a) overwhelming abundance of God's creation and God's Grace with its generosity, durability, diversity and beauty.
  - *Abundant diversity* a positive asset of humankind and creation
  - *Abundant life is linked with justice.*
  - *Abundance is a promise:* the non-violent meek have abundance
  - *Abundance of love:* the more one shares, the more one gets.
  - *Abundant inner happiness:* life full of sense.
- b) Liberation from violation of dignity and from oppression for a life in dignity of all, through the liberating resurrection of Jesus Christ
- c) His/her Holy, Universal Spirit of love which is combined with incarnation and inculturation in each single life and context.

## 4.2 Future: Vision (continued)

*According to the Christian eschatological vision, human beings are called to re-act to God's action, to re-pond in responsible way to his sponsorship, by basic-needs-oriented global ethics:*

“You who are blessed by my Father: come! Come and receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. <sup>35</sup>I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, <sup>36</sup> naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.” (Mt 25:34-36).

## 4.3 Future: Values (ethical)

### Global Values

- Caring (for human and non-human beings)
- Equality
- Justice
- Peace
- Liberation
- Responsibility

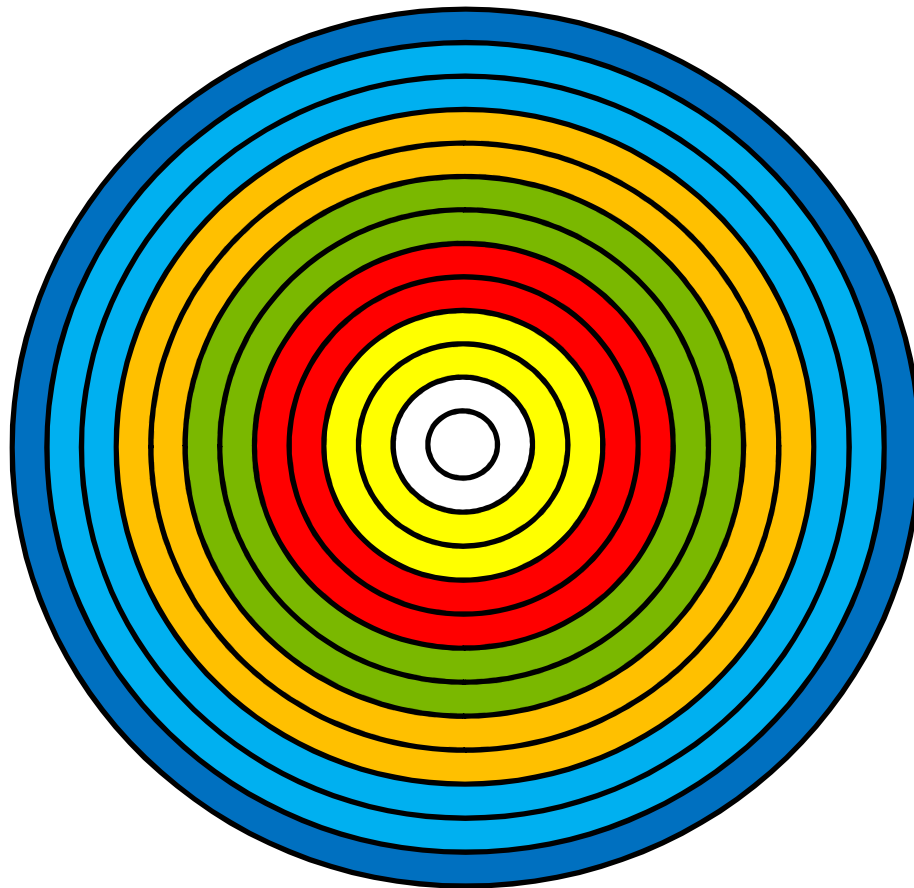
### Global Virtues

- Moderation (liberated from greed)
- Faithfulness etc.

## 5.1 Common Good: a Multicultural Value

1 Common Good	West	Christianity
2 Ubuntu	Africa	African Tradition
3 Kyosei	Japan	Shintoism
4 Da Tong	China	Confucianism
5 Jew + Yi	China	Taoism
6 Lokasangraha	India	Hinduism
7 Cidadania	Latin America	Political

## 5.2 Common Good - of which community?



White:

1 Myself

2 Inner Family: partner, children

Yellow

3 Broader Family: Clan

4 Professional Community: team

Red

5 Neighbourhood: village, quarter

6 Religious Community: parish/temple

Green

7 Peers: sport, ethnic, interest groups

8 Professional Community: company

Brown

9 Nation: state, peoples,

10 Regions: EU, Asean

Blue

11 All Religions: world spirituality

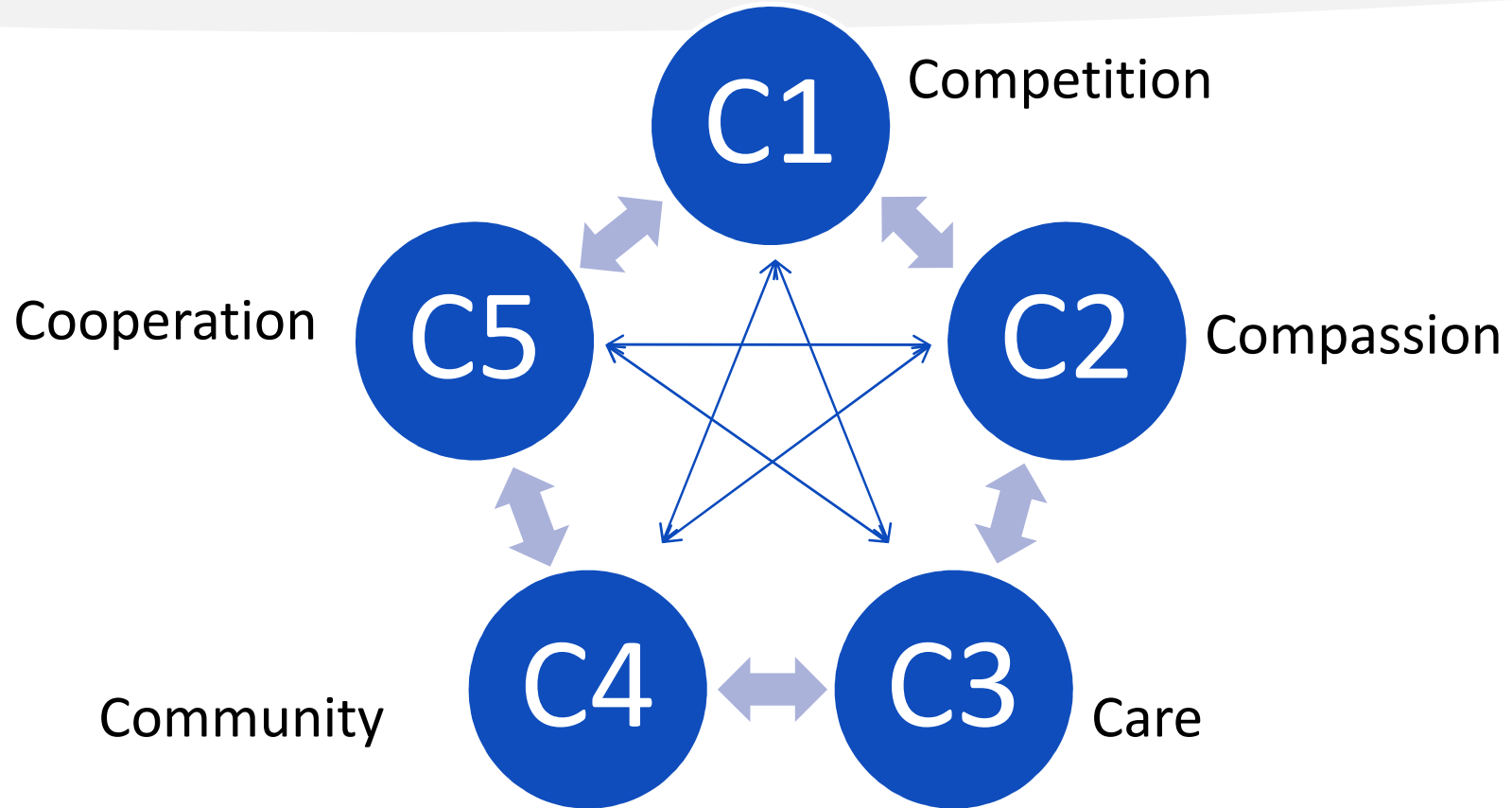
12 Humankind: all human beings

Dark Blue

13 Biosphere: all living beings



## 5.3 Acting for the Common Good: 5 C's



## 6. Globethics.net's Contribution

*Globethics.net as a global network of persons and institutions (9400 persons from 200 countries, 140 institutions as of end Oct 2010) aims at contributing to global and contextual ethics:*

### Goals/Activities

- Strengthen value-oriented behaviour
- Fair/free access to ethics information
- Networking as encouragement
- International online research groups
- Open and fair communication

### Value

Fairness  
Justice  
Empowerment  
Participation  
Transparency

## 6. Globethics.net's Contribution (cont'd)

From „Globethics.net Vision, Mission, Values“ (2009): „Values

- **Sharing:** We promote the mutual sharing of global and contextual ethical concerns and perspectives.
- **Respect:** We respect and affirm the dignity of every person and the diversity of cultures, religions and life orientations.
- **Participation:** We value the participation of people from all regions of the world.
- **Responsibility:** We encourage responsible use of, and responsible contributions to our knowledge resources and network.
- **Transparency:** We are committed to honesty, openness, transparency and accountability which build trust.

**We believe that value-oriented behaviour improves lives and societies.”**

Globethics.net

asante sana

धन्यवाद (Danyavad)

thank you

merci

gracias

danke

grazie