



Call for Papers: Book on “Humanistic Ethics in the Age of Globality”

Book Working Title: *Humanistic Ethics in the Age of Globality*

Subtitle: *Normative Foundations for Business in Society*

Content

Our volume intends to contribute to an ethics for business and society in the age of globalization. As a main driver of globalization and also a source of many of its social, environmental, and cultural problems, the free-market economy in particular is in need of normative orientation. Norms and values for trans-national business, however, must prove – the further globalization proceeds, the more – acceptable to individuals from very diverse cultural traditions. The general idea of this book is therefore that re-orienting ethics at the nature of the human being helps focus moral debates on the one common ground that people of all cultures share. Revisiting theories of humanistic ethics we aim to work towards ethical positions for business and society with a global appeal.

The book begins by unearthing the religious and cultural foundations of humanistic ethics. Then we proceed along the lines of the history of Western philosophy in pursuit of a self-critical ethics of the human being. In each chapter, we investigate whether and how the examined traditions can yield normative guidelines for our socio-economic situation today. **We already have accepted and collected a number of essays on various philosophical schools and authors.** The following list spells out areas for which we still seek contributions. If you are interested in submitting a paper, please regard the subsequent guidelines. **We still need texts on:**

Humanistic Ethics... ... and their possible impact on business & society today.

- in pre-Aristotelian philosophy
- in post-Aristotelian / Hellenistic Philosophy
- in Patristic Thinking
- in the Thomistic Tradition (up to and including Suarez)

- in the Renaissance
- in the Reformation
- in pre-Kantian philosophy
- in post-Kantian and pre-Hegelian philosophy
- in late 19th century philosophy (Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, etc.)
- in 20th century philosophy (Freud, existentialism, Critical Theory, etc.)
- in Analytical / Linguistic Philosophy
- in Postmodern and Feminist Theories.

Selection Process and Key Dates

Phase I – Abstract selection: **Deadline** for **abstract** submissions is **April 15th 2009**. Please submit your **300-500 word** abstract to **info[at]humanetwork.org**

Phase II – *The Humanistic Management Network* will inform all authors, whether their abstract is being considered for publication by the **May 1st 2009**.

Phase III – Submission of papers (10-12 pages): **Deadline** is **July 1st of 2009**.

Phase IV – Review: **Deadline is September 1st of 2009**. By then the editorial team will have reviewed the articles. To authors whose articles we consider for publication, we will provide detailed feedback.

Phase V – Final submission of revised papers. **Deadline is the 1st of November**. Papers that sufficiently reflect the feedback of the editorial teams will then be finally accepted and submitted to our publisher.

Phase VI – The editorial on part of our publisher review shall be concluded by **1st of February 2010**.

Phase VII – We expect the **publication of the volume in May / June 2010**.

Rationale

The Age of Globality

Globalization was yesterday. Today we live already in a world of globality. While many singular outcomes of globalization could theoretically still be reversed, the general gist of the developments of the last decennia will not be made undone. The reach that globalization has had in the past confronts nowadays most of the people most of the time with a global state of affairs. Hence whatever the future dynamics of globalization, this accomplished state of globality must be addressed – as one that by its distinct features requires particular ways and modes of governance, differing considerably from everything that came before.

It is true that global trade and cultural exchange have yet existed for centuries. Still, there are important disanalogies to consider between now and the past. Globality describes a state of affairs where a global impact of individual actions, local business practices, and national politics are no longer the exception but the rule. Globality gives a name to a reality that has immediate interconnectivity as its constitutive feature, including the growing awareness – spreading from the debate over climate change to ever more realms of our life-world – that there are always many more consequences to our practices than we foresee at the time we act. So, whereas the semantic field of globalization conveys the impression that the dynamics of the process are being overseen, and hence controllable, the term of globality points to a different worldview. It intimates that the reach of our knowledge does not align itself with the range of our effects. The significance of what we do lies beyond what our actions were intended to bring about. The signature we leave on the planet will be decipherable only in the future – while we carry the burden of responsibility for it already today.

In the past, it seemed merely an idealistic moral imperative to act as if the world in its entirety was the receptacle of our impact, and as if the whole of humanity was to judge our conduct. Now, it dawns on us that to push *ad infinitum* the spatial and temporal limits for the considered effects and externalities of our actions is a pragmatic necessity of political and economic survival. Whether we slow down or even halt the ongoing processes of globalization, what will remain is this deep, fundamental shift to a mental model that encompasses the unarticulated, incalculable, and indefinite consequences for our actions just as much as those that are captured by our established accounting practices and our traditional schemes of responsibility assignment. Globality represents the insight that we have achieved a position in history where the angle of moral universalization and the pragmatic perspective of prudent circumspection render almost identical results. Whatever governance systems we shall propose for the future, they must take into account the changed premises on which they rest: Political as well as

economic legitimacy, no longer tied to geographical boundaries, will have to be earned in view of and in response to the interests of the whole of humanity.

The Role of Business in Society

With astounding speed the global production and exchange of products is transforming the natural and cultural face of the earth. Biological systems vanish, customary rules of behavior fade, legal frameworks dissolve, languages die out, and many traditional religions are on the wane. In their stead, driven by an exponential increase in information exchange, novel forms of interaction are taking hold. Various new customs and life-styles are quickly spreading, from their origins in the remotest localities on earth and from cyberspace, to everywhere all around the globe. Unprecedented wealth has been created at some places; yet, elsewhere unacceptable destitution persists.

Are we heading toward a paradise of freedom and autonomy where all human needs are met or are we facing endless war, civil strife, environmental destruction, and cultural poverty? Are we nearing one global culture or ‘multiple modernities’? And what will be the future role of business in society? Will transnational corporations become an integral part of a global civic society, and close ranks with the various non-governmental organizations that work toward the betterment of human life? Or will big business impede the advancement toward more humane forms of life? In brief, will corporations foster or hinder human progress?

So far the messages are ambiguous. Globalization in its emerging form surely has sharpened the competitive environment for companies. Greater connectivity and the speed at which the global integration of business occurs have increased the number of relationships, multiplied the amount of available information, but have done nothing to give managers more time or better tools to interpret and manage the information. Tougher competition for companies might signal the dawn of an era where managers lose track of the moral and social repercussions of their actions. The global business community risks an overemphasis on financial results only – to the detriment of society, the environment as well as the long-term interests of business.

The Need for a Humanistic Orientation

On a very basic level, the main problem as well as its likely solution seems clear: Business tends to operate where its return on investment is highest. Not infrequently, this is where costs are cheapest, and today that includes many nations with unsustainable social and environmental standards. Driven by competition, capital gravitates to the lowest level of regulatory constrictions, thus exerting economic pressure against the societal co-determination of the business sphere. In its wake, this deregulatory movement destroys, however, the very conditions that the longevity of business and its

profits is premised upon. Humanity can halt this “race-to-the-bottom” only through global norms. The regulatory loopholes must be closed that allow businesses with questionable social and environmental standards to out-compete firms that operate with a view to sustainability. For lack of a united global legislative and executive, the requisite regulation has, however, to be generated from within the business community, in alliance with civil society.

The much needed global governance is premised on circumspect self-restraint of all involved. To build voluntary coalitions for collective self-policing, an at least minimal normative agreement on the Dos and Don'ts of corporate and individual practice is needed. Yet the problem is that virtually none of the traditional values offered by religions and customary ethics are uncontroversial or universally accepted. With every advance of globalization came a reduction in the power and effectiveness of traditional ethics to regulate the practices of business.

In an attempt to find such a common moral ground, the *The Humanistic Management Network* has turned to investigate the parsimonious and agnostic foundations of the humanistic approach to ethics, trying the theories of humanism to advance positions that can legitimately claim to be of common concern for all of humanity. Hence the aim of our book: to investigate what theories of humanistic ethics can contribute to a moral re-orientation of business in society in the age of globality.

The Need for Conceptual Clarification

Due to its divergent use in different historical eras the concept of “humanism” has no singular, clearly circumscribed meaning. In fact, the conceptual foundations of humanism need much clarification before one can begin working towards a coherent concept of humanistic ethics. For instance, besides referring to a certain cultural epoch (Renaissance), it also is being used to describe certain positions in antique philosophy (encompassing as contrary positions as those of Protagoras and Plato); to give name to a revival of some such traditions in German Idealism plus in successive movements (e.g., Humboldt's theory of the state, or Niethammer's ethical “humanism”); to brand an attempt of German philosophers (around Werner Jaeger) to revive antique education and virtue ideals in the 1920-30s; to classify atheistic and agnostic approaches to the question of what makes a human life good (where humanistic theory also enters the realm of Marxist doctrines); to point to the uptake thereof in the work of Sartre and other existentialists (seeing the human being as a life-form that has to define its own essence); to collect some psychoanalytic and leftist writers of the 1940s-70s under a unifying conceptual umbrella; and, last but not least, to refer to several personality-focussed ethics in various religious traditions in the Eastern, Western, and African world.

From this survey one should not conclude to refrain from humanism as too heterodox a keyword for forming a consistent notion of humanistic ethics that could further the uptake of moral values in

business. Instead, the task is to elaborate the requisite conceptual clarity and coherence by way of academic discourse and deliberation. To this purpose our book is dedicated.

The Humanistic Management Network

The Humanistic Management Network is a trans-national and interdisciplinary think-tank where academics from various fields work together to foster the creation and dissemination of actionable knowledge to change business practices towards humanistic ideals. Our mission is to influence business academia, management practitioners, policy makers, and the general public in defining the purpose and role of business in a global society. Our vision is a world economy in which all stakeholders are equally respected so that market mechanisms are applied to maximize societal benefits before individual profits; an economy in which economic rationality is applied as a means rather than an end in itself.

The members of *The Humanistic Management Network* are academics, who wish to contribute to the long impending paradigm change in economics and business theory. We share the view that the quantitative and mechanistic economic world-view of yesteryear is superannuated and will sooner rather than later be replaced by theories that put the qualitative and human dimensions of business into the foreground. We wish to lend a hand in said paradigm change, helping academics formulate cohesive visions and alternative theorems, while also providing orientation for practitioners and politicians. Our purpose is to be change agents in a process that shall set the economy free to unleash its benign potentials to better human life. We believe that individual and corporate responsibility rest first upon the intellectual and then the practical realization of moral freedom.

For that reason, one of our premier objectives is to use academic tools to make visible to the public the enormous and hitherto often unused potentials within the free-market for a socially and environmentally responsible use of economic freedom. In showing how firms can be both doing good and doing well at the same time, we wish to intimate to a future where social and financial interests are located no longer at opposite ends of the social spectrum but work hand-in-hand.

The Humanistic Management Network – as Editors

The Humanistic Management Network (www.humanetwork.org) tries to impact the way businesses operate by integrating humanistic thought into strategy in the quest for a more 'life-conducive' economy. *The Humanistic Management Network* has already come forward with, 'Humanism in Business,' a book that looks at how humanism can contribute to management theory and practice on a system, organizational and personal level. (Cambridge University Press 2009.) In our second book, 'Humanistic Management in Practice' (forthcoming in 2010) we are providing examples of how

humanistic principles can be integrated into managerial practice. This is to demonstrate that successful businesses can emancipate themselves from a singular focus on (short-term) profit maximization whilst being highly competitive players in a market environment. The book here at stake will provide the philosophical and ethical foundations for our more practical endeavors in orientating business towards humanistic goals and purposes.

Procedural approach to Humanistic Ethics

The Humanistic Management Network promotes a procedural understanding of humanistic ethics; the reasons for our stance are as follows. Whatever policies powerful institutions (such as states, corporations, and NGOs) are to employ in the future, they must conceive them in the light of a yet largely globalized world. Human beings everywhere need agreed-upon values to live well, to cooperate socially, and to organize collaborative work. In the age of globality, however, conventional values offered by traditional religions and customs no longer suffice, if we concur that values should, wherever possible, not be imposed on those who disagree with them. The world is, then, in dire need of values that can be approved by all concerned. Said values should recommend themselves to an endorsement from cultural traditions so diverse as African natural religions, Western monotheistic theologies, and Eastern spiritualism.

Even if the *genesis* of global norms is, as a rule, owed to particular cultural and religious backgrounds, the *validity* of these norms has to be universally intelligible and acceptable. By default (i.e., for lack of metaphysical or theological alternatives that could convince everyone) the human being falls back unto itself. This, however, is not tantamount to endorsing “methodological individualism;” rather, we think, human beings are coming to axiological awareness only through dialogical procedures, with the social dimensions of human life being the starting block for all further ethical reflections. It is therefore all-important *how* our values are arrived at. For the future, this much can be anticipated: The needed values ought to be *relational*, i.e. context-sensitive, yet not *relativistic*, i.e. arbitrary. Their context-sensitivity, in turn, will then engender constant norm-reform. For together with every contextual change comes the need for renewed moral reflection. The humanistic ethics we seek must hence be open for perennial renovation.

For the soft force of the better argument to win the day, a *procedural* process of humanistic value creation recommends itself, that is, a process that looks to the deliberative processes of respectful normative deliberation first, and only second to their axiological outcomes. This *procedural* humanism is to be demarcated from a *material* humanism that aims to give a definite answer what ‘the’ human values are – now and for all times, here and at all places. A humanistic ethics cannot offer ‘perfect’ solutions, imposed by ‘experts’, but must be generated in a humanistic way, too, i.e., by the active participation of

all involved. The position we seek to advance shall, however, also clearly be differentiated from a merely *formalistic* humanism that leaves the choice about the values to live by solely to arbitrary discretion. Certain standards of fair procedure and due process must apply so as to render the outcome of societal deliberations about values generally acceptable. When applied to business, procedural humanism thus asks firms, for example, to elicit from their social and cultural contexts, which needs and values to cater to primarily (informed by stakeholder dialogue, processes of co-determination, etc.). In fact, to co-determine the value proposition of business is, in our eyes, the inexorable prerogative of society. *The Humanistic Management Network* advocates hence qualitative – and not merely quantitative – definitions of both micro- and macro-economic success, generated by social dialogue and deliberation. To this discourse, we hope, the tradition of humanistic ethics can contribute vital ideas and valuable arguments.

Guidelines for Authors

Target Group

The book is targeted towards a general audience as well as researchers looking for a reference for "humanism and business/society". The text itself should not be too academic and overall easy to follow.

Structure of the paper

- 1) **Locate / contextualize** your author(s)/tradition historically and systematically so that readers can identify the relevance thereof and are able to connect up the author(s)/tradition to their overall mental map of intellectual history (about 2-3 pages).
- 2) **Explain why** humanistic ideas were of paramount concern in the context you investigate (about 1-2 pages).
- 3) **Work out the methodology** *how* your author(s)/tradition advance(s) humanistic ethics (about 2-3 pages).
- 4) **Explain the main tenets** of this position; use examples when possible (2-3 pages).
- 5) **Relate** the respective ethical position, if possible, **to the realm of business**, or, at least, lay out its overall socio-economic and socio-political consequences (2-3 pages). Draw, if possible, some conclusions for questions of humanistic management and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the age of globality. (If you are uncomfortable with this point, however, leave it out. The application to the business realm can also be provided by the editors in a separate chapter or addendum.)

Formatting guidelines

1. Please use Times New Roman 12 for the text, single space.
2. Aim for 10-12 pages, incl. bibliography.
3. Please use the referencing style as described below.
4. Please use meaningful subheadings to ensure easy readability

Books

Give the **author's name in reverse order**, ending with a period. The **full title and subtitle** of the book are set in upper and lower case **italic** type, ending with a period. The **place of publication** is followed by a colon and then the name of the **publisher**, followed by a comma and the **date** of publication, ending with a period. Put ed./eds. or trans. (preceded by a comma) after the name to indicate editor(s) or translator(s).

Spitzeck, Heiko; Pirson, Michael; Amann, Wolfgang; Khan, Shiban; Kimakowitz, Ernst, eds.
Humanism in Business. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Journals

Give the **author's name in reverse order**, ending with a period. The **full title and subtitle** of the **article** are set in upper and lower case **roman type**, between **quote marks** and ending with a period. The **journal title** is set in upper and lower case *italic* type, followed by a comma and the **publishing details** in **roman type**, including volume number, issue number, the date and page numbers (preceded by a colon) if necessary. Note: There is no need to give the place of publication of the journal.

Dierksmeier, Claus, and Pirson, Michael, "Oikonomia versus Chrematistike. Learning from Aristotle about the Future Orientation of Business Management", forthcoming in: *Journal for Business Ethics*, Vol. 85/2009.

Internet sources

Quote the URL, along with the date and time of the download.

harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/hbrsa/en/issue, June 23, 2006

Philosophical Classics

When quoting classical philosophical authors, please use internationally accessible editions, and provide, where possible, also references to original paginations.