Mark Casson strives to define what makes a good ethical leader; that would seem to be—he believes—someone who is able to postpone the search of pleasure. That would be a difficult man to find, according to this author.

Simon Deakin and Frank Wilkinson state that cooperation between firms has lead to the success of German and Italian industries after the war, compared to Britain’s. They discuss the role of legal institutions in fostering such cooperation.

Sir Adrian Cadbury, chairman of the Cadbury corporation, reports on the Commission that bears its name that studied business ethics in Great Britain. His contribution is that free adoption of a Code of Best Practices by corporations is the most effective approach for raising the ethical level of corporations.

Norman Barry studies the role of culture in government’s involvement with promoting business ethics. He contrasts German culture, which promotes more the values of responsible management through the Third Way with the Anglo-Saxon culture, which promotes stockholder maximization.

Maurie Cohen presents the “larger picture” in which corporations operate and how the latter affect this larger picture. By “larger picture,” the author means the environment. The changing culture, for him, means a greater sense of responsibility that people have toward the environment, and therefore they also put pressure on corporations to protect their “values.” Nowhere do other superior values like human life, truth, and those of the spiritual realm seem to be part of these values.

Russel Sparkes looks at the same ideas from the point of view of a socially responsible money fund manager. He claims that fund managers act as pioneers vis-à-vis corporations, trail blazing for them the path to business ethics, when this reviewer would find it more appropriate to say that these fund managers are simply implementing the so-called “values” proffered by the solons of the “business ethics” dogma.

Clive Wright makes a genuinely substantial contribution by defining the culture of a corporation and the different means by which this culture can and should be impacted upon by business ethics. Indeed, his discourse takes us away from the negative and exterior points of view of traditional business ethics. Business ethics must first be brought into the interior of the organization; it must be part of the “blood stream” of the organization, as the author states.

Neil Hood presents thoughts that would be mildly amusing if they were not dangerously distracting, concerning the ethics of multinational corporations, once considered as the supreme villains of the corporate world. What Hood promotes, in this age where “diversity” seems to be the ultimate human value, is that MNCs should not impose worldwide the culture of their headquarters but should allow national managers some liberty to express their own national values, too.

The disconcerting feeling is that if business ethics has now become less acrimonious against corporations, it is all for the wrong reasons. It would seem, indeed, that the values of the Woodstock generation have slowly sunk into mainstream corporate life. “Business ethics,” as a body of thoughts (rather than as a real movement; the media are what really provide all the muscle needed for its missionary power), has become a very effective and active agent to remove large chunks of Western and civilized values from corporations that still support such quaint values; instead, it has showered modern corporations with values that are running the gamut between red and green, not forgetting Socialist pink, with the end state solidly projected to be environmental green.

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International Business Ethics: Challenges and Approaches
Georges Enderle (Editor)
Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999
(446 pages)

The origin of this book is the First World Congress of Business, Economics, and Ethics organized by The International Society of Business, Economics and Ethics (ISBEE), which took place in 1996 in Japan (Kashiwa-City, near Tokyo). It includes an introduction by the editor and twenty-nine papers from thirty-seven contributors from the United States (15), Asia (14), Europe (5), South Africa (2), and Latin America (1). These papers deal with many different topics, and grouping them has probably been a difficult task. The editor opted to group them in four parts under quite generic titles: Global Context and Ethical Orientations (Part 1), Ethical Standards and Sources for International Business Organizations (Part 2), Ethical Challenges for Business Leaders Around the World (Part 3), and Emerging Business Ethics in East Asia and Japan (Part 4).

International Business is a well-developed matter within business, so it is not strange to see that in the last few years increasing attention has been paid to International Business Ethics (IBE). Apart from two, well-known books by T. Donaldson (The Ethics of International Business, 1989) and R. T. De George (Competing with Integrity in International Business, 1993), both focused on multinationals, quite a number of articles have been published on this subject. This book, edited by Georges Enderle, adds to this field. It presents a pluralistic approach from different authors and different backgrounds.

In the field of IBE there are a number of recurrent topics such as specific issues in international business, universal principles of ethics for international business, codes of conduct for transnational companies, cross-cultural analysis, differences in ethical perception in managers, influences from national values, globalization problems, and so on. Most of these topics can be found in this book, but as the subtitle states (“Challenges and Approaches”), the majority of the articles are quite philosophical or descriptive while there is a significant absence of discussion on specific ethical issues on IBE. An exception is De George’s article (271ff), which considers entrepreneurs and local small businesses facing some specific ethical issues.
One of the main concerns in IBE is to find universal principles to be applied around the world in spite of different cultures and religions. This point is treated in several contributions. This is not entirely a new problem, since in the sixteenth century, the theologians of the Salamanca School confronted the "international trading" in Spain and Europe among different countries and with people of different religions. They defended the natural moral law, which requires, for instance, the ethical requirement for everybody to keep promises and fulfill fair contracts, no matter whether they are Muslim, Jewish, Protestant, or Catholic.

Today, however, there is a strong emphasis on cultural differences and, as a result, some scholars posit an ethical relativism. Against that, N. Bowie and P. Vaaler argue in favor of (rational) universal ethical standards (160ff); S. Webley (96ff) reports on the "Interfaith Declaration" (Muslims, Jews, and Christians) as a moral base for international business activity, and H. Küng (109ff) defends a global ethics containing a set of minimums on common values, standards, and basic attitudes by a fundamental consensus of representatives of the world's religions. Moreover, H. C. de Bettinggies, K. E. Goodpaster, and T. Matsuoka (121ff) discuss "The Caux Roundtable Principles," an interesting universal set of ethical principles for business, based on human dignity and the Japanese concept of "Kyosei" understood as "living and working together for the common good" (Goodpaster, 150ff and Yamaji, 443ff).

On the other hand, some contributions point out the role of local values in business activities: Confucian values (Ornatowski, 386ff), Hindu values (Grand and Rothlin, 67ff) and Chakrabarty, 78ff) and Islamic values (Abeng, 237ff). The Buddhist ethics of compassion is also studied, looking for similitude with the feminist ethics of care (White, 174ff). Beyond difference among these values and approaches, one can realize that they have much in common. More than likely, Enderle is right when, in the introduction, he states that, "Given the caveats against superficial harmonization and confrontation, a sound and lasting common ethical ground for international business is vital for humankind as we are moving toward an increasingly interconnected world" (4).

Special mention should be given to the essay by the Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen who, remembering Adam Smith, discusses the place of business and moral sentiments in economic success and examines the role of cultures in influencing norms of business behavior. Sen points out the complex structure of business and practical influence of some features of business ethics in economics operations. He did so by considering the corruption in Italy (remembering the "clean hands" campaign at the beginning of the 1990s) and the "grabbing culture" in Russia.

Apart from that, the book contains some articles dealing with general topics on business ethics, such as "Formation" (Schmidt, 281ff), "Stakeholder Theory" (Pava, 187ff), "Courage" (Mahoney, 249ff), "Leadership" (Ciulla, 260ff) and also some criticism on the frequent use of business ethics exclusively as a tool for profits (Song and Park, 200ff and Polet, 223ff).

Finally, several articles are devoted to business ethics in developing economics in East Asia and, above all, in Japan (305ff). Most of them are descriptive: "Ethical Perceptions," "Ethical Subjectivism of Managers," "Ethics in Japanese Business Practices," and others. More conceptual is the chapter of Sison (358ff), who considers the concept of "social capital" and analyses of how trust was established in some select Filipino family businesses. In contrast, hardly anything is said about Latin American economies and businesses.

Summarizing, this is a book with valuable and interesting specific topics, although, like most books from conferences, it has chapters that could be useful for those with specific interests.

—Domènec Melé

Ethics and Economics

Globalization for the Common Good

Kamran Mofid


Globalization for the Common Good is a timely and valuable contribution to the debate over how the discipline of economics can be reformed in the twenty-first century. Unlike many of the other contributions to this debate, this book is not written by a theologian nor by a sociologist but by a professional economist who has more than twenty years' experience in teaching and researching economics across the world. The book is written in an accessible and, at times, personal manner, intertwining the author's personal Christian faith and his experience as an economics lecturer with his extensive knowledge of the complex debates that lie behind the separation of ethics and religion from economics as an academic discipline.

The structure of the book follows the suitably religious image of a journey from a "wasteland" into the "Promised Land." Kamran Mofid argues that the world we are living in today can be likened to a wasteland—in which the economic rationale of self-interest has come to dominate all aspects of human life. Like Jürgen Habermas (Legitimation Crisis) and many others before him, Kamran Mofid sees this unsolicited intrusion of economic rationality into other aspects of human life as "colonization of the life world." It has led to the creation of a world in which any concept of the "fair society" has been subsumed within policies geared at maximizing the interests of the strongest. Through tracing the history of economics from its roots as a branch of moral philosophy to its current scientific form, Kamran Mofid demonstrates the discipline's "moral bankruptcy." The policies of the IMF and the World Bank are a case in point. Underpinning much of this analysis is the view that economists have much to answer for. The book, in fact, is also an impassioned plea to the neoclassical economics establishment to reflect on their work—in particular, how they teach economics—and to mend the errors of their ways before it is too late: "My plea is for mainstream economics scholars to build these considerations into their analysis and discover how
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