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**DEVELOPMENT ETHICS THROUGH THE LENSES OF  
CARING, GENDER, AND HUMAN SECURITY**

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## Abstract

Thinking about ethics of development and 'human development' must both treat development in a global perspective and yet reflect on the content of 'human'. The paper<sup>1</sup> explores some faces of globalization by using a gender perspective, in order to consider reproduction (psychological and emotional as well as biological) and the activities and attitudes of care that give moral resources for response to systemic tragedy, not only for identifying and understanding it. There now exist globally interconnected systems of vulnerability and capability, for which matching systems of human security, care and responsibility are needed in order to protect human dignity. The discourse of 'human security' helps here by better grounding an agenda of basic human needs, in an ethnography of ordinary lives rather than only an abstracted accounting of deficiencies or an elevated language of opportunities. It must be emotionally and existentially grounded too. We<sup>2</sup> examine the potential contributions here of three diverse bodies of thought: the tradition of Mahayana Buddhism; the work of philosopher-anthropologist Ananta Giri; and feminist care ethics.

## Keywords

Development ethics, Buddhism, care ethics, globalization, human development, human security, migration, vulnerability.

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# Development Ethics Through The Lenses Of Caring, Gender, And Human Security

## 1 INTRODUCTION: GLOBALIZED VULNERABILITY

Processes of globalization are diverse in character and have produced contradictory tendencies: integration and differentiation, spread and concentration, inclusion and exclusion, gain and loss. Global concentration of power and authority in trade and finance and economic policy – the dominance of bodies in Washington DC, together with the WTO and a few others – has been paralleled by the decline of many weaker economies into structural indebtedness, foreign imposed economic policy regimes (and their widespread failure), shrinkage of many domestically owned activities, and greatly increased reliance on exports such as drugs, persons and criminal ‘services’. Globalization processes offer unprecedented opportunities, for those able to take them, including opportunities for more efficient exploitation and crime. They frequently spread inequality within as well as between countries.<sup>3</sup> Forms of exploitation of persons that had been largely exiled to the fringes of the world system have revived in the North (see e.g. Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2003); while some countries in the South have restructured their economies and societies such that the sex trade and dependency on women migrants’ remittances have become a form of survival for both nation-states and a growing number of their citizens. Saskia Sassen has called this the feminization of survival (2002); ‘the sex trade itself has become a development strategy in some areas’ (Sassen 2003: 269).<sup>4</sup> A global trade in people has re-emerged, based on increasingly globalized communications and aspirations, structural economic problems in much of the South and East, and increasing demand yet decreasing local supply in rich locations for some types of labour, particularly of low-cost labour for menial tasks (Sassen 2003).

Many of the most striking examples of these varied processes and transfers are in industrial countries, not least the implosion or decay of parts of the former Soviet bloc, and in the work and movements of women (Truong 2003c). The agenda of development ethics, on the human costs, options, ‘trade-offs’ and human ‘write-offs’ in socio-economic development processes, ever more clearly applies not simply to events in a geographically separate South and its relations with a separated North, but to events and relations within the North too. We have a ‘Global South’, everywhere, partly as

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<sup>3</sup> The economic advance of large groups in the two population giants, China and India, may bring decline in measures of global inter-personal equality; but at the same time major groups have suffered absolute declines, in many cases into dismal penury, and the income ratios of global top groups (whether in New York or Mumbai) to global bottom groups (whether in Mumbai or New York) have grown dramatically.

<sup>4</sup> Bales (2003) presents the sex trades in Thailand as integral components of its development model. A ‘down market’ of virtual sex slavery caters to lower income workers who can now afford to regularly buy sexual services. An enormous ‘up market’ supplies sex for tourists: ‘nearly 5 million unaccompanied men visited Thailand in 1996. A significant proportion of these were sex tourists’ (Bales, p. 219).

migratory consequence of the era of a rich geographically separate North dominating a remote South, and more importantly from endogenous (re-) creation of a South in the North. The term 'Global South' conveys the transnational character of poverty and deprivation, and suggests a convergence of deprivation across geographical boundaries. Pierre Bourdieu wrote of the 'sans': those without, the jobless, homeless, paperless. We find pockets of 'North' everywhere now too. The world has become pre-1994 South Africa writ large. To an important extent, the fields of development studies and international political economy now merge (Hettne 1995).

Development ethics' typically strong focus on women (e.g., Nussbaum & Glover 1995; Sen 1999) grows. Strikingly many of the Voices of the Poor (Narayan et al. 2000) were women's. Women are characteristically families' 'shock absorbers': they care for the ill and infirm, they enter forms of flexible or informal work when family pressures dictate, they are pressurized in times of change to embody purported tradition, they give others some security and comfort. Their own security and well-being are often in jeopardy, unconsidered, downgraded. Shock absorbers are noticed only when broken. Since the 1990s women have become the majority group in international migration for work, whether voluntarily, by coercion or through deception.<sup>5</sup> Migration and vulnerability are however of general relevance and, for the sake of contrast, we open with an example that mainly concerned male migrants from economically booming China, deployed in an occupation that was dominated earlier by British women.<sup>6</sup>

One night in February 2004, 21 foreign workers, nearly all of them young Chinese, drowned in Morecambe Bay, North England. They were harvesting cockles, a profitable shellfish, on the Bay's notorious mudflats. Possibly they became 'stuck in sucking sands as the tide came in, perhaps [they were] simply swept along in one of the deep channels that can suddenly open up in those sands' (Thompson 2004). Fifteen fellow-workers were rescued. Reportedly, some who were stuck or stranded tried to call their families in China by mobile phone, to say farewell. They were not familiar with the emergency services telephone number in Britain. 'There are warning signs about "quicksand and dangerous tides" near where they died, but they would not have understood them. They spoke no English.' (Xinran 2004). Groups of Chinese workers had been saved from the winter sea by lifeboats twice in the previous five weeks.

Subsequent investigations indicated that some of the workers were asylum seekers; others were illegal immigrants who had paid large sums to be smuggled into Britain. All lacked work permits and were controlled by Chinese 'gangmasters', who could take up to half of the income from the cockle sales and who supplied the labour to an English boss who helped obtain the permits for cockle picking. The twentyone workers who died lived with twenty others in one small house. They would be taken to the sands at any time of day or night, dependent on the tides, to reap the unusual temporary abundance of

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<sup>5</sup> See International Organization for Migration (IOM) statistics.

<sup>6</sup> *The British Countryside in Pictures*, Library Edition, Odham Press Limited, London (no date) p. 318.

cockles. Local residents and the fishing community in Morecambe Bay had warned for months about the risks.

These events, variously described, attracted much attention in Britain, China and worldwide. Whatever the exact details of the case were, it called forth questions about work and insecurity in the global market. Are people so reckless or so ignorant, so eager for gain, so desperate, or so misled by recruiters? In fact, nobody from the very poorest groups in China can afford the payment required for transportation and entry to the West; but the move leaves many migrants heavily in debt and with families in China to support. Once in Britain they appear willing or forced to risk their physical security in the hope of economic security and gain. Some of the workers who had been rescued in February soon returned to work on the mudflats. And two months later, for example, four cockle-pickers were rescued by lifeboat men after becoming stranded on the same sands.

The risky search for financial gain in a worldwide field of operation is not new. What might be new is the intensity of reporting and reflection, thanks to modern communications technology; and perhaps, partly underlying the intensity, the degree of concern that can be seen in the reporting, with not only outcries at interlopers but in many cases both a lament over loss and a will to understand. In a piece in London's Daily Telegraph (February 7, 2004) immediately after the deaths, Adam Thompson evoked a painting by JMW Turner from an earlier phase of outrage, the 1840s. It depicts the casting of dead and dying slaves into the Atlantic from slave ships in order to claim insurance by reporting that the slaves were lost in a storm rather than from sickness. Turner brought the case memorably to attention, but to an immensely smaller audience than that for modern electronic media.

Later in the 19th century, millions of Chinese died in a series of famines. Over ten million died in the North China famine of the late 1870s alone, watched over by an enfeebled Imperial government long undermined by Western incursion. In stark contrast, the great North China drought of 1743-44 had been effectively handled by vigorous government action, far more effectively than were comparable famines in Europe in 1740-43 (Davis 2001: 280ff.). Famines of similarly enormous magnitude occurred repeatedly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in British-ruled India. Its population was as a result virtually stagnant between 1891 and 1921 and indeed stagnant between 1871 and 1921 in many districts (Davis 2001: 175). Davis notes figures of twenty million excess deaths in India for the 1890s, and ten million excess deaths or more in each of the famines of 1876-9, 1896-7 and 1899-1902 (Davis 2001: 110-11, 158, 174). As in the Irish famine of the 1840s, the British authorities consciously restricted and rejected remedial interventions in the face of weather-related crises. Little or nothing was done to secure the ability of the poorest groups to access food. The famines were recorded and reported in Europe and North America but as remote and alien events. They received far less attention than the dramatics of war and rebellion. Unlike the 'Indian Mutiny' or 'The Boxer Rebellion' they never entered the popular (or elite) Western memory. Only the insecurity of ruling groups was considered significant and noticed. Nowadays with incessant electronic media coverage, deaths in Darfur or Ethiopia may be experienced elsewhere as more manifest,

tangible, and urgent. Such events can though be largely ignored, as the loss of millions of lives in the Congo in the past decade testifies. Corpses on a winter night on Morecambe Beach may speak more vividly to Northern audiences.<sup>7</sup>

Section 2 explores some key areas in globalization by using a gender perspective. This takes us beyond the abstracted circuits of economic production and the corresponding categories. It makes us centrally consider reproduction: biological, psychological, emotional. Otherwise, disjunctions in reasoning at policy level reinforce and exacerbate dysfunctions in social systems at local and global level, leading to tragedies at the personal level. A gender perspective may provide also some moral resources for responding to systemic tragedy, in addition to resources for identifying and understanding it. It brings to our attention the centrality of activities and attitudes of care, in various settings and forms.

Global changes demand an ethic that honours and protects human dignity as a core value, and can extend itself beyond the particular form of governmentality confined by the notions of sovereignty and territorial control. Ethical questions regarding human dignity can no longer be framed within neatly demarcated realms, such as the 'domestic' (read: self), and the 'foreign' (read: distant others). Self and Others intertwine in processes of production, reproduction and consumption. Socialisation by foreign au-pairs and domestic workers affects children growing up under paid domestic care (Baquedano-López 2002). Withheld wages of commercial sex workers are laundered through international banking systems, or invested in real estate and transformed into immobile capital for further accumulation (O'Neill-Richard 1999). The HIV/AIDS pandemic transmitted through uninformed or uncaring unsafe sex has caused an inter-generational transfer of burdens to AIDS orphans and social orphans. Vulnerable children become commodities fed into cross-national trafficking chains (Dottridge 2004). There now exist interconnected systems of vulnerability, for which corresponding systems of human security, care and responsibility are needed in order to ensure the protection of human dignity as a core value (Truong, 2006).

Section 3 looks at responses in the evolution of thinking in development ethics. The gradual move beyond economism to ideas of human development is being deepened by drawing of connections to the human rights tradition and by the growth of a discourse of 'human security'. This discourse represents a response to human insecurity: economic debacles in Africa, the former Soviet Union, Latin America and more briefly in East Asia, and numerous wars and their effects. Does it provide anything more than new packaging? We suggest yes: 'human security' is a return to the substantive agenda of basic human needs, but better grounded in an ethnography of the risks and pressures, hopes and fears, of ordinary lives rather than only an abstracted accounting of

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<sup>7</sup> The Tsunami disaster of December 2004 triggered exceptional sympathy and response in Europe. The involvement of large numbers of European tourists, combined with the near-universal nature of the event (who has not spent time on a beach? who cannot imagine a wall of water raging in?) and perhaps the post-Christmas lull in other news to generate enormous attention. This could not but notice the undeserved nature of the disaster, and the vigorous help by local authorities and residents to tourists and to each other.



deficiencies or an elevated language of opportunities. An ethic of human security and human development must be grounded not only in rich ethnography but be emotionally and existentially grounded too. These required forms of grounding are mutually supportive.

Section 4 examines the potential contribution of three diverse bodies of thought to grounding such an ethic of human security and human development: the ancient tradition of Mahayana Buddhism; the current work of philosopher-anthropologist Ananta Giri; and feminist care ethics. Section 5 summarizes and concludes concerning the trajectory and lessons for development ethics. Its work, especially on 'human development', has to treat development in a global perspective and to reflect on the content of 'human', including through careful attention to gender and to caring.

## **2 GLOBALIZATION THROUGH A GENDER LENS**

Viewing globalization through the gender lens reveals the persistent obliteration of reproduction, the female sphere, in mainstream debates in international political economy (IPE).<sup>8</sup> Susan Strange, a founding mother of the field, helped to redirect its focus from state-based to society-based (Palan 1999). She identified four foundational societal structures – knowledge, security, production and finance – and argued that State power can be understood as an outcome of the articulation of elements in each structure, independently or in interaction. Reproduction – as a foundation of the human condition that maintains and makes the continuity of life and social institutions possible – remained implicit in her framework. Yet Strange held that the object of study of IPE is nothing less than the 'human condition as it is, or was' (Palan 1999: 126).

To provide a more adequate account of the human condition and address the consequences of an androcentric construction of reality requires what Youngs calls an act of ontological revision: to get 'behind the appearance and examine how differentiated and gendered power constructs the social relations that form that reality' (Youngs 2004: 77).<sup>9</sup> She delineates three levels of interrogation, concerning: why women and gender concerns are subsidiary in high politics and diplomacy; why the male subject position reigns in theorizing, despite its selective apprehension about the human condition; and whether these aspects reflect a deeper cultural current of masculinity itself, a phenomenon of power and consciousness historically formed and structured by the separation of public and private life (Youngs 2004: 77-80).

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<sup>8</sup> We consider gender to be a structure in a multilayered social reality, intersected by other structures such as class, ethnicity, religious affinity and generation. We use a three-fold concept of gender: a) as a property of individuals (male and female); b) as one principle that defines the boundaries and hierarchies of social organisations; and c) as a structure in conceptual systems that gives visibility and significance to the public sphere (the male representation), sidelines the private sphere (the female representation), and at certain points obliterates the continuum of interaction between the two.

<sup>9</sup> Ontology is used here to mean a perspective concerning what exists and the position of the 'self' in that reality.

Following her suggestions, let us look at characteristics of ‘globalization’ as a historical process – a process which has acquired features distinct from early forms of internationalisation. These include deterritorialization (the growing range of human activities that take place irrespective of the geographical location of participants in such activities), social interconnectedness (the ways in which activities in one locality can have impact on the social world of another), and velocity (the accelerated pace of human activity and rate of social change) (Scholte 2000, 2005). Our main questions are: Deterritorialisation, social interconnectedness and velocity relating to whom? To which human activities are we referring?

What do these three key features of globalization mean to those located in the ‘Global South’? There is an increasing disparity of interests between those involved in the accelerated and perpetual mobility of capital (‘the men’ who control the corporate sector, including the women in masculine positions of power and authority) and those involved in the daily maintenance of firms, farms and families (‘the women’, including the men in feminized positions). As Beneria (1999) points out, ‘Davos Man’ provides the archetype of human activity in the mainstream account of globalization, displacing the representation of the quotidian reality shared by the two thirds of humanity in the Global South. The disparity has brought new boundaries in the global geography of wealth, deprivation and mobility, and rescaled political and economic relations within and between nations. In this new geography, the nation-state is simultaneously irrelevant to some social activities and omnipresent in others.

Contemporary labour migration regimes illustrate this. Evidence on the licit and illicit involvement of migrant labourers (men, women, boys and girls) in sectors such as construction, agriculture, textiles, and tourism-related activities including sexualized entertainment and even begging (ILO 2001) reveals the dynamism in international and regional labour markets. These markets reflect structural changes and forces other than those in the welfare systems of industrialized countries.<sup>10</sup> While labour markets increasingly acquire regional and international ramifications – interconnected by vast networks of labour recruitment using methods stretching from high-tech digital facilities down to personal persuasion at village levels – the legal regimes for labour migration still centre around assumptions of territorial integrity and cultural separation and difference.

Industrialised countries report three service sectors with major labour shortages: health and care; education; and information technology (OECD 2002). Shortage in the health and ‘care’ sectors results from an ageing population and the absence of substitutes for human labour. More broadly, we see a huge expansion of markets for personalized services, both in essential and luxury sectors. The proliferation of care services, such as body care, childcare, care for the elderly and the plethora of sexual services, feeds on and into a rapid and globalised transformation in social reproduction. Yet migrant

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<sup>10</sup> For example, reports from NGOs working for trafficked children in Africa show that an increase in the use of child labour seems to be correlated with the fall of world prices of commodities (coffee, cocoa) (Truong 2006).

labour in a variety of activities affiliated with the maintenance of human life is considered as insignificant – therefore unmonitored – and is supplied through irregular private means, sometimes with the tacit tolerance of state agents. These supply lines have come to form an area of international migration managed with little human rights protection (Truong 2003b; Chapkis 2003), mostly dominated by human trafficking regimes in which migrants are subject to gross violations of rights by unruly practices of underground organisations (Truong 2003a; Iselin 2002).<sup>11</sup> Currently, regulatory regimes of migration for work consist of a combination of global, regional and bilateral regimes. Defined as the movement of natural persons, international migration is a category of trade in services regulated by the WTO-GATS Mode 4. This mode covers service suppliers at all skills levels. However, governments' commitments have been largely restricted to the highly skilled male sectors (intra-corporate transfers, business visitors, contract suppliers). There exist isolated bilateral arrangements for labour gaps in formal sectors dominated by women, such as health and managed care. Some bilateral arrangements also cover sectors that lie at the nebulous junction between formal and informal, such as entertainment and domestic services.<sup>12</sup>

The unwillingness of many governments to commit themselves to regulating the lower strata of the skill ladder reflects a preferential treatment of the male-dominated corporate sphere of work. The desire to protect the integrity of national borders remains entrenched, while the pressing need to protect those living in conflicting frameworks of jurisdiction, stripped of their capacity for control over their destiny, languishes in judicial disharmony. Patterns of 'forum shopping' have emerged – choices by trafficking networks of where to operate according to which judicial environment allows them to maximize returns and/or minimize risks – that constitute a direct challenge to state control (Europol 2000). As argued by Iselin (2002), unless states can create judicial harmony, allow joint investigation, and adopt workable and efficient national and international mechanisms of referencing that protect the human dignity of victims, migrant workers in 'feminised' conditions (of submission and obedience) will, irrespective of their gender identity and sector of employment, remain unable to assert themselves as subjects with rights.

In these situations, high velocity as an aspect of globalization fails to apply to the judiciaries, bound as they are by so many considerations derived from history, culture, national identity and other interests. Despite a formal commitment by states to juridical protection of victims,<sup>13</sup> the slow formation of functioning local institutions to provide this protection has buffeted many undocumented migrant workers into sidelines where they turn to criminal actors for protection – a protection that often transforms into tyranny. The

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<sup>11</sup> Belser (2005) estimates that global profits made from forced labourers exploited by private enterprises or agents reach US\$ 44.3 billion every year, including US\$ 31.6 billion from trafficked victims. The largest profits - more than US\$ 15 billion - are made from people trafficked and forced to work in industrialized countries.

<sup>12</sup> For example the arrangements between Japan and the Philippines for entertainment, and Hong Kong and the Philippines for domestic services.

<sup>13</sup> Under the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocol on the human rights protection of victims.

‘unpeople’, helots or undocumented and bonded migrant workers do not experience de-territorialization as active agents, but as highly dependent subjects. They move through distinct gendered and racialised corridors of the international labour market. They are deployed in stigmatized and risky locations with often little scope for agency.

By contrast, within the sphere of conventional economic statistics the visibility of migrant workers’ contribution is now glaring. Their remittances (as citizens, denizens or helots) have become a key source in national finances, less volatile than other financial flows and relatively unaffected by financial crises (Ratha 2003). According to IOM (2003), remittances through official channels amounted to USD 72.3 billion in 2001 – double the amount in 1988, implying a growth rate between five and six per cent per year. Since a large number of migrants remit through informal channels, the total amount is much higher. According to the World Bank (2006: ix) international remittances received by developing countries in 2005 were in the order of USD 167 billion. For many low-income countries remittances have become two to three times larger than foreign direct investment, and far exceed the volume of Official Development Assistance.

Remittance is proportionately more important amongst the less educated migrants, who have a higher burden of parental and filial duty for the maintenance of the young and the elderly (IOM 2003). But precisely the least protected migrants remit through informal and risky financial channels, for undocumented and/or temporary migrants cannot open bank accounts. They turn to costly methods offered by private companies who charge between 13 and 20 per cent of the amount transferred, or to informal channels where their money is at risk of theft (Ratha 2003). In a pyramid of social relations, new rules provide privileges and protection for workers affiliated with corporate activities but leave the subordinate groups subject to the unruly nature of the global polis, despite their major contribution to the economic security of their nations.

The global economic reforms of the past generation, and current frameworks of analysis and policy negotiation, show great attention to economic productivity and little regard for human and social reproductivity. Norms built into global governance frameworks on liberalisation of financial markets and migration have produced, in many contexts, distinct spheres of gendered interests. The transformation of production as a key structure in international political economy has not entailed a transformation of consciousness to address the security and financial concerns of those who are daily engaged in the maintenance of human life and social institutions without which the production and financial investment would be impossible.

A reproductive crisis manifests itself in anarchical patterns of unauthorised, illicit and concealed movements of people across borders in search of work under conditions of high risk in order to be able to sustain them selves and the livelihoods of those left behind. This crisis, a tragedy for very many, has opened up a new space for ethical reflection and for debates on how to foster progressive forces for a more equitable transformation.

### 3 DEVELOPMENT ETHICS

#### From economism to human development to human security

##### *Theories and practices*

Development ethics as a field is a space of analysis and action regarding the trajectory of societies, with special reference to suffering, injustice and exclusion within societies and between societies at a global scale. (See e.g. Gasper 2004 for other characterizations.) Its typical focus on humans in their own right, irrespective of location, rather than as abstract functioning factors in an economy, offers the possibility for a politics of social change that accepts human dignity as a priority.

The development ethics field can be seen as the intersection of various streams of practice and traditions of theorizing. Figure 1 presents some major bodies of practice in which ethical issues have been perceived and grappled with, at least sometimes, and how they intersect with important streams of theorizing, thereby generating many types of thought and action. The matrix shown is a tool to think actively about work in development ethics, not a facsimile portrait. There are of course overlaps between the streams and traditions presented; but professional ethics, for example, has become a distinct field of theory, as part of practical ethics' theorizing and advice in response to real choices. Further, the matrix lacks a time dimension, to convey say the rise of human rights in policy terms. Other areas of practice, such as consumption or inter-cultural relations, and of theory, such as consumer theory and critique, or cultural theory and critique, could be added. Arguably we could, for example, add environment as a practice column and participatory approaches as both a row and a column.

In this paper we stress some sources which are not prominent in past work but whose importance in development ethics is growing: feminist theory and practices in struggles for gender equity; and migration as a social reality from which many ethical questions emanate and are being scrutinized in the same way that emergency relief and intervention have been and continue to be. We will in addition propose to extend beyond disembodied moral philosophy and spirituality and to draw from existentialist thought and from ethics of care.

**FIGURE 1**  
**Some sources and streams in development ethics.**  
**Examples of the resulting work.**

		<b>SOME SOURCES IN PRACTICE</b>			
		<b>Socio-economic development policy, programs, projects</b>	<b>Human rights activism and practice</b>	<b>Emergency relief, conflict and humanitarian intervention</b>	<b>The world of work and corporate responsibility</b>
<b>SOME STREAMS IN THEORIZING</b>	<b>Critiques of mainstream economics</b>	Sen & capability approach. Haq & 'Human Development'. Grameen Bank.	'Rights-based approaches' to development (not led by HR theory)	The entitlements approach to famine and hunger	'Triple bottom-line'
	<b>Well-being research</b>	Participatory poverty assessment. Ellerman on building autonomy via assistance	Galtung, Max-Neef et al. on autonomy and participation in one's community	Harrell-Bond on promoting autonomy in relief programs	De Moraes, Carmen, on autonomy in work
	<b>Moral philosophy</b>	Nussbaum's capabilities approach. O'Neill's approach to justice	Rights of women, children, workers, aged, handicapped, animals	Kantian ethics of obligations; Red Cross	[Western moral philosophy has been very largely too abstract to distinctively contribute here]
	<b>Religions</b>	Liberation theology; Buddhist economics, Sarvodaya	Liberation theology; Gandhianism; socially engaged Buddhism	Christian relief agencies; Red Crescent	Catholic social thought. Vedantic business ethics; 'faith-based...';SEWA
	<b>Humanism</b>	Goulet, Berger, Illich, Max-Neef	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Oxfam relief MSF	UN Global Compact
	<b>Human rights theory, jurisprudence</b>	Right to work. Basic income. Rights of the displaced.	Human rights covenants; work on legal constitutions, legislation; judicial activism	Doctrines of (non-) intervention	Labour rights. Child labour. UN Protocol on Human Trafficking (2000)
	<b>Professional / practical ethics</b>	Immersion visits; professional guidelines and codes of practice	Work to apply formally avowed rights in practice	Codes of relief ethics; SPHERE standards	Business practice codes; social entrepreneurship
	<b>Feminist theory</b>	Discerning gender-based social injustice. Gender audits. Unveiling of the care sector.	Complementing rights with virtues and care. Demanding rights for invisible workers and subjects in need of care.	Rape as a war crime and a component of genocide (UN Resolution, 2008)	Organizing in the informal economy; Domestic Workers Associations.

## *Human development*

Much of the literature in development ethics has arisen in the italicized cells in Figure 1, where some schools in moral philosophy and social science, including critiques of mainstream economics, address issues arising in socio-economic development policies, programmes and projects. This work is diverse, since the schools are diverse – utilitarian, Aristotelian, Kantian, existentialist and more – but a major thrust is captured by the subtitle of a recent survey: ‘From Economism to Human Development’ (Gasper 2004). The leading single theoretician in such work has probably been Amartya Sen. Of key importance was his association with an inspiring and influential practitioner Mahbub ul Haq, founder of the UNDP Human Development Reports and of the wider human development movement in development analysis and advocacy. The work led by Haq, Sen and UNDP can be broadly called the Human Development Approach. It has achieved, rather rapidly, a significant degree of institutionalization, in national and sub-national as well as international reporting.

Human development (HD) thinking has broadened the range of objectives that are routinely considered in development debate and planning. Some other aspects of the HD approach are less obvious and require comment. They include both strengths and lacunae.

First, Haq led a rejection of partitioned thinking: the analysis of processes and connections only within conventional disciplinary and national boundaries and thus within the supposedly largely separate containers of national ‘economies’. He emphatically espoused and embodied ‘joined-up thinking’ not hobbled by those boundaries.

Second, quietly included without much philosophical trumpeting, the HD approach (HDA) also takes a step towards ‘joined-up feeling’. As in pure utilitarian or human rights philosophy, the field of reference is all humans, wheresoever in the world. Unlike in market-based economics, the field is not reduced to agents with purchasing power, let alone weighted according to their purchasing power. Global ethics then automatically starts to arise as a topic of attention, as we see for example in UNDP’s work on global public goods.

Third, the focus on individuals does not make HDA neo-liberal. Neo-liberalism views the human being through a narrow lens, as an individual economic actor who should be placed in a levelled ‘playing field’ for competition. HDA endorses a broader spectrum of meanings with regard to ‘being human’, seeing people as social, cultural, economic and political subjects. Humanism implies a view of the self as socially embedded and influenced, but not as purely socially determined. While HDA requires and employs such a view it has not elaborated it far, except perhaps in the contributions of Martha Nussbaum. Later we discuss this lacuna further.

Lastly, a number of criticisms have been made of the conceptualization adopted in the UNDP Human Development work which is largely based on Sen’s capability approach to welfare evaluation (see e.g.: Apthorpe 1997; Truong 1997; Cameron & Gasper eds. 2000; Gasper 2002). While seeking to move beyond mainstream economics, Sen and Haq aimed to bring most of its practitioners with them. The capability approach still bears then many of the

features of economics discourse which other disciplines and audiences can find problematic. For example:

- The overgeneralized style of the slogan ‘Development is the expansion of human capabilities’ brings a danger that thinking can be displaced by counting. We must ask: capabilities for which persons? which capabilities, why and to what end? Sen’s later slogan ‘Development as freedom’ provokes similar questions (Gasper and van Staveren 2003). Nussbaum’s work probes deeper here (e.g., Nussbaum 2003, 2006).
- In contrast to the human rights tradition, HDA did not establish guarantees for individuals, despite its serious concern for equity. Nussbaum’s work, focused on constitutional anchoring of basic rights, has faced this issue, and the HDA has moved towards an accommodation with work on human rights (UNDP 2000). It remains worried though about human rights formulations as absolutist and as too focused on the state (e.g., CHS 2003: 28).
- Why should one care about individuals and particular capabilities? HDA presumes rather than builds a motivational basis. So in fact does much of the human rights tradition, but that more readily connects to some motivating factors. A minority of HDA writers, such as Nussbaum, have attended explicitly to emotions and motivation. (See also Sen 2002.)

Recent work seeks to reduce these limitations and deepen the Human Development approach – as by clarifying relationships of human development to human rights and to culture (WCCD 1995; UNDP 2004; Gasper 2007) – and to extend it to cover crucial related areas, notably of human security. Haq warned against a possible fossilization of HDA that could be induced by its extraordinarily rapid institutionalization. He urged ongoing criticism and innovation, and himself led the work on human security in the 1993 and 1994 HDRs. Subsequently, Sen has been at the forefront of extension and innovation, including as co-chair of the report *Human Security Now* (CHS 2003).

### ***The lens of human security***

The newer discourse of ‘human security’ addresses both the question of guarantees for individuals, in sometimes a more flexible and probing way than in most human rights discourse, and the need for a motivational basis, including by providing a foundational rationale for human rights in terms of basic capabilities which concern areas of basic need. It thus complements the established but sometimes partly honorific or stultified discourse of human rights (Penz 2001), and complements and extends the discourse of human development in a number of ways (Truong 2005b; Gasper 2005a, 2008a).

Methodologically and in policy outline, the approach appears the same. We see again the insistence on being empirical and tracking real connections between economy, polity and society, now including the worlds of war, and drawing the implications: joined-up thinking. For example: ‘What is needed is not large amounts of additional financial capacity within the state but more efficient integration of social policy objectives into macroeconomic and trade-related policy processes’ (CHS 2003: 87); ‘Costa Rica, Sri Lanka and the Indian



state of Kerala have managed very effective social protection systems on the same budget as other regions that offered no such protections' (CHS 2003: 89). Haq brought militarism's opportunity costs as well as its direct costs to the centre of the stage, and estimates like the following have become commonplace: 'The World Bank and the United Nations estimate that if four days' worth of the annual military expenditure worldwide were diverted into education every year, that would provide the funding needed to achieve worldwide primary education by 2015' (CHS 2003: 117-8). Feminist theory goes on to explore militarism's cultural impacts and consequent other effects.

So what if anything does the human security discourse add? First, most obviously, it concerns itself with the stability and security of people's capabilities (seen as the real opportunities of achievement which are open to them and which they have good reason to value), not only their average level. Secondly, it has a more substantive character: less generalized and abstracted, a language of the concrete needs of concrete individuals. A concern with securing starts with a concern for basics, specific goods: securing life and health and dignity and peace. The very label human security, initiated to draw a contrast with the security of states, makes us think about what is human, what is the humanity that should be secured. It better grounds the existing human development discourse -- in the mud, as Manfred Max-Neef would insist, and directs us towards the quotidian, the most vulnerable and their plural systems of protection. Thirdly, this substantive focus on basics gives the discourse a stronger existential charge, a more vivid and touching content, a firmer motivational base. It goes further towards 'joined-up feeling' in addition to 'joined-up thinking'. Thus Penz (2001) diagnoses it as a fuller move in a cosmopolitan direction. In these last two respects it is close in character to Nussbaum's form of human development theory, but with a more limited focus: on the basics.

Listen to one of the presidents (Carazo) of Costa Rica who built its welfare state:

I knew the Costa Rica of social injustice: a country of people without shoes or teeth, without [a] university, with scarcely half a dozen high schools ... It was a Costa Rica without a limit of working hours, in which children also worked as grown ups; ... [where] life expectancy was barely more than 40 years. I saw the sick ask for hospital attention as charity ... Workers had no vacations, no dismissal notice, no severance pay .... A Costa Rica without social guarantees. (Cited by Mora 2000, p.24.)

The country of people without teeth, two generations ago, now has higher life expectancy figures than the USA. The MDGs are not yet about helping people have teeth, as a basic need, but they are in that same spirit.

These evocations from the notion 'human security' survive, and in fact grow out of, the vagueness and pluriformity of the notion in current usage. A variety of meanings is employed, and appears legitimate and important. Evocativeness and richness of content are not inherent mistakes in ethical concepts, but they also bring dangers of confusion and of drift. We must distinguish for example between socio-economic security and psychological security. The two are not always closely related. Psychological security can be obtained in various ways besides socio-economic security, some of which are

admirable, some undesirable. Psychological security via a belief in a simple 'true' personal identity, typically from membership in some inspiring group, carries dangers, and can be at the cost of openness and humanity to those outside the group (see e.g. Glover 2001).

*Human Security Now's* policy agenda includes attention to the formation of such basic perceptions, and to more cosmopolitan education that can 'teach students to reason, to consider ethical claims, to understand and work with such fundamental ideas as human rights, human diversity and interdependence ... to grasp the reality of human interdependence more directly and more widely... [and] instill in the content of education a new emphasis on ethical values – and on public debate and democracy' (CHS 2003: 122). Education concerns adults not only children, including 'the police, the armed forces, private security forces and others with access to the means of coercive force' (loc. cit.: 122). It should include gender awareness, conflict management, and opening up of perceptions of identity, to see oneself as having multiple identities (p. 123). The last of the main recommendations is to strengthen activities for 'Clarifying the need for a global human identity' (pp. 141-2).

### ***The challenges to development ethics***

So, something important has happened in the attention to development ethics in the past fifteen years: more at the level of literature and theorizing; much less so, yet with some significant achievements, in the worlds of policy, education, and action – for example concerning debt, child labour, the greater centrality officially granted to human rights, and so on. Whether the changes outside the world of words are judged encouraging or not depends on what one takes as the basis for comparison and evaluation. More should have happened, but at least something did.

Why have some favourable moves occurred, and why not more? The move from words to policy action to institutionalized daily practices is an enormous journey. What did not yet happen are the required gradual paradigm shifts at all levels, from abstract reasoning through to institutions and daily practices. Historically, major change has often been measured in centuries rather than generations (Krzmaric 2007). One hopes that velocity and deterritorialization will grow at the same rate in ethics as they have in many other respects, to keep pace with interconnectedness.

The speed of the journey is affected also by the insightfulness and methods of the travellers, including how well they converse with those with whom they must work and influence. The preoccupation with theory, in the revival since the 1970s of academic political philosophy and substantive ethics triggered by John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (1971), may have brought insufficient explicit attention to motives and feelings. Rawls incorporated moral intuition into his method, but did not interrogate and educate it. In the thought experiment that he used to render plausible his theory of justice, the imaginary 'original position', he sought to incorporate intuitions about fairness into the design of the original position and then rely further only on calculations of self-interest. This appears neither a consistent approach nor one that explores sufficiently the emotional building blocks of ethics.

Where do the intuitions about fairness come from? What if they are absent? Jonathan Glover cites Thucydides' account of the negotiations between the militarily dominant Athenians and the city of Melos in the Peloponnesian War. The Athenians, from their position of strength, listened to and rejected every plea from the Melians made on grounds of fairness, sympathy, compassion or rights. They insisted on Melian subordination in place of neutrality, besieged the city, massacred its male inhabitants of military age when it surrendered, and sold the women and children as slaves (Glover 2001: 28-30). Writing at the same time as British imperialism presided with Olympian indifference over mega-famines in India, Nietzsche commended the Athenians' stance to the aspirants to world-power in late 19th century Bismarckian Germany. The viewpoint remains widespread, bedecked sometimes in the philosophical vestments of 'realism'. Indeed, Rawls explicitly limited his theory of justice to relationships within modern Western liberal polities, and rejected its application elsewhere, including to relationships between polities. The development ethics implications of his position are both limited and, in a globalized world, obsolescent.

Without a starting point of concern, care and motivation, development ethics in particular will have little impetus. Both Sen's work on human development and official human rights discourse may rely on motives which they fail to highlight, discuss, and consolidate. A human rights language is anyway insufficient, and must be complemented by the acceptance of duties and the presence and practice of 'virtues', appropriate ethical attitudes and skills (O'Neill 1996). These have a base in fundamental human capacities and proclivities for reflection, empathy and compassion (Truong 2005a). We saw that Human Security Now gives substantial attention to education towards a global human identity. We will see too that some authors on human development ethics such as Giri and Nussbaum seek to fill more general lacunae in HDA by drawing from other traditions in moral philosophy, spirituality, and social theory. We will refer in particular to feminist care ethics, a modern strand within the family of those ethics which stress virtues.

Nothing may be more practical than a good theory, but what are the factors which contribute to the perceived power of a theory, especially in social philosophy and public policy? Rawls's theory achieved impact not only through its elaborate reasoning but because it could tap and also tacitly educate widespread ethical intuitions in his chosen audience. Sen's work has achieved similar or greater impact, including far beyond academe, partly because of his adoption of a more morally evocative vocabulary – of entitlements, functionings, capabilities, agency, freedoms and human development – than in the existing economics of welfare and policy. Drawing from studies of what types of ideas acquire authority and influence in policy-oriented science and successfully bridge the worlds of science and policy, Asuncion St. Clair (2006) argues that successful intellectual 'boundary objects' in the emergence of ethics in development theory and policy are those which have had a strong ethical 'charge' and that connect well to feelings and intuitions. She posits that 'human security' can be an effective boundary object (see also Gasper 2005a).

Work on 'human security' has been with us already for over a decade. Arguably, for the work to reach more of the parts that most development

ethics has so far failed to influence, it must consciously employ methods with emotional depth, such as life narratives and intimate studies of life spheres, methods from the arts and humanities. In parallel, it and development ethics more broadly have to widen their theoretical attention to cover emotions and motivations, as is done in the literature on an ethics of care. In other words, work on human security requires a methodological broadening, to add to its broadened scope in terms of themes and sectors.

### ***The need for experientially and emotionally grounded ethics***

Early modern social theory in Europe emerged during the 17th and 18th centuries in the transition from an era riven by immense inter-religious European conflicts to a world dominated by economic forces and inter-State competition for global prizes. David Hume expressed his relief to live in the 18th century not its bloody predecessor. He and thinkers like Bernard Mandeville and Adam Smith advocated strong reliance on a market system, as supposedly guided by and in turn fostering more peace- and progress-giving motives, ‘the Interests’ as opposed to the volatile ‘Passions’ which fuel war (Hirschman 1977). Smith argued that, if properly institutionally channelled, self-interest is the most reliable way to build both prosperity and peace. But while the passions can be extremely destructive, it would be deeply erroneous to think that all passions are undesirable and dispensable, or that cooperation and mutual help are dispassionate. Smith himself gave enormous weight to the role of ‘the moral sentiments’ which sustain human society, including market functioning. Others took over his analysis of the first world-wide web, the market system, and presumed that only the amoral sentiments, the desires for material gain and personal convenience, were necessary for its effective, indeed socially optimal, operation. Strangely, some of their present-day successors even try to analyse violent conflicts exclusively as dispassionate struggles for gain.

Ananta Giri’s remarkable *Conversations and Transformations* (2002) argues persuasively that social ethics requires deeper pictures of self and of how selves relate with others; attention to how reasoning, reasonable, compassionate selves are fostered; and empirical study of how committed, sympathetic reasoning can be embodied and sustained in social practices and styles of ethical argumentation, notably in the various spheres of ‘civil society’. In effect, he considers the social contexts for moral self-development and action. He reflects on the roles of case studies and biographies, noting Gandhi’s insight that people impervious to reasons may still be susceptible to influence via their capacity for sympathy; or as formulated by Bhikhu Parekh, that unless there is already sympathetic attention to a person she will be ignored or downgraded in reasoning. Giri therefore proposes that development ethics should draw on the tradition of self-cultivation found in ‘aesthetic ethics’ but must also avoid the possible associated narcissism, by strengthening its own tradition of facing suffering others.

Giri argues that Sen’s conceptualization of human well-being rests on an inadequate conception of personhood and lacks a dynamic perspective on self-development. ‘Sympathy’, said Sen in mid-career, is when a person’s own well-being is affected by the situation of other persons; ‘commitment’ is when a

person acts in support of other persons or other causes even though this does not improve his/her own well-being. Evidently by 'well-being' Sen here meant felt well-being, gratification. His definition of the label 'sympathy' (feeling with others) as gratification from another person's well-being implies that this gratification is the only possible sort of feeling-with-others, and implies that non-gratification types of feelings towards others require a different name (he chose 'commitment'). Giri prefers the ordinary usages of 'sympathy', as feeling with others, and of 'commitment', as dedication to others. Hence like Adam Smith he stresses that, in these senses, sympathy sustains commitment rather than the two being mutually exclusive categories as for Sen. Nor are they marginal: mental health requires some degree of orientation to other people.

Sen has famously proposed that democracy prevents famines, in contrast to the malign neglect practiced by the Imperial British authorities in 19th century India or Ireland. Case studies of contemporary India show that while formal political democracy mitigates famine, in reality it does not prevent it (Banik 2007; Currie 2000). Underlying Sen's hypothesis is an optimistic vision in which democracy increases not only (1) the flow of information, but also (2) the respectful and sympathetic awareness of others and (3) the willingness to contribute to help them, at least if other relevant people share in doing so ('collective altruism' – Penz 1986: 202-210; Dreze & Sen 2002). Unfortunately democracy at national level does not guarantee any of these three, at national or even subnational level; let alone guarantee respect, sympathy and solidarity on a global level. Within the United States, as in India, formal democracy co-exists continually with the destitution and malnutrition of large groups of people. And at global level there is not even formal democracy.

Giri brings in a richer picture of human personality than Sen has used, and this leads to a profound critique. He proposes that Sen's capability approach does not focus on personal growth, nor on the ability to be a friend not enemy to oneself, nor on the nature, as opposed to only the idea, of human agency, nor on the development of 'a space for criticism of the self-justificatory claims of one's freedom' (p. 210). The approach '[does] not embody striving for self-development on the part of the poor... [and] lacks an objective of self-actualization or self-realization' or self-extension (p. 230). 'Sen is dismayed by the unreasoned identity shifts that are taking place [in India] but the reasoned deliberation that Sen is looking for requires much more than reason' (p. 239). His ethics remains too much in the mould of Rawls, lacking an adequate psychological basis. Giri contends similarly that Habermas's discourse ethics does not attend to 'the preparation of the self that is required to take part in the public sphere' (p. 302), including the arts of listening and openness to 'otherness' that are required for true conversation, nor the enriching role of love which Giri illustrates from the years of intense debate between Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore.

Richard Sennett's recent study of respect (Sennett 2004) perhaps carries further warnings for Sen's variant of human development theory. At least we must distinguish carefully between types of attitude towards others. In Sennett's view, opportunity and compassion make an unhappy marriage: opportunity brings inequality, and 'creaming off' of the brightest of the poor(er), while 'compassion wounds' as Mary Douglas declared, and is anyway

undermined by inequality. Compassion easily deforms, in circumstances of inequality, into pity and becomes experienced by receivers as contempt. Receivers typically share Mary Wollstonecraft's perception that 'It is justice, not charity, that is wanting in the world'. For the poorer, not only the poorest, 'compassion condescends, meritocracy excludes'. Building self-respect amongst the poor by meritocracy is no solution, for this rapidly brings creaming-off. The required response to the inevitable inequality of capitalism, suggests Sennett, should not be for the state to (further) promote meritocracy and opportunity, but to guarantee access to basic needs; for example via a basic income, not via conditional handouts monitored as part of the 'audit society' (Power 1997).

Two more warnings arise. First, fulfilment of basic needs ensures opportunity; but a key question is by how many stages of opportunity (opportunity to have an opportunity to have an opportunity...) one is removed from centrally important goods. The guarantee is hollow if the stages are too many. A danger exists that the language of providing opportunities can be used to disguise their absence for most people.

Second, basic needs provision requires continuing commitment and is not a substitute for it. Costa Rica has recently had two ex-Presidents charged with corruption and at the same time a third who prudently resided abroad. Tatiana Mora (2000) reports a growing mental distancing of its affluent urban groups from the expanding urban underclass, growing feelings that the poor, while indeed multiply deprived, are in one way or another outside society -- weird, contrary, and not susceptible to help or not deserving of help: 'not one of us'. Fighting human development deficits requires human development policies and investments which should be cost-effective, plus a conducive macro-environment, economic and political (no waste and no war). But it also centrally requires ethical commitment: recognition of other people as fellow humans.

From the 1991 *Human Development Report*, Mahbub ul Haq highlighted the lack of political commitment, rather than lack of resources, seen in many low-income countries, as shown by how national budgets are allocated (Haq 1999: 178). Haq's legacy, the Millennium Development Goals, are a tool in trying to generate political commitment. By focusing on the real basics, for 'the people without teeth', the MDGs have captured attention including the attention of at least some of the mentally distanced elites. They provide in addition a yardstick by which leaders will be judged, and against which if there is seen to be failure there could well be reaction. But targets alone are unlikely to be self-fulfilling in this way. Also required for MDG implementation is an ethical and perceptual strategy.

Such issues become harder still in international relations. The goodwill that is feasible, even presumable, between family and friends, and to some degree within a local community and to a lesser extent a nation, becomes yet thinner; many nations lack solidarity. Here too Haq and like-minded progressives made important steps, by demonstrating how aid budgets are actually allocated and could be reallocated, and by obtaining rich governments' commitment to the MDGs. However such targets are not self-implementing.

Section 4 looks therefore at caring and its role in moral thought: in a generalized way, in familial and local contexts, and with some reference to authors who discuss what types of extension or supplementation may be possible in the global arena.

## 4 THE LENS OF CARING

We present now three somewhat complementary streams which offer a social treatment of the self and its interface with ethics and politics. First, the ancient Mahayana Buddhist tradition offers a theory of compassion and systemic transformation through the transformation of human consciousness. Second, the work of Ananta Giri links such concerns to those of development ethics, which requires an ethic of development of the self, to enrich the human development approach. Since the historical record suggests the limits to projects of individual improvement, these must be inserted into a project of the construction of civil society -- local, national and global. Third, feminist care ethics offers strong insights which are beginning to be extended to face issues of care beyond the household or local community. We consider the three streams as different manifestations of a shared yearning for the protection of human dignity and the facilitation of human flourishing. In terms of Figure 1's survey of development ethics, their sources are from the rows for moral philosophy, religions, and feminist theory.

### Buddhism

The Buddhist queries any claim to independence embodied in the notion of 'to be', seeing it as arrogant, and seeks to honour a diversity of forms of interdependence and inter-being, meaning the mutual relevance of all life forms and events in the social world. She/he does not reject justice as a universal principle, but considers justice as subordinate to compassionate understanding (*prajna*). Unlike some of his/her Kantian or feminist counterparts, the Buddhist subject does not place justice and care in mutual opposition, but seeks constitutional balance of the individual self and of the social body. She/he uses meditation techniques as a worldly tool for ego-reduction, not as escape (Truong 2005a).

Buddhist thought may be apprehended through the principle of non-duality, backed by the Buddha's deliberations (*sutras*) on knowledge and spiritual wisdom. The principle derives from a bio-centric approach to human life, nature and the cosmos. Buddhist thought defines humans as organisms that are interlinked with other organisms. The human being differs from other organisms in nature owing to the endowment of mind<sup>14</sup>, the essential quality of which is formed by the recognition of this interdependency and expresses itself in different forms known as empathy or 'interbeing' (Thich Nhat Hanh 1993). Organically embedded in nature, the individual self is subject to impermanence

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<sup>14</sup> An introduction to Buddhist theory of mind and its meeting point with the field of psychology is best found in the conversation between H.H. the Dalai Lama and Howard Culter (1998).

and the cycle of life and hence she/he requires care and is capable of caring as an intuitive response. What can come between self and others are unwholesome minds, not the specific biological traits of the self or the other.

*Prajna*, or penetrating insight, is the ability to understand nonduality, the inter-being of all forms of life. This insight has the capacity to transform individual and collective memories of trauma and sufferings into a release of compassion. *Prajna* stands for the image of a fountain from which compassion as a non-violent life force emerges. To tap the fountain requires mind training. This can help achieve a transformative shift of consciousness to attain what are referred to as the four abodes – caring and friendliness (*maitri*), empathy with those who suffer (*karuna*), sympathetic joy for others without envy (*mudita*), and equanimity or constitutional balance (*upekka*). A change of perception through *prajna* leads to a change of emotional structure (from hostility to caring and friendliness), a change of attitude (from anger to empathy), a change of behaviour (from desiring to take, to a willingness to give; from readiness to cause grief, to willingness to bring joy), and a change away from being diverted by ‘unwholesome mind’, towards maintaining the constitutional balance of nonduality. By applying the practices of the ‘four abodes’ or virtues, the individual can achieve moral clarity. Moral clarity enables an understanding of interconnectedness as a phenomenon that lies deeper than the societal level, a clarity that facilitates the acceptance of all differences as manifestations of a universal process in which all human beings are parts.

Knowledge produced by a bio-centric approach to human life, nature and the cosmos is neither anthropocentric nor egocentric. It seeks to apprehend the interconnection between human life and other organisms. Wholesome knowledge comprehends this interconnection. Unwholesome knowledge perceives myopically. Buddhist ontology provides a vision of human nature embedded in a bio-centric world view. Organically embedded in the universe, mind is capable both of drowning in conceptual errors or liberating itself from these. Liberating the mind can lead to the capacity for generosity and appreciation of other persons’ universes. The will of mind (determination) in Buddhism is not geared towards power and control, but towards understanding the nature of interconnectedness, which is considered the key to release empathy and compassion. Ontological security is not derived from the notion of a fixed stable self, whether socially or morally defined. It is derived from the ethical ideal to perceive oneself in relation to others and, indeed, as others (Adams 2002).

Placed in the context of modern theory of care, the Buddhist notion of care for the self may be understood as the fostering, attaining and maintaining of constitutional balance; with the expectation that care for others then follows, based on the moral clarity achieved. The values of care in Buddhism as represented by the four abodes are applicable to anyone in the community; and achieving constitutional balance and moral clarity, in varying degrees of depth, are the responsibility of everyone in the community. Social injustice is seen as a manifestation of a collective psychological failure, a misperception of the self and inability to see interdependence as a reality and to appreciate the immeasurable virtue of the four abodes.



## **Ananta Giri and a non-narcissistic ethics of self-development**

Giri adds modern social theory to such concerns with perception and misperception. He proposes that 'Development is a field of relationship', between persons. The broadening of concerns in development policy, as seen in Sen's work, 'has lacked a parallel effort to deepen it' (2002: 200), in terms of agents' motivation and skills. '...the agents of development have not given much attention to developing themselves' (loc. cit.), their personalities and empathy, their ability to listen and co-operate. In contrast, as Bill Cooke has noted, the established caring professions insist on years of training and testing before their junior professionals are given power over clients and patients. Professional ethics are needed to strengthen a sense of servanthood in the powerful and privileged. Ethics must build a committed ethos, not merely proclaim sets of rules. In fact, professional ethics should critique self-concerned, irresponsible, 'professional' identities, and drop the old model of the professional as master. Giri advocates here a model of service and of existential, not necessarily geographical, pilgrimage.

This step is central: 'without emphasizing self-transformation we cannot adequately address either the problem of distributive justice or institutional well-being', let alone the issue highlighted by Nancy Fraser of justice as recognition (Giri 2002: 262). The work of development agents can be greatly strengthened by, and even requires, extension of the self, including extension of their sympathies and ability to 'listen for a change' (Hugo Slim's phrase). '...self-development is also equally a challenge for the [intended/purported] beneficiaries of development'; the poor must 'become responsible for their destiny' (p. 200). In India, for example, extension of the self is an essential step in bursting the barriers of caste. '...aesthetics of self-cultivation challenges both the poor as well as the rich' (p. 217).

Development of the self leads us towards the agenda of 'aesthetic ethics': self-cultivation, self-transformation, and Foucault's 'elaboration of one's own life as a personal work of art' fit for admiration by oneself and others. In caring for the self, people can easily be influenced by their feelings of superiority, insecurity and resentment. An aesthetic ethics has potentials for egoism, vanity and narcissism; and despite its celebration of 'difference' and otherness, 'the radical otherness that poverty poses has been deliberately relegated to the background' (Giri 2002: 201). An aesthetic stance need not be aestheticist, however; we can have attention to both self and other. Self-fulfilment in fact requires deep and non-repressive commitments to others. Thus Giri's exemplars are Kierkegaard, Aurobindo and, interestingly, Adam Smith, rather than Foucault, for they provide a deeper ontology of the self and its potentials.

The premise of 18th century Scottish Enlightenment thinking on civil society was that mutual sympathy is a quasi-universal feature in human nature, providing 'a basis for human interaction beyond the calculus of pure exchange' (Adam Seligman, quoted by Giri 2002: 287), but that it needs to be promoted and defended. Thinking of India and elsewhere (and also of universities), Giri extends this notion:

'the challenge before us is to rethink civil society and transcend the primacy of the political [and the fixation on the State] in thinking about it and being part of

it. Those who inhabit civil society are not only rights-bearing, juridical beings but are also spiritually integral beings, and unless civil society is animated and enriched by their sadhana of self-transformation and the tapashya of unconditional ethical obligation of the self to the other and society, then it can not perform its creative and critical functions. It shall cease to be a reflective space where the logic of money and power of society is shown its proper place and given a transformative direction' (2002: 289).

Civil society should be seen not only as the realm of rights-bearing individuals who organize to discipline the state, and the market; but also as the seed-bed for the 'cultivation of virtues in the lives of individuals' (p.290). It requires inspiring figures ready to be martyred to 'protect the autonomy of civil society and the dignity of individuals' (p.304). It also requires more routine and widely accessible schools for the virtues. He accepts the view of Claus Offe that schemes such as LETS (local trading schemes that use their own alternative-currency) cannot function directly as tools for societal transformation but have valuable roles in training as well as in societal damage limitation. They can help to build mutual awareness, including awareness that nobody deserves all his advantages (or disadvantages) and that we exist only through others.

Civil society in multi-cultural nations must become inter-cultural, 'a learning society where different cultures and individuals are open to learning from each other' (Giri 2002: 325). Identity should then be seen, as Paul Ricoeur suggests, as narrative identity: 'not only as a matter of a priori formulation and categorical determination; it is also an aspect of an unfolding narrative' (p.327), an ongoing identity formation or 'identification'. Giri's current work extends this focus to the construction of global civil society, with specific reference to the movements for an alternative globalization.

## **Feminist ethics of care**

Our third source, feminist care ethics, offers the richest mix of ethnography, social theory, ontology and moral reflection. It presents a multi-fold vision of care: first, as a moral orientation, disposition, and emotion; second, as a set of skills and understandings; third, as a social practice found in a variety of significant relations such as mothering, friendship, nursing, and citizenship; and lastly, as a socio-economic system jointly managed by private and public actors, which faces many dangers including paternalism and corruption (Tronto 1994; Sevenhuijsen 1998). A care system spans, or should span, various sectors, including the traditional caring professions such as nursing, social work and schooling; humanitarian relief; and the business sectors, in employment regimes and corporate outreach (Razavi, 2007).

Different feminist care ethicists bridge the divide between personal and political in different ways. Some claim the existence of a gender structure in morality, and claim the superiority or equivalence of the ethic of care arising from women's social roles as the feminine principle – which they find obliterated in masculine moral deliberations (e.g. Gilligan 1982). Others reject this claim, as it confines women's moral capability to self-erasure and abnegation and as lacking autonomy of agency (Clement 1996). They seek to revise the notion of autonomy by removing it from abstract reasoning and ideal types and develop a social approach to care and autonomy, private and

public, as dialectically linked. Noddings (2003) for example defends the ethic of care as based on personal relationships, but draws out important implications for public concerns (such as social supervision of managed care systems like hospitals, day-care centres, homes for the elderly). To her, caring as a practice requires personal encounters. Therefore, beyond the defence of managed care systems to prevent their deterioration by public decisions, care practices must be guided by situated ethics requiring reference to contextual details as well as to general principles of forms of caring (Parton 2003; Keller, 1996).

Although there is consensus on the definition of the self as socially situated, interpersonally bonded and sexually and racially embodied, there seems to be no common feminist position on the relation between this self and social change wider than the contexts of industrialised nations. With some exceptions (e.g. Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2003; Tronto, 2003; Yeates, 2004), the care debate misses an international perspective that can show how changing forms of care in one country may affect the social world of care in another – as in the case of migrant workers in paid domestic services, bilateral arrangements for the migration of nurses, health tourism and outsourcing of health services. Technological innovations, market forces and cultural shifts create massive change in this international arena. An ethic of care should contribute to reining in market behaviour and re-directing technological research to serve humanity and not just specific groups of monied humans. Building this contribution requires an enlarged definition of vulnerability and moral orientation. Compassionate evaluation of merit remains an insufficient force for transformation. Care as a moral orientation for global social justice must understand the sufferings of those who are denied care as not only a discrete tragedy of persons and groups, but as outcome of systemic forces which sustain the functioning of care systems for richer others.

To identify the systemic forces that undermine care systems within and between countries and to respond in a holistic manner, the strategy adopted by Sevenhuijsen (1998), Folbre (2001), Tronto (2003) and Williams (2003) may be useful. The strategy seeks to integrate the values derived from the ethics of care (attentiveness, responsiveness and responsibility) into concepts of citizenship: to enrich the concept of citizenship, based on a more holistic notion of the self in which reason, judgement and care co-exist, interrogate each other and find resolutions to specific and contextual contradictions. To use the values of care as political virtues to interrogate performance in particular contexts may help to alter systems of values and concepts in service of democracy in all dimensions of life.

## **Connecting streams**

None of the three positions above has, as yet, strongly developed attention to international relations, but each has potential. Of great interest for this task are also, first, Martha Nussbaum's work, which spans investigation of the emotions, ethical motivations and practices of care, through to an emergent cosmopolitan global ethic for an ever more joined-up world; and the very different but potentially complementary work of Onora O'Neill, that locates the role of ethical virtues within a reasoned framework of the duties that we

owe others in a system of interdependence. Since Nussbaum and O'Neill's work is widely and intensively discussed, in this paper we have concentrated on sources that are equally interesting but less considered in development ethics. Feminist ethics in particular appears to be pregnant with ideas relevant for a wider stage.

Aware of the risk of reducing nuanced, rich traditions to a sterilized presentation of similarities and differences, we yet see the merit in comparing diverse traditions for mutual appreciation and possible synthesis. Competing views on human agency, the body, and moral formation of the self may however have to be reconciled.

At the most general level, a view shared by the traditions is of the self as an encumbered rather than unencumbered subject, which we can refer to as embedded humanism. Feminist theory on care, vulnerability and women's agency grounds the notion of autonomy in real life conditions, as do Sen and Nussbaum's theories of human capabilities and functionings. Mahayana Buddhist moral theory on compassion and karmic consequences defines the self as organically embedded in nature and the cosmos, and encumbered by the pain of birth, illness, old age and death. It is not fully socially determined but certainly moulded by cultural socialisation.

Sharing such a view of the self, the traditions then take different routes in reasoning. Each captures something important. 'Vertical reasoning' – emphasizing norms, principles for human capabilities and functionings – is found especially in Nussbaum's work, whose deliberations suggest the position of a legislator and a decision-maker in the public sphere where ideas gain their legitimacy, policy options are chosen and resources are mobilized.

'Horizontal reasoning' stressing historicity, process and context is characteristic of early feminist writing on ethics of care. The ethical subject in this line of reasoning is the mother and the community builder who interrogates the legitimacy of regnant ideas and norms in the public sphere and demands public attention to everyday survival problems and the maintenance of life. 'Spiral reasoning' stresses the chain of causation of suffering and deprivation, starting with a view on the illusion of the self as a uniform entity, and appeals to the use of methods of mind discipline (meditation) to discover diverse levels of interconnectedness (mind-body; self-other; public-private; local-global) and achieve moral clarity for change. It is characteristic in Mahayana Buddhism. Rather than interrogating others, this tradition interrogates the self, the notion of 'to be' and the tragedy of the human failure to recognize the significance of to inter-be. The Buddhist ethical subject is a healer and adviser on practices of mindful living as a way of healing social systems.

In an era where human relationships have gone transnational, the values of the ethics of care must be applied on a transnational scale to foster a political agency that can extend itself beyond the particular form of governmentality confined by the notions of sovereignty and territorial control. As Sevenhuijzen pointed out, care structures human relationships and makes them possible, and how we can care defines to a great extent how we can give shape to our society. She suggested the term 'caring solidarity' to convey the notions of attentiveness, responsiveness and responsibility to all sort of

situations in which care is required by human beings who are differently situated. She writes: "This "caring solidarity" offers more potential for understanding the diversity of needs and lifestyles than a solidarity which takes for granted the norms of homogeneity and a "standard" human subject. In this respect, care marks the difference between policy as control and policy as an enabling activity' (Sevenhuijzen 1998: 147-8).

In Sevenhuijzen's view, the feminist ethics of care, a politics of needs-interpretation and a caring solidarity could be integrated into a reflexive and dialogic form of discourse ethics. Treating ethics as 'enabling discourses' may help us to address human rights, human development and human security issues in a more situated fashion. Such an approach would allow for ethical judgement of experiences and locations in ways that recognize what Sevenhuijzen refers to as 'situated rights', and therefore can enable public provision that is derived from the principle of universality of rights yet meets the standards of what is required in a given situation, place and time. Applied creatively, feminist ethics of care may contribute to resolving contested issues regarding universality, universalism and particularism, and may contribute to fostering interconnected systems of human security relevant to the quotidian experience of the most vulnerable people.

As the global public domain is stratified, conflictive and dominated by interests that are hegemonic and defined according to reigning notions of nation-state and communities, building a caring solidarity at this level would inevitably encounter what Yuval-Davis refers to as the politics of belonging (2003). Drawing from her empirical work on identity politics, she endorses Crowley's concept of 'belonging' as being thicker than that of citizenship, covering not just notions of membership, rights and duties but also the emotions that such membership evokes. In her view, belonging is where the sociology of emotions interfaces with the sociology of power, where identification and participation collude. For human security to be possible and a caring solidarity to be active, the sense of belonging and the emotions attached to it must be re-oriented beyond the particularities of states or communities, to foster a spiritual understanding of the human condition that goes beyond the temporal and partial boundaries of communities.

## **5 CONCLUSION: GLOBALIZED SENSIBILITY? GLOBALIZED SECURITY?**

Development ethics as a field of thought focuses both on the overall trajectories of human communities and on the lifepaths of the individuals who constitute and span those communities. Its agenda increases in urgency in the face of globalization's vast and varied impacts worldwide, which render some groups of people highly vulnerable. Notably many impacts are on women, as 'shock absorbers', custodians of the private and reproductive spheres downgraded in business calculation and mainstream economics. Our focus has been on the 'shock absorbers', specifically on those without security.

The fact of such impacts is not new, though some of the modalities may be. In the recurrent "Third World Holocausts" of the mid 19th to early 20th century, which Mike Davis has helped to recover from oblivion, tens of

millions of poor people perished. They were victims of a historical phase marked, as Sen noted, by: the extension globally of market forces and ideologies, backed by direct rule or indirect imperial policing; second, the related decay of local capacities to assure subsistence in times of need; and third, the absence as yet of new national capacities to take on these roles. Such capacities grew in the second half of the 20th century, under most post-colonial governments. In late century and at the start of the new millennium we have seen new holocausts as global market forces outstrip, undermine and bypass national governments; classes of new helots emerge to serve the rich; some national social compacts that existed for assurance of subsistence have declined; and parts of the globe even fall into the abyss, as happened in the Congo and pockets of West Africa. While some of these holocausts pass unnoticed (by the rich) into the night, there are signs of increased global concern within the global electronic village. The tsunami of December 2004 is not the best indicator since, besides its visual drama, many Western tourists were involved. More striking for our purposes is a case like the Morecambe Bay drownings, where Chinese workers in search of better lives ended theirs as throw-away inputs in a value-chain in Europe and thus attracted more attention than they ever did in their lifetimes.

We now require, and are unevenly moving towards, a global frame and global ethics, comparable to the earlier begun emergence of national systems of rights and responsibilities. Will this emergent global framework be one where might makes right and the universal principles are those of market (and other) power, or will it be based on principles of universal human dignity and fundamental human rights? (Held 2004; Gasper 2005b).

The paper looked at the responses in development ethics in relation to these practical and intellectual challenges raised by attention to human security and gender. We proposed that, besides elaboration of detached theory, or drafting of conventions, more attention is needed to the emotional, perceptual and existential grounding of ethics. The Human Development approach (HDA) has a number of gaps to be filled. It has, as a great strength, substantially put aside economics-dominated frameworks and attempts instead 'joined-up thinking': transdisciplinary integrative analysis of 'development'.<sup>15</sup> It remains much weaker with respect to 'human'. The approach's previous lack of basic guarantees for everyone is being remedied by connection to the human rights stream and in the recent reformulations of 'human security'; but it lacks a sufficient analytical base concerning the nature of personhood, selfhood, identity, and mutual concern, and a considered motivational basis for such concern. It implies a humanist view of the self, but many of its exponents have perhaps not realized that it needs to articulate and elaborate such a view, and to consider how compassionate committed selves could emerge. It presumes and conduces to ethical universalism, 'joined-up feeling', but needs a more emphatic and profound basis for this. (Martha Nussbaum's work is an exception in these respects, but has an outlier role within the HDA; Gasper

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<sup>15</sup> The *Journal of Human Development*, founded in 2000, still chose the subtitle *Alternative Economics in Action*. In 2007 it finally replaced this with 'A Multi-Disciplinary Journal for People-Centred Development'.

2003.) We suggested that Sen's picture of the impact of democracy per se is too rosy; and saw Sennett's warning of the incoherence and instability of a system based on opportunity and presumed compassion alone. The less generalized, less abstract focus in the work on 'human security', on securing basic needs, supports concern and motivation, but is still not enough. Its language is at risk of being hijacked by the psychological insecurities of the rich. The poor too can seek psychic security in dismaying ways.

We presented three contrasting but probably complementary exemplars of more profound attention to the self and to caring, as important illustrative sources: from an ancient religion, from a modern anthropologist-philosopher, and from a stream of feminist investigation. All three sources go beyond the sort of humane economics found in the United Nations mainstream of 'human development'. Buddhism's bio-centric vision of non-duality and inter-being questions the concept of self presumed in economics. Ananta Giri argues that self-development is the indispensable partner to notions of human development and societal development, and that civil society must be a nursery of the virtues. Feminist care theorists provide a major synthesis of observation and social, psychological and ethical theorization. While not offering an evolved, let alone unified, position on international issues their work suggests that global justice requires a conception of caring, a 'caring solidarity', to complement a systemic vision; that while compassion alone does not suffice, it is indispensable. For dispassionately reasoned global citizenship faces a more heady competitor, the politics of group belonging. Global justice may require a countering notion of global belonging, such as hinted at in human rights thought or as more grandly essayed by Buddhism.

We conclude that the field of development ethics needs to be deepened in several directions to better serve those adversely affected by processes of globalization.

- Development ethics should enrich its conception of the human being. Vulnerability and capability are two sides of the same coin of being human. Care connects both sides, and should be considered as a virtue to be developed for democracy, solidarity and social justice to be possible.
- Development ethics should enrich its notions of well-being, including by drawing from the gender-sensitive study of care and routine life maintenance.
- Bringing in the ethics of care may help to renew and reshape moral responsibility and reciprocity between persons as citizens within a state and between citizens of different states. This reshaping could be guided by the concept of belonging that incorporates notions of membership and community and the emotions that these notions evoke. Emphasising the interconnected nature of belonging, and empathy as a basic human emotion, may help redirect the politics of belonging beyond current territorial and temporal social confines.
- By this and other means, development ethics should respond to the reality that human processes, and persons, have escaped from national

containers. An end to the perceptual and therefore moral blindness regarding inter-state care provision is called for.

As Hershock points out, 'tragedy lies at the intersection between the positive moral space of what ought to happen and the negative space of what could not happen' (2003: 24). Ethical and other reflection is sorely needed to reduce that negative space.

In arguing for a development ethics with a global perspective, grounded in rich ethnography and grounded emotionally and existentially, we in effect call for a revival in substantial part of the agenda mapped and pursued by Denis Goulet since the 1960s.<sup>16</sup> Such work is needed to complement the 'Sen wave' of the last twenty years. Such an enriched and situated development ethics could contribute to the deepening of the body of social knowledge on globalization and the extension of forms of cosmopolitan judgement and political agency.

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<sup>16</sup> See Goulet (1971), Gasper (2008b).



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