From Hans Küng’s Global Ethic to Value Community – Re-thinking the Construction of Business Ethics Theory

Dr. Hsiang-Yi Lin, Assistant professor, Department of International Business Management, Ching Yun University, Taiwan
Dr. Li Lin, Associate professor, Graduate Institute of European Studies, Tamkang University, Taiwan

ABSTRACT

Stakeholders in a corporate or social activity – the individuals or groups that are influenced by the corporation’s actions, decisions, policies, behaviors, or objectives, have interests or benefits that are closely intertwined as one’s actions often cause immediate positive or negative effects on others (Frederick, 1986:126-141). Therefore, corporate ethical obligations and duties deserve our attention. Donaldson (1982) examined the issue in which a corporation’s activities inevitably influences the society where it is located positively or negatively, the accepted basic values, norm, common goals, and behaviors and obligations accepted among corporations and the society form a social contract that regulate the society and corporations (Donaldson, 1982:42-52). The proposal by Donaldson & Dunfee for developing the social contract for constructing corporate ethics is “integrative social contract theory.” They attempted to integrate universal ethics with certain ethical norms in different cultures into a set of corporate ethics that allows corporations to conduct ethical operations in different cultures. We will then propose a “social contract that only involves basic survival rights, the principle of majority, and adjustable content” along with Rawls’ “the influence of humanistic systems” as the ultimate solution to the problem of ethical foundations.

Keywords: Hans Küng; Global Ethic; Business Ethics; Value Community; Social Contract.

INTRODUCTION

Hans Küng’s World Ethic and the Theory of Social Contract

The Universal Ethics Project initiated by UNESCO in 1997 was made possible by Hans Küng—a Swiss Catholic Father and theologian. In the Parliament of the World’s Religions in 1993, the Declaration of Global Ethic by Hans Küng deeply influenced how UNESCO’s ethic project would be implemented. In fact, the thesis “No World Peace without Inter-religious Peace” announced by Hans Küng in 1989 in the “World Religion and Human Right Conference” has marked the beginning of his world ethic movement. In 1993, Hans Küng prepared a declaration of his global ethic and initiated a

1 Hans Küng was born in Sursee, Switzerland, in 1928. Received the status of Catholic Father in 1954, acquired the mater’s degree in theology from Pontifical Gregorian University in 1955, acquired the doctoral degree in theology from Sorbonne (France) in 1957, passed the Habilitation in 1959 and taught in Uni Munster. In 1960, Hans Küng transferred to Uni Tubingen and retired in 1996. His theory of global ethic is rooted in Catholic theology and seeks the common moral ground between different religions and cultures.

2 Hans Küng was granted the Father status in Basilica di San Pietro in 1954. After acquiring the doctoral degree in theology from Sorbonne in 1957, Hans Küng has dedicated himself to global religions and “the research and promotion of global ethic.” After retiring from Uni Tubingen in 1996, Hans Küng worked as the chairman of “die Stiftung Weltethos” and continued to promote global ethic. Please also see the work by Prof. Liu who helped Hans Küng with promoting global ethic. Please see Liu (2001) “Global Ethic and Interreligious Dialogues”. Taipei: New Century. pp. 2-53.
petition in the Parliament of the World’s Religions; the petition was signed by more than 6,500 religious representatives from different backgrounds, attracting much attention at that time.

The influence of Hans Küng also prompted the “Commission on Global Governance” led by the late Brandt (1913-1992; ex prime minister of Germany) to propose “global civic ethics” three years after Brandt’s death. In the same year, the “World Commission on Culture and Development” urged for the establishment of global ethic. In the first meeting regarding the Declaration of Global Ethic that was drafted for the Universal Ethic Project initiated by UNESCO in 1997, Hans Küng was one of the 12 representatives and was also invited to participate in the second meeting held in Naples, Italy, in early December of 1997, in which UNESCO decided to fully support the efforts on exploring global ethic in different regions. This is why discussions on global ethic are still taking place all around the world.

Using simple and direct observations and inductions to determine the existence and content of global ethic, Hans Küng (1998) explained there are the following commonality between different religions and cultures. (Küng, 1998:95-104, and Küng & Kuschel, 1993:157-169):

Confucius: “Do onto others as you would have them do onto you.” —The Analects of Confucius (Yanyuan 12; Wei-ling-gong 15)

Rabbi Hillel: “What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbor.” —(Shabbat 31a)

Jesus Christ: “As you would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” —(Mathew 7:12; Luke 6:31)

Islam: “Direct me to an act which, if I do it, will cause Allah to love me and people to love me.” —(Forty Hadith of an Nawawi,31)

Jainism: “A man should wander about treating all creatures as he himself would be treated.”—(Sutrakritanga I,11,33)

Buddhism: “A state which is not pleasant or enjoyable for me will also not be so for him.”—(Samyutta Nikaya V,353.35—342.2)

Hinduism: ‘One should not behave towards others in a way which is unpleasant for oneself: that is the essence of morality.’ - (Mahabharata XIII, 114, 8)

In Hans Küng’s principle of global ethic, the most fundamental basis is “humanism” as he proposes that each human should be treated humanely. Using the above “golden rules,” he explains that such “golden rule of humanity” can be found in all major religions and ethics. From the “golden rule,” Hans Küng attempted to come up with an ethical consensus, and the Declaration of Global Ethic drafted by him in the Parliament of World’s Religions in 1993 was a specific example (Küng, 1998:95-104, and Küng & Kuschel, 1993:157-169). The “global ethic” by Hans Küng is defined in our study as the spirit in the “Declaration by the Parliament of the World’s Religions” signed by more than 6,500 religious representatives from all over the world in the Parliament of the World’s Religions held in Chicago, 1993. Global ethic includes one fundamental attitude (“every human being must be treated humanely”) and four necessary principles.

The four necessary principles that were determined based on major religious and ethical codes are: (1) the commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life; the teaching of “thou shall not murder” and the respect for life; (2) the commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order;

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3 Liu, S.-H. as footnote 2, pp. 22-27. Moreover, Hans Küng stressed that the German word of his global ethic is “Weltethos,” which in English could mean “world ethic” or “global ethic.” However, it is not “ethics” since his global ethic is not a form of ethics but rather a personal or group moral attitude. See Hans Küng. (1998). A Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.105.

the teaching of “thou shall not steal” and be honest and just; (3) the commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness; the teaching of “thou shall not lie” and acting out one’s words; (4) the commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women; the teaching of “thou shall not commit adultery” and the respect and love for one another (Küng, 2001:182, and Küng & Kuschel, 1993:137-143).

Hans Küng’s global ethic is to seek the minimum common values and attitude for all human beings. Hans Küng has stated that instead of a complete consensus on ethics, what he seeks is a minimum level of consensus on ethics. In this regard, he was deeply influenced by Michael Walzer who divided ethics into “Thin Ethics” and “Thick Ethics.” In “Thin Ethics,” the so-called “core ethics” includes mankind’s fundamental right to live, the right to be treated equally, and the right to be free of physical or psychological tortures (Küng, 1998:88-101).

“Thick Ethics” refers to the ethic codes that are naturally enriched in different cultures and permeate into all possible concepts and attitudes regarding history, culture, religion, and politics due to changes in time and space (Küng, 1998:90-95). Regarding Walzer’s ideas, Hans Küng (1998) believes that from the perspective of “Thin Ethics,” ethics based on global consensus can be made possible and meet the common expectations among different races, cultures, and religions, making it more of a “pure ethics” that is inviolable. On the other hand, “Thick Ethics” that is rich in cultural differences contains many unique cultural traditions and factors – even political and educational differences, making it impractical to ask different races, religions, and cultures to have common ethical practices (Küng, 1998:97-98). Therefore, Hans Küng’s world ethic and Walzer’s “Thin Ethics” both imply universalism. Hans Küng believes this kind of concept provides a minimum possible basis for mankind’s common life and behaviors in the face of political, social, or religious differences (Küng, 1998:99-101).

Confucius once said:

“Let his words be sincere and truthful, and his actions honorable and careful; such conduct may be practiced among the rude tribes of the South or the North. If his words be not sincere and truthful, and his actions not honorable and careful, will he, with such conduct, be appreciated, even in his neighborhood? When he is standing, let him see those two things, as it were, fronting him. When he is in a carriage, let him see them attached to the yoke. Then may he subsequently carry them into practice.” (The Analects of Confucius. Chapter 15 of “Wei-ling-gong.”)

From this passage, it seems Confucius’ “sincerity, truthfulness, honor, and care” are what Hans Küng believes to be the minimum possible basis for mankind’s common life and behaviors – or “Thin Ethics” according to Walzer. This is why Hans Küng has spent many years understanding and compiling different religions and cultures in order to determine their commonalities. He completed “Christianity and World Religion” in 1985 and “Christianity and Chinese Religions” in 1989, based on which he later proposed the principle of world ethic (Küng, 1989:134-151, and Küng, 1985:194-208). From the perspective of corporate ethics being formed by social consensus, although Hans Küng’s global ethic is rooted in Catholic Christianity, it also includes the concept of Christianity indigenization in order to seek the existing and essential ethical codes in major religions and cultures and common values and consensus regarding basic human dignity and attitude. These acknowledged values and consensuses are compiled by Hans Küng as a fundamental attitude (“treat each human humanely”) and the four essential principles: (1) the commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life, (2) the commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order, (3) the commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness, and (4) the commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women. In the Parliament of the World’s Religions in 1993, Hans Küng also announced his world ethic and
proposed his belief. As a Catholic Father, Hans Küng is seeking the feasibility of a universal Theology in Religion. He believes the true humanity is the premise of a true religion, and a true religion is the completeness of true humanity. Therefore, as long as these two premises are met, religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and Catholic have met the above requirements. In this sense, “religion” is concealed, and what is left is the truth that these religions have trouble describing in words (Küng, 1985:194-208).

If we think about this matter from another perspective, stakeholders in a corporate or social activity – the individuals or groups that are influenced by the corporation’s actions, decisions, policies, behaviors, or objectives, have interests or benefits that are closely intertwined as one’s actions often cause immediate positive or negative effects on others (Frederick, 1986:126-141). Therefore, corporate ethical obligations and duties deserve our attention. Donaldson (1982) examined the issue in which a corporation’s activities inevitably influence the society where it is located positively or negatively, the accepted basic values, norm, common goals, and behaviors and obligations accepted among corporations and the society form a social contract that regulate the society and corporations (Donaldson, 1982:42-52). The proposal by Donaldson & Dunfee for developing the social contract for constructing corporate ethics is “integrative social contract theory.” They attempted to integrate universal ethics with certain ethical norms in different cultures into a set of corporate ethics that allows corporations to conduct ethical operations in different cultures (Ye, 2005:122).

As mentioned earlier, if there has to be a form of tacit or obvious social contract that regulates the obligations and rights that should be followed in the interactions between corporations and the society, the content and doctrines that should be included in the social contract are the basic norm that constructs corporate ethics, and this is what we now need to examine. Donaldson & Dunfee (1999) divide their integrated social contract into the macro-social contract and micro-social contract. The ethical norm that constitutes social contract includes authentic ethical norm, procedural hypernorm, structural hypernorm, and substantive hypernorm that derived from authentic ethical norm (Donaldson & Dunfee, 1999:262-270) and serve as the content of social contract that constructs corporate ethics. The above-mentioned norm for determining whether a behavior is right or wrong is a form of hypernorm in macro-social contract, and its content includes the spirit of universal values announced by well-respected scholars of ethics, philosophies, and international organizations. Global ethic announced by Hans Küng in the Parliament of the World’s Religions in 1993 was also a source of the substantive hypernorm by Donaldson & Dunfee. (Donaldson & Dunfee, 1999:70-73).

Re-thinking the Construction of Corporate Ethics based on Social Contract Theory

Using social contracts to establish a basis for social activities has always been an attractive method since it allows people to indicate what they should do. In fact, the social contract theory or other ethic theories based on humanity (such as individualism or altruism) are the same since they can only be successful with the basis of “common humanity”.

Therefore, foundation-laying of morality for the theory of human nature and social contract theory face the same problem – the “non-existence of highly common human nature.” In other words, except norms of “no killing (including using peaceful means instead of violence to solve disputes; no stealing, and no lying),” there is not yet a norm that is agreed upon by all human beings. If the consistency of human nature was exaggerated, the problem of “why do you ask me to do things based on the human

5 “Social Contract” does not have to be interpreted as a group of people signing on a document in a public meeting in a certain time and location. It can be interpreted as people silently and willingly use consistent behaviors to express their consensus (agreement).
nature that you have but I do not” would rise when using the theory of human nature to lay the foundations. Similarly, the problem of “why do you ask me to obey in accordance with your contracted norm when I did not sign the contract” would rise when using the theory of social contract. Therefore, philosophers who attempted to construct the theory of social contract tried their very best to “expand the consistency of human nature so more people would agree on the same thing” and to propose more sophisticated norms, but such effort is filled with difficulties (Schwartz, 1973:294-307,301).

To address the above-mentioned difficulties, two questions are reviewed in our thesis:

First of all, disagreements among human is why it is difficult for the social contract theory to stand. People often try to compromise in order to reach a consensus that later proves to be unreachable. There are two sources of disagreements: 1. each person’s persistence towards his/her circumstances and interests, and 2. the different inborn nature of people. Rawls attempted to use the “veil of ignorance” to eliminate the first cause of disagreements, but what he did not expect was that the second cause was still irremovable6. However, Rawls’ method is still acknowledged in our thesis since his approach allows more consensuses to be reached to a certain extent. Therefore, we do not believe it is appropriate for Donaldson, a scholar of corporate ethics, to define the circumstance of signing the social contract as “the agreement between a certain known situation and the stakeholders,” and an example of which is the contract between a “productive organization” and the “public” (Donaldson,1989:47). However, if this was the case, there would still be much intolerance between shareholders or managers and people without such identities even if they had some common interests. We believe that the key to making the social contract theory work is that instead of treating contract-signers as two trading parties in a business setting (each cares only for their own known special interests), they should sign the contract before they know what kind of identities they would be given. In other words, they should only know there is a possibility for them to become the manager, shareholder, consumer, employee, or a resident near the factory…etc., while clearly understanding the stakes of each role but not being sure about what kind of roles they would be given. Even when it is difficult for the scenario of “not knowing what one’s own identity is” to exist in the real world, people should still be encouraged to sign the contract with the attitude of “putting oneself in another’s shoes” (whether it is about provoking people’s sympathy or reminding them that they might not be so lucky in the near future) in order for consensuses to be more likely reached. “Encouraging people to sign the contract after considering their own interests” does not work because it does not facilitate consensus-reaching. Unlike business negotiators who can simply go back to their own lives if an agreement cannot be reached, people still have to live together; therefore, what often is seen is that power-wielders oppress the weak by force when a consensus cannot be reached7.

Second, as mentioned earlier, since it is difficult to reach a consensus, some scholars believe that a social contract is signed “when it is agreed upon by the majority.” Donaldson & Dunfee believe that a characteristic of a norm based on social contract is that it is “approved by the majority” (Donaldson & T. Dunfee,1994:252-284). However, we believe it is more of an error rather than a solution. The two scholars obviously have failed to notice the fact that previous philosophers who constructed the social contract theory always say a contract was “being agreed upon unanimously” (even thought this is extremely rare) instead of “being agreed by the majority” in spite of the circumstances. This is because if

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6 A key difficulty is that there is no guarantee that people would reach a unanimous conclusion through moral influences. However, philosophers of the social contract theory always propose that a unanimous comment has to exist in order for the contract to be signed.

7 Although individual’s selfish intentions would hinder the signing or intention of signing a social contract, a possible approach is to ask those with power to put themselves in others’ shoes (“what if you are not strong but weak? How would you feel….”). Those with power might still know right from wrong and would even sign the contract. In contrary, a contract is less likely to be signed if those with power are allowed to look after their own interest.
a contract was only “agreed by the majority;” those who did not comply could say “We did not agree to obey the norm, so why do you use the norm to condemn us? Why should the agreement reached by the majority be imposed on the minority that does not agree with it? Where is the justice? This is just another form of violence inflicted by the majority on the minority.” Even though the value supported by the majority could be implemented by forcing the minority to comply, this is definitely not a foundation of ethics but merely a “social reality.”

This kind of difficulty was also revealed in the attempt to construct the so-called “global ethic norm.” Donaldson and Dunfee attempted to use the common religious, traditional, and philosophical values from different cultures to indicate that mankind does have certain common values and to support certain universal agreements (Donaldson & Dunfee, 1999:60). However, this kind of thinking is very insufficient in terms of philosophical precision. In our secularized era in which diversity is respected, a religion or moral code that is popular in an area does not mean it is accepted by all people but is merely being accepted by the majority of people. Different nations signing an international protocol do not mean it is accepted by all people, and this is because the government represents the majority instead of the entire people, and it is impossible for some protocols that require public voting within a country to be totally supported. A common ground between major religions and Confucianism does not equal the common ground between all people in the world (including those who are not religious or followers of Confucianism). Then, on what basis should the consensus of certain people be imposed on all people?

The above discussions indicate that when there is no consistency among the more sophisticated human values, the only way to use the social contract theory as the foundation of ethics is to include the principle of “respecting the majority” as a part of the consensus reached by social contract, making “the minority should obey the majority” legitimate. We will then propose a “social contract that only involves basic survival rights, the principle of majority, and adjustable content” along with Rawls’ “the influence of humanistic systems” as the ultimate solution to the problem of ethical foundations.

The Social Contract that Only Involves Basic Survival Rights, the Principle of Majority, and Adjustable Content and Rawls’ “the Influence of Humanistic Systems”

If people know that “they will not be able to reach agreements on many details but still have to live together” when signing a social contract, we believe that in accordance with human nature, they would at least reach a contract in which “people do not kill, steal, or lie; people act in accordance with what the majority decides only when the latter does not remove the basic survival rights for the minority, and the minority can continue to challenge the ideas of the majority in a peaceful manner in order for themselves to become the majority”. Here, the “conditional power by the majority” has been agreed upon and is legitimate, thus the problem of “violence by the majority” does not exist. The kind of social contract that mankind would prefer to choose is rarely achieved since history shows that selfish people with power often use violence and brain-washing to oppress the weak. However, after much effort, what mankind truly desires is eventually being made possible. Today, this kind of system can be seen everywhere, and people in a region, a country, or the world have gradually agreed to use this method to solve their differences and survive together. In our thesis, this kind of system that people commonly prefer is the “fundamental democratic structure.”

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8 Today, if all political or economic issues in a region, country, or the world could be peacefully solved, it would be solved with this kind of “conditional voting” approach. Not all matters can be solved via unanimous decisions. If the new social contract theory in our thesis was adopted, this kind of method for solving disputes and ensuring survival would have moral legitimacy.

9 Based on how we interpret humanity, it is inevitable that mankind continues to follow democracy since it is the system that most facilitates “survival.”
The difference between the above concept and traditional social contract theory is that the former only proposes that mankind would choose the “fundamental democratic structure” but does not go deeper to propose a more specific system; in other words, it does not arbitrarily say what kind of sophisticated system mankind would definitely choose. The specific systems being implemented in a society are determined due to the support by the majority, and time changes everything. In contrary, philosophers supporting the social contract theory assume “mankind can reach agreements on detailed matters.” These philosophers enthusiastically promote and construct their beloved ideas and state that mankind would unanimously choose certain sophisticated systems despite contradicting evidence.

We reject this kind of fantasy as we believe that the top priority for a person is to promote a value that he/she supports so it can be accepted by the majority, allowing him/her to live in the system that he/she desires. In other words, if a person prefers a certain value (e.g., male labors being granted parental leave; corporations being taxed to cover college students’ tuitions), he/she should use specific actions to promote the value and let others understand that it is pleasant, secure, and rewarding to live under such value. Other people would join his/her circle of value-sharing or “faith” and form a stronger force that makes the value influential and eventually become a strong and stable norm.

Part 3 of Rawls’ “A Theory of Justice” inspires us to propose the possibility of “solidifying faith,” “influencing others,” and “expanding the circle of faith.” Earlier we have pointed out that even though Rawls’ method of foundation-laying does not stand, there are indeed many countries today using systems that are similar to his proposals and are deemed as being advanced. This means there are a “majority of people” in the real world that support these values and make them into laws. Part 1 of Rawls’ work explains that a human being would consistently choose the “justice” that he/she proposes in the “original status;” this is not out of universal love or noble since it is due to the sake of self-interest and preservation and the fear of becoming a member of the minority and living a hopeless life when he/she does not make that choice (choosing the “maximum”). However, in a humanist system where the minority group is being looked after and a person enjoys the fun of self-actualization, he/she will deeply believe in the legitimacy of this system, support it, and will not let other members of the society ruin it (Rawls, 1971:454). This means that people will change their attitude after their minds are being cultivated; from being forced to support a humanist system in order to protect their own interests, they eventually truly identify with humanism, and their minds shift from the selfish end to the sympathetic end.

Rawls believes a humanist society nurtures humanism and improves human nature. In contrast, a society without humanism and does not guarantee basic survival rights would not allow benevolence to develop. Once benevolence is spread out, an environment where sympathy can grow will be established, and sympathy that can be found in most of us will be further developed in such an environment, resulting in a high level of humanism in this society. According to Rawls, “the development morality requires certain social conditions and environment, including education; …morality is not imposed on people from the outside but rather a natural manifestation of people’s own attributes in an environment that is harmonized, just, and fair” (Chao, 1998:142). When people enjoy the good life made possible by a humanist system, they will truly love, support, and identify with the values in such system.

Through the painful lessons learned in history, today’s mainstream values undoubtedly emphasize on “sympathy,” and ideas such as re-distribution of wealth and looking after minority groups are

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10 If there is not a humanist social system that solves people’s worry of becoming the weak or rids the weak of hatred towards the society, human sympathy could be suppressed, and people would be more likely to be more suspicious with each other or become aggressors.
gradually being supported. As stated earlier, Rawls believes the system based on these values is attractive and contagious.

From Rawls’ description we can argue that if a set of values truly brings people joy and hope, it will be supported by more people. This system that more and more people desire will become more stable; it will have fewer challengers and attract more people who do not wish to harm others but to be sympathetic. Honesty, respect, and harmony will fill the society and major cultures – including business (Rawls, 1971:454).

**Conclusion - Supporting the Pursuit of “Value Community” through Sharing Joy**

To conclude our thesis, we use the “social contract whose content is adjustable and is only about protecting basic survival rights” to replace the foundation-laying by traditional ethics. The scope of foundation-laying by this kind of new thinking is the same as the result of “individualism” – reaching only the “fundamental democratic structure.” This is because both concepts are based on humanity which is only consistent in a certain level; therefore, except proving basic norms such as “no killing, theft, or deception” (and related matters such as “do not dump toxic waste to harm others, do not engage in inside trading, do not bribe governmental officials, do not product imitated products, and do not mine illegally…etc.), there are no powerful argument to further support ethical norm and systems such as the issue of “distributive justice” (this is not to be underestimated, however, since proving the ethic of “honesty” alone would have a major impact in the domain of business). If people wish to go beyond the values outside the scope of “fundamental democratic structure,” they will have to actively “promote their desired values” and form “a mandatory rule imposed by the majority” and “identify with systems that were originally only desirable to those who forcefully imposed them.” This is they only way for one to actualize their desired value and system.

Although people might ask whether “being supported by the majority” would lead to the discovery of “absolute truth” and “objective goodness”, we will not adopt this kind of logic in our thesis; in other words, we will not use terms such as “absolute truth and objective goodness” to evaluate “a certain system supported by the majority at a given time” since this may not be the eternal consensus of all people. But we should notice that a system that is supported by the majority is the one that makes them feel the happiest, and this is why it will be implemented in the real world (the society free of violent oppressions).

In the past history, people with power create ideologies and use brain-washing in the attempt of making many people “willingly” accept the idea of feudalism, believe they are slaves, and stay happy that way; those who are dissatisfied with the system were suppressed with violence. This kind of system has declined, meaning it is actually instable and inhumane, and is not believed to be joyful or good for “survival.” Today, more and more people can freely express their ideas, make choices in the environment of open information, and stand their ground against oppressions since all people identify with the “fundamental democratic structure” in order to “survive.”

After the democratic setting has been actualized, the question of “what kinds of ethics or corporate ethics do most of us choose” would have more referential importance. This is because all stakeholders are allowed to express ideas in a process of selection that is free of violence, and only those who feel truly joyful would support such a system. Therefore, if a set of values cannot make most of us happy, it will soon be replaced; if it exists stably, it must have made most of us happy. Although we do not comment on whether this kind of system is “objectively truthful or good,” at least it is a system that allows most people to truly feel happy and able to “survive.” We believe that it is far better than the method of each philosopher using some sort of impractical foundation-laying (an example is “the natural rights” when
each philosopher has a totally different definition of God-given rights; or, stating that all people would choose a certain kind of system when signing the social contract) and arbitrarily believing that a certain system is the absolute truth and should be accepted by everyone.

As mentioned earlier, if a value and a system based on which are joyful and attractive, education and influence will be very effective; on the other hand, a system that makes people suffer or hinders self-actualization will eventually be replaced no matter how hard the power-wielder tries to brain-wash the subjects.

Therefore, if we believe corporate ethical values such as honesty, humanity, and environmental protection are joyful and can be best developed in a system that stresses democracy and humanism, we should actively promote the system and the corporate ethic codes supported by the system. Although it is impossible for us to make all people believe in the same value, the power of education and promotion would still be amplified if the value did make many people feel joyful, and more and more people will join. The growing authority would have fewer and fewer objectors to deal with, and the latter will face more difficulty and less determination disrupting order. In short, if people in a society believe many behaviors of today’s people are undesirable and hinder the pursuit of happiness and thus wish to introduce a corrective value in today’s business activities, they should actively promote the value and educate the public. If the popularity of the ethical order brings the majority a sense of happiness, they will be able to actualize the values and systems endorsed by them with more ease.

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