

# *Reflections on Catholic Social Thought as Resource in an Age of Globalization*

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**ABSTRACT:** The 21<sup>st</sup> century poses many ethical challenges at both global and local levels. These have been well documented in a variety of sources not only by academics, but also by global agencies, church groups, economic, social and political pressure groups and so on. This conference asks that we consider the role and response of philosophy in this context, and how best philosophers might “reflect on what their responsibility might be to foster order and resist disorder”. This paper will argue that developing and using an ethical framework based on Catholic Social Thought in both research and pedagogy offers a rich resource for analyzing and interrogating social, political and economic problems and issues within the global and local context. Catholic Social Thought developed and articulated in this way, for example within the academic field of Applied Ethics, can function as both a normative and analytical framework. As such, it provides an integrative and holistic basis on which to conduct research in, for example, Business Ethics, and Social and Political Ethics. Such an approach addresses the need for sensitivity to multi-cultural contexts, effectively countering the relativist claim that pluralism means in effect that there are few, if any, common values across cultural divides and that any attempt at universal moral values is futile. CST can also provide what I will call a ‘counter cultural’ lens when incorporated into teaching pedagogy, for example in Business Ethics when considering ethical issues at the macro, micro and meso levels. Finally, this rich resource enables us to reflect and envision alternatives to the status quo and established and accepted paradigms within global and national contexts, thus enabling us to at least attempt “to foster order and resist disorder”. In presenting the argument, examples from research/work done by staff and students in the Applied Ethics Department at St Augustine College will serve to substantiate points made.

## **Introduction**

Catholic social thought (CST) is not alone in noting and expressing concern about the many ethical challenges posed by our global and

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\* *St Augustine College of South Africa* (South Africa). – This text can be quoted as follows: M. E. Smurthwaite, “Reflections on Catholic Social Thought as Resource in an Age of Globalization”. In: João J. Vila-Chã (Org.), *Order and Disorder in the Age of Globalization(s): Philosophy and the Development of Cultures*. Fourth World Congress of COMIUCAP (Johannesburg, South Africa), November of 2013.

national environments. A number of approaches within diverse academic fields have engaged with a variety of contemporary social, political and economic problems, analyzing these and possibly pointing a way forward. I argue that CST is well placed to do likewise, but it cannot do this by quoting encyclicals and pastoral documents, nor does the provision of such documents necessarily mean that change occurs in the areas addressed.

From an academic perspective, the potential of CST can only be realized if we engage with the documents and work to build suitable research frameworks based on CST, with a view to interrogating contemporary problems as well as dialoguing with other approaches to the same issues. As Thompson (2010: 2) notes, the catholic social tradition is valuable, but “imperfect” and must engage in a process of continuous development. Thus, “Only a critical conversation about its method and content, mistakes and strengths, lacunae, and future challenges can facilitate that development” (2010: 2).

Given this, it is perhaps useful to begin by differentiating between some relevant terms, namely *Catholic social teaching*, *Catholic social doctrine*, *Catholic social thought* and the *Catholic social tradition*.

Thompson (2010) reminds us that the terms *Catholic social doctrine* and *Catholic social teaching* have been used interchangeably by both John Paul II and Benedict XVI and refer to those documents which have been “issued by those who hold an official teaching position in the Roman Catholic Church...” (2010: 6). Similarly, Himes (2011: 5) argues that the “writings” in the genre *Catholic social teaching* “are examples of the universal teaching authority of the Church” and are characterized by “broad, general statements”, by “values” and “perspectives” which “frame” discussion on various issues, rather than by “specifics” of any kind. Himes suggests that such teachings, while containing considerable religious and moral content, have tended to focus on certain issues and neglect others, may lack methodological rigor and may not be as universal as assumed. In addition, Himes argues that too little reflection has been given to the “partiality” of the *Catholic social tradition* and the ways in which “institutional self-interest” influences its teaching (see Himes 2011: 5-6).

In contrast to the terms *Catholic social teaching* and *Catholic social doctrine*, the term *Catholic social thought* “refers to the broader theological and social reflection on social issues that takes place in the church... [and]... includes the work of academics and professionals that reflects on social issues from the perspective of Christian faith and that analyses and interprets Catholic social teaching, as well as the work of activists and social movements that endeavor to put the teaching into practice” (Thompson 2010: 7). This is a somewhat broader and more inclusive understanding than some such as that of Brady (2008: 1) who argues that “The subject matter of Catholic social thought is the relationship between

Christian morality (virtues, rules, and ideals) and the concrete social patterns, practices, and institutions within which persons live". Thompson also argues that the term the *Catholic social tradition* is synonymous with *Catholic social thought*, as suggested by theologian Judith Merkle.

Despite claims that certain of these terms are interchangeable, it is interesting to note that, in some cases, none of these terms is used and instead reference is made to *Christian social teaching* rather than *Catholic social teaching*. This is the case with Höffner (1983: 21) who believes

Christian social teaching is neither a bundle of practical instructions for the solution of social questions nor a skillful selection of certain findings of modern sociology useful for Christian social training, but an "integral component of the Christian doctrine of man" (*Mater et Magistra*).

He opts for a somewhat broad definition suggesting that Christian social teaching is

... the whole of our knowledge about the essence and order of human society and the resulting norms and tasks applicable to any given historical conditions: it is acquired socio-philosophically from the essential social nature of man and socio-theologically from the Christian order of salvation (Höffner 1983: 23).

He argues that its goal is therefore

... a system of order, "based as it must be, on truth, tempered by justice, motivated by mutual love and holding fast to the practice of freedom" (*Pacem in Terris* 1963: n. 149 cited in Höffner 1983: 71).

Höffner's explanation of what *Christian social teaching* is *not*, might be seen as an important caution against a simplistic interpretation and application of CST principles as a solution to our various social, economic, political and cultural problems. However, his definition of what CST *is* seems somewhat complex and inaccessible and in need of further clarification. Part of this clarification process involves considering a number of explanations of what CST *is*. A brief consideration of some such explanations will quickly illustrate that hope for some unanimous view or some common definition is unlikely.

So, for example, David Kaulemu (2010: 75) sees Catholic social teaching somewhat differently to Höffner. He claims it is a rich resource for finding solutions to some of Africa's problems, a resource which "...inspires social transformation" (2010: 60). He cites John Paul II's understanding of CST as a "corpus which enables the church to analyze social realities, to make judgements about them and to indicate directions to be taken for the just resolution of the problems involved" (CA: n. 5 cited by Kaulemu in McDonald 2010: 63). Kaulemu also reminds us that the founding of AFGAST (The African Forum for CST) was driven by a number of reasons including that "CST offers a moral framework, social vision, and motivation for needed social transformation" (2010: 75).

Johan Verstraeten's view is not dissimilar to this when he observes that "...it is generally accepted that CST is more than a matter of applying abstract principles to political and economic realities. It also requires an analysis of the signs of the times in the light of the gospel" (2010: 152). Therefore, he argues that "...Catholic social thought is practical. It is not a self-referential theory but a method responding to real needs and aiming at real historical change" (2010: 154). This would seem to be a significant strength.

What we *can* say, therefore, is that while we have some definitions or explanations of CST which are clearly more conceptual and others which are more operational and while we do not have complete agreement on either the meaning or use of the various terms, such differences are not in themselves cause to argue against the use of this rich resource in our analysis of social, economic and political challenges and problems which beset our times. Rather, this simply points to the immense amount of work that needs to be done to draw on this resource and to create frameworks and models with which we can do our research in such areas as Applied Ethics. In addition, this work involves, in part, opening this resource to our students, especially those doing post-graduate research, so that they may consider its possibilities as a basis for their work along with other possible ethical approaches.

However, this is far less simple than it sounds. Thompson (2010: 2) sums up the difficulty by stating:

"It is a challenge to teach Catholic social teaching. The list of papal documents with Latin titles beginning in the nineteenth century is enough to make eyes glaze over. With some exceptions, such as the two pastoral letters of the U.S. Catholic bishops, the documents are dry as dust".

This sentiment was echoed by one of my postgraduate Masters students in Applied Ethics, who, having read a couple of encyclicals, loudly proclaimed himself unable to "work with this kind of stuff" while waving the offending text back and forth. This was a teaching opportunity: the solution was to make him the group leader, give the group raw data and material on executive remuneration, provide a matrix combining principles of CST and economic injustice indicators (from the SACBC 1999 document) and ask the group to ethically evaluate executive remuneration in South Africa using this matrix. Needless to say, this proved a very fruitful exercise. The student concerned (not a Catholic by the way) did an 'about-turn', so to speak, revised his previous opinion of CST and even used it in his own research report.

In fact, CST provides a holistic and integrative basis to develop robust, flexible and authentic ethical frameworks which can be used to analyze and interrogate contemporary ethical problems, and suggest ways forward. Such frameworks function normatively and analytically, without being

unduly reductionist. The latter is a well-known weakness of such models, whatever their ethical basis. Often, the lens provided by CST challenges the status quo, the ‘taken-for-granted’, the ‘this is the way things are and the way they have to be’ views. I shall substantiate these claims later in this paper. For now, I wish to turn my attention to the type of ethical problems which characterize our times and which can be fruitfully considered using this CST lens.

### **Ethical Challenges of Our Times**

It is worth stating at the outset that, in a paper of this length, there is no possibility of discussing all these ethical challenges, nor can one even name them all. However, let us consider some of these, in the following order: global ethical challenges, national ethical challenges and ethical challenges in a specific academic field, namely Business Ethics. In other words we consider here some of the Disorder in the age of globalization.

#### *Global ethical challenges*

I have mentioned a number of the ethical challenges which confront us in our time, both globally and nationally, in some of my earlier work (Smurthwaite, 2006; Smurthwaite 2010; Smurthwaite 2012), which I intend to draw on here in order to contextualize our discussion. While I admit that many of these have “negative implications”, and reflect the “downside” of globalization, this does not mean that I argue that there is no “up-side” to globalization. However, the challenges we might consider here include:

- “Issues relating to consequences of the present economic model most notably its unfair outcomes, its consequences for the majority of the world’s population (especially the poor) and for the environment” (Smurthwaite 2006: 57-58).
- Issues relating to the “future possibilities of the neoclassical free-market globalised economy” (Smurthwaite 2006: 57-58).
- Poverty, hunger, food insecurity, increasing inequality, and “economic dislocation” (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2012: 2).
- Human rights abuses.
- Power discrepancies between first and third world economies, skewed in favour of the former (see Smurthwaite 2006: 58).
- “The significant power shift from the nation state to the multinational or transnational corporation which in many cases has a wealth far beyond that of the nation state” (Smurthwaite 2013: 10).
- “The inability of governments to properly regulate capital flows” (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace 2012: 2 cited in Smurthwaite 2013: 10).

- The challenges associated with what Castells has called the “*new economy*”. The latter, which is “global, networked and informational” (Castells 2000: 77), means those without the requisite specialized skills have a disadvantage in this global context (see Smurthwaite 2013: 11-12).
- “The challenge of information overload and pressures for quick decision making as a result of advances in communications technology” (Smurthwaite 2013: 10).
- The so-called “*Financialisation* of business worldwide[which] has intensified tendencies to commoditise the goals of work and to emphasize wealth maximization and short-term gains at the expense of working for the common good” (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace: 2 cited in Smurthwaite 2013: 10).
- The shift to a “bimoral society”, as observed by Hendry in his book “*Between Enterprise and Ethics. Business and Management in a Bimoral society*” (2004), where the business context evidences behavior based on two sets of conflicting moral principles, both legitimated by society, namely “traditional moral principles (i.e. our duties, obligations, respect, fairness, concern for others), which he [Hendry] calls a morality of obligation”, and a dominant “market morality” which means that “To an extent unprecedented in history the pursuit of self-interest at the expense of others, traditionally condemned as morally reprehensible, has come to be seen as morally acceptable and socially legitimate” (Hendry 2004: 2 cited in Smurthwaite 2013: 11).
- “The challenge to go beyond prevailing and increasing individualism characterizing both society and work, to an understanding of work which focuses on relationships with others, on community and on providing goods and services which are needed by people in our society” (Smurthwaite 2013: 10).
- “The challenge of a society where values “become relative and rights more important than duties” such that “the goal of serving the common good is often lost”” (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace: 3 cited in Smurthwaite 2013: 10).
- Corruption and illegality in both rich and poor countries.
- Environmental destruction.
- Cultural leveling and homogenization.

And there are many more.

### *National ethical challenges*

National ethical challenges may be identified in South Africa to include unemployment, poverty, hunger and food insecurity; an increasing gap between rich and poor with a Gini coefficient of about .63 (UN Human

Development Report 2013); gender discrimination; environmental degradation and destruction; corruption in political, business and social sectors; crime and violence; xenophobia, child abuse and neglect; HIV/AIDS; a vacuum in respect of ethical leadership; education problems; misuse of resources and many others.

### *Ethical challenges in the field of Business Ethics*

In the field of Business Ethics, there are ethical challenges at the macro, meso and micro levels. At the macro-level, examples include questions about the way we order our economy, the power relations in the economy such as those between nation states and corporations, our current economic vision and practice and global and local governance issues. At the meso-level are questions pertaining to the policies, structures and practices of corporations, the role of corporations especially the powerful Multi-national Corporations *vis à vis* nation states; ethical business leadership; ethical organizational culture; unethical business practice (e. g. collusion, fraud, insider trading), corporate governance; corporate social responsibility and so on. At the micro-level are questions of work, worker conditions, strikes, individual moral decision making, ethical conflicts for the individual in the workplace; leadership models, executive remuneration, and so on.

It is to this plethora of issues which pose many ethical challenges and questions that we bring the rich resource of CST.

### **Catholic Social Thought as Resource for Addressing Ethical Challenges**

Let us turn now to a discussion of how we can develop and use CST-based research frameworks to provide us with insight into some of these problems.

Firstly, to do this, we must acknowledge, as we have tried to do earlier, the strengths and weaknesses of CST. We do not have here a ready-made tool for solving social, economic, political and cultural problems. We do not have a tick list (like some corporate governance lists). We do not have a 'one-size-fits-all' model or framework as a basis for research. Rather, we have a resource which can provide us with the basis for building such frameworks, specific to particular problems and contexts. That CST may be used in diverse contexts, does not imply that it resembles a kind of relativist approach which provides an 'all-things-to-all-people' option. Rather we have a body of teaching and of thought and commentary which, if considered, addresses at least some of the areas of our political, social, economic and cultural concerns and yields a number of core ethical principles. While Himes (2011) argues that these may not be universally applicable, I argue the opposite, i.e. that these could have universal applicabil-

ity, given that many seem to me to be common across cultures, though the practices based on such principles may vary. For example, there are differing ways of showing respect for human dignity in differing cultures, but the underlying principle cuts across cultural specifics. While there are varying lists of core principles, some including more and some including fewer such principles, I would suggest, at the very least, the following:

- dignity of the human person
- solidarity (including stewardship and the common destiny of goods)
- subsidiarity
- the common good
- justice
- the preferential option for the poor (see Smurthwaite 2006: 124).

A second consideration in our quest to develop and use CST-based research frameworks, would be to acknowledge the importance of articulating the meaning and implications of these principles, rather than only documenting and describing where we find them in encyclicals. It is unsatisfactory to simply assume their meaning or to take for granted that we all have a similar understanding of their implications. For example, how does the term “the common good” differ in meaning and implications from the often repeated terms “public good”, or “public interest” or “the commons”? Clarity and distinction of meaning is important. Only if we are prepared to ‘unpack’ such meaning, will we be able to use or build on these principles either as a means to analyze particular situations or as a basis for developing a set of criteria/a model/a matrix/a framework appropriate to the research question and serving as the basis for ethical analysis.

Thirdly, we must recognize that in analyzing contemporary ethical problems, we may not merely be able to ethically evaluate issues by simply using the principles themselves as an analytical grid. I would suggest that very often the principles must serve as the ethical foundation on which the particular research model or framework is built, but that the framework will inevitably need to be more complex than a list of principles, if our research is to be reliable and valid and bring to light more than superficial conclusions.

Fourthly, I would suggest that it is important to consider where CST needs further clarification, where there are ‘gaps’ in the work done based on CST, where there are opportunities for development of CST itself and of CST in relation to particular issues and problems.

For example, John Coleman states that CST has “remained much too vague and moralistic when it comes to the guiding criteria it brings to thinking through global governance” and, in fact, neither considers the problem nor provides ethical guidance in this respect, other than “its



vaunted call for an international common good” (Coleman 2005: 242). He also notes that, in his view, “CST does not currently have a coherent treatment of multinational corporations as they have evolved under globalization” (Coleman 2005: 246) and therefore, should work on describing strengths and weaknesses of “the new organizational forms of the multinational corporation” (Coleman 2005: 248). His view is that “In the end, CST’s analysis of globalization will call for more careful attention to three crucial agents in globalization and their interrelationships: intergovernmental organizations, regimes and policy networks; states; and multinational corporations.” (Coleman 2005: 248).

Coleman (2005), therefore, gives us an idea of some of the ‘gaps’ we need to work towards closing and points to the opportunities for work needed in the area of CST and globalization. There are doubtless many other examples. To allow CST to continue to make a meaningful contribution to research and knowledge, we need to identify and address such gaps.

*Substantiation: CST as resource for research*

At this point, I would like to turn to an illustration and substantiation of some of the points made in respect of CST’s potential for providing an ethical basis and ethical framework/model for particular research problems.

I will do this in two ways: firstly by illustrating the diversity of possible topics where CST can be provide a basis for ethical analysis, using a number of titles taken from research/publications by staff and students here at St Augustine College of South Africa in the Department of Applied Ethics. The list does not represent an exhaustive list of work done. In some instances, I will give a brief explanation of the way in which CST was used in the research. Secondly, I will briefly discuss some CST-based frameworks generated and used in research done here.

I begin with the list of titles.

**MPhil/DPhil TITLES:**

*Economic Justice for all in South Africa – Myth or Reality?* Catholic Social Teaching on economic justice principles and the SACBC indicators for economic injustice were the underlying ethical foundation for examining the unequal distribution of wealth in South Africa and, in the light of CST, the response of government, the business sector, labour and civil society (including the church) to this issue (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2002 MPhil Applied Ethics).

*The Ethic of Social Entrepreneurship in the Light of Catholic Social Thought* (Racionzer, D. G. 2007 MPhil Applied Ethics).

*The Ethical Basis of the Arguments For and Against Current South African Land Reform Policy* (Vest Louw, A. L. 2007 MPhil Applied Ethics).

***Ethical Leadership in the Context of Globalization:*** The student developed an ethical framework based on CST in order, firstly, to assess the ethical challenges posed by globalization and secondly, in order to develop an ethical leadership model. The framework was developed by firstly identifying certain key themes as found in the literature and explaining the principles of CST. These were then linked to the ethical challenges of globalization (Lalor, C. 2010 MPhil Applied Ethics).

***Women's Rights in Politics in Lesotho: An Ethical Analysis of Structures, Policies and Practices.*** The student examined key principles of CST which formed the basis for the ethical evaluation of the structures, policies and practices of two political parties in Lesotho (Lillane, M. C. 2011 MPhil Applied Ethics).

***A Textual Analysis of the Labour Conditions of the Textile Factory Workers in Lesotho in the light of Catholic Social Thought.*** The student explained the key principles of CST and, using these principles as the ethical foundation, generated a set of criteria relevant to workers and conditions of work correlated with each principle to form the ethical framework. The latter was then used for the analysis and ethical evaluation of certain selected documents pertaining to the labor conditions of textile factory workers in Lesotho (Mohloua, S. S. completed 2013 MPhil Applied Ethics).

***The Human Rights Factor in the Social Teaching of the Catholic Bishops in Malawi*** (Nsope, A. D. 2004 D Phil.).

***The Corporation and Economic Justice in South Africa 1994-2003: An Ethical Analysis.*** A model for ethical analysis of the corporation's contribution to the amelioration of economic injustice in South Africa was developed. The model was based on CST principles aligned with corporate governance principles as a means of ethically evaluating the policies, structures and practices of the corporation in this respect (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2006. DPhil in Philosophy).

PAPERS/ARTICLES TITLES as examples. Again, this is not an exhaustive list:

**'Economic Justice in for all in South Africa – Myth or Reality?'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2002 *Praxis* 10 (3), 2-8).

**'The Unequal Distribution of Wealth in South Africa'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2002 *Praxis* 10 (4), 2-8).

**'The Response of Government to the Uneven Distribution of Wealth in South Africa'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2003. *Praxis* 11 (1), 4-12).

**'Economic Justice for all in South Africa – Myth or Reality?'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2004. Catholic Theological Society of Southern Africa Proceedings of the Annual Conference 21-23 September 2004)

St Augustine College of South Africa compiled by Stuart C. Bate, pp. 42-46).

**'Governance and Catholic Social Teaching'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2005. *St Augustine Papers* 6(1), 29-50).

**'Executive Remuneration in the Light of Catholic Social Thought'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2006. *Praxis* 14(2/3), 2-17).

**'Christian Judgement on Neoliberalism'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2006. *Zenit* 11 November 2006).

**'Christian Judgement on Neoliberalism'** Smurthwaite, M. E. 2006. *Praxis* 14 (4), 16-17).

**'Ethics and the Bank'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2007. *Praxis* 15 (1/2), 2-7.)

**'The South African Public Service Strike in the Light of Catholic Social Thought'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2007. *Praxis* 15 (3/4), 2-10).

**'A Challenge to Contemporary Christian Leaders: A Preferential Option for the Poor'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2008. *Praxis* 16 (1), 2-5).

**'The Purpose of the Corporation'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2008, in Williams, O. F. *Peace Through Commerce: Responsible Corporate Citizenship and the ideals of the United Nations Global Compact*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, Chpt. 1).

**'Notes on incorporating Catholic Social teaching in Business Ethics Education'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. and Racionzer, D. 2008. *Praxis* 16 (2/3), 11-15).

**'The purpose of the corporation'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2008. *St Augustine Papers* 9 (1), 54-97).

**'Economic Justice: some thoughts in the light of "Caritas in Veritate"'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2009. *Praxis* 17 (3/4), 12-15).

**'Corporations and economic justice in South Africa: a model for ethical analysis'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2010, in Omoyefa, P. and Antonites, A. *Basic Applied Ethics: A Multidisciplinary Approach*'. Germany: VDM Publishing Company, 111-155).

**'Linking Poverty and Economic Justice'** (Smurthwaite, M. E. 2011. *Praxis* 19 (1/2), 3-15).

These few titles reflect the wide range of issues that can be examined in the light of CSR. This potential for applicability in diverse contexts is also realized in the actual conceptualization and execution of ethical frameworks/models. This brings me to the second task of my substantiation, namely, to briefly discuss some CSR-based frameworks generated and used in research done here.

Again let us illustrate by example:

**Example 1** – Let us say we wished to examine and ethically assess a national economy with a view to establishing the extent to which the

specific macro-economy is economically just or unjust. We could, after an explanation of their meaning, *construct a matrix* illustrating the core or key principles of CST and the eight indicators of an unjust economy as given in the SACBC Pastoral Letter of 1999 (viz. *Economic Justice in South Africa: A Pastoral Statement*). We could further explain how the presence of each indicator offends against the principles of CST, by way of contextualization. Then, we could examine the macro-economy (or smaller aspects or sections depending on the project) in the light of each indicator and explain *how*, and *the extent to which*, the ordering of the economy exhibits economic justice or injustice and the extent to which the economy offends against such principles as the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity, justice, the dignity of the human person, and the preferential option for the poor. Table 1 is an example of such a matrix.

**Table 1: Ethical Matrix**

<i>Values of CST</i> →→ <b>Indicators of unjust economy</b> ↓↓	<i>Solidarity</i>	<i>Subsidiarity</i>	<i>Common good</i>	<i>Justice</i>	<i>Option for the poor</i>	<b>Business activities</b>
Poverty						
Unemployment						
Gap between Rich and Poor						
Discrimination against women						
Materialism						
Greed						
Threats to family life						
Environmental degradation						

(Note: This matrix, as well as the ethical model illustrated below in example 2 were originally developed in a DPhil in Philosophy 2006 at St Augustine College of SA. The thesis title was *The Corporation and Economic Justice in South Africa 1994-2003: An Ethical Analysis*. A book chapter based on the development of the matrix, and the model for ethical analysis as first published in 2010 (see Smurthwaite, M. E. 2010. 'Corporations and economic justice in South Africa: a model for ethical analysis' in Omoyefa, P. and Antonites, A. *Basic Applied Ethics: A Multidisciplinary Approach*'. Germany: VDM Publishing Company, 111-155).

**Example 2** – However, let us say, as a second example, that we wished to do research at the so-called meso-level and to evaluate the extent to which a particular corporation had or had not contributed to ameliorating economic injustice in a particular country. In Business Ethics, when examining such a corporation ethically, we consider its policies, structures and practices to make an assessment in terms of some particular

approach to ethics. Let us suggest that instead of using, for example, a Kantian framework, we considered using CST as the ethical framework for this analysis. This raises some interesting issues with which we must deal and this involves the kind of work I referred to earlier.

Firstly, corporations are not all Catholic, nor do they subscribe to CST. Therefore, it would be unreasonable to merely use the type of matrix we have just illustrated in Table 1. Not only is it designed for the evaluation of a macro-economic order, but we must remember that corporations do not report in terms of economic injustice indicators. Instead, they report in terms of corporate governance (in South Africa this means the so-called King Code, currently King III) and, in terms, therefore, of what is known as the triple bottom line viz. financial, social and environmental performance indicators.

In other words, to use CST as an ethical basis for our research, we need to think of a way to correlate the SACBC indicators of economically unjust economies with the indicators *which* corporations use for their reports. Only if we can make some correlation, would it be possible to assess whether or not the particular corporation made a contribution to ameliorating economic injustice at the level of its policies, structures and practices. Such a correlation is possible and, in the particular research featured here, was made as appears at Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Correlation: SACBC and Corporate Governance Indicators**

<b>Ethical Tool for analysis of unjust economy</b>	
<i>SCABC INDICATORS</i> ↓↓↓↓↓	
	<b><u>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE</u></b> ↓↓↓↓↓
<i>Unemployment</i> →	← <a href="#">FINANCIAL</a>
<i>Discrimination against women</i> →	
<i>Rich/poor</i> →	
<i>Materialism</i> →	
<i>Greed</i> →	
<i>Poverty</i> →	← <a href="#">SOCIAL</a>
<i>Threats to family life</i> →	
<i>Environmental degradation</i> →	← <a href="#">ENVIRONMENTAL</a>

To explain this correlation in a little more detail: the two sets of indicators were correlated on the basis of categorizing those corporate activities which are likely to correspond to the areas referred to in the economic injustice indicators. So, for example, unemployment is correlated with the financial area because whether a corporation contributes (or does not contribute) to relieving unemployment depends on such activities as job creation, retrenchments and so on. These activities are, in the end, a part of the financial area of corporate activity.

While this correlation is a start, it does not provide us with enough of a basis for the ethical evaluation of the corporation's activities: i.e. we need to ask what aspects of corporate life or activity are likely to constitute their financial, social and environmental practice and, secondly, which activities in the corporation are likely to correlate with which SACBC indicators. Without this type of correlation, we might not have a sound enough or nuanced enough basis on which to proceed with our analysis. The correlation in this research looked is seen in Table 3 (but note that other possibilities exist):

**Table 3: Business Activities Corresponding to SACBC Indicators and Corporate Governance Indicators**

Ethical Tool for analysis of unjust economy		
SACBC INDICATORS ↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓		
	<b>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE</b> ↓↓↓↓↓	
<i>Unemployment</i> →	← <b>FINANCIAL</b> → →	Job creation/Retrenchment Redundancy Training ----- Affirmative action/equity Empowerment of women Gender discrimination: salaries, promotions, Jobs, benefits, maternity ----- Salaries/wages/shares Benefits: pension, leave, health, housing Conditions of employment: Overtime, Sunday, Worker participation: unions, Financial products Black Economic Empowerment
<i>Discrimination against women</i> →		
<i>Rich/poor</i> →		
<i>Materialism</i> →		
<i>Greed</i> →		
<i>Poverty</i> →	← <b>SOCIAL</b> → → →	Donations Projects: poverty relief, empowerment
<i>Threats to family life</i> →		
<i>Environmental degradation</i> →	← <b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b> → →	<b>Positive contribution:</b> compensation, proactive measures <b>Negative contribution:</b> pollution Unsustainable use of resources

By developing our ethical model in this way we begin to have an idea of which specific activities or aspects of corporate life we might examine and analyze in order to assess the corporation’s contribution to ameliorating economic injustice. However, for academic purposes, this model is still incomplete. We need to indicate a few more things, the first being that we are looking at the corporation’s policies, structures and practices, the second being the possible theoretical approaches to the corporation of which a CST approach is one and the third being the underlying ethical basis for evaluation, which is CST. Table 4 represents the inclusion of the first of these three aspects into our model:

**Table 4: Preliminary Ethical Model: The Ethical Domain**

SACBC INDICATORS ↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓		BUSINESS	ECONOMIC	DOMAIN: <u>meso economic</u>
	<b>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE</b> ↓↓↓↓↓↓			Organisational Ethical issues ↓↓↓
		<b>PRACTICE</b> ↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓	← <b>STRUCTURES</b> ↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓	← <b>POLICY</b> ↓↓↓↓↓↓↓↓
<i>Unemployment →</i>	← <b>FINANCIAL</b> →	Job creation/Retrenchment Redundancy Training ----- Affirmative action/equity empowerment Gender discrimination: salaries, promotions, Jobs, benefits maternity ----- Salaries/wages/shares Benefits: pension, leave, health, housing Conditions of employment: Overtime, Sunday, Worker participation: unions, Financial products Black Economic Empowerment	What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←	Which Policies? In whose interest? Power? ←
<i>Discrimination against women →</i>				
<i>Rich/poor →</i>				
<i>Materialism →</i>				
<i>Greed →</i>				
<i>Poverty →</i>	← <b>SOCIAL</b> → → →	Donations Projects: poverty relief, empowerment	What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←	Which Policies? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←
<i>Threats to family life →</i>				
<i>Environmental degradation →</i>	← <b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b> →	Positive contribution: compensation/ proactive measures Negative contribution: pollution/ Unsustainable use of resources	What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←	What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured ←

In other words, our activities form part of the practice, structures, and policies found in the corporation. We are asking what these policies, structures and practices are, whose interests they represent and where the power interests lie.

Finally, if we incorporate the other two aspects into our model (possible theoretical approaches to the corporation and the underlying ethical basis for evaluation, we will have a complete and comprehensive model for use in the research process. In other words, we need to include the criteria for differentiating the theoretical paradigm which were generated in the process of the literature survey for this research and show the type of paradigm possible for each criterion. We also must include CTS as the ethical basis for the framework. This means including the CTS assumptions on the corporation, the CTS principles and the US Bishops questions from their pastoral statement on economic justice (1986). The complete model is illustrated in Table 5 below.

However, designing a model based on CTS is one thing, using it in the actual research is another, but a further important task is to actually evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the particular model or framework used. I turn now to questions about the particular model developed above.

**Questions about the model** – The key question is to ask whether the model worked. Was it robust enough to ensure a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the contribution (or not) of the corporation to the amelioration of economic injustice. In short, it had strengths and weaknesses as is always the case with such models and frameworks. It was fit for purpose, combined the relevant indicators and information, “provided a systematic process for the ethical evaluation of the corporation, namely, firstly, to identify the perception of its nature, purpose, role, responsibility and relationship with society and secondly to examine its structures, policies and practice in terms of the indicators of economic injustice, but within the performance areas which are generally applied in the business sector” (Smurthwaite 2006: 551-2). In addition, it also provided for a “threefold ethical analysis” of data by analyzing all data in terms of CTS principles, of economic injustice indicators and in terms of the US Bishops’ questions. This “helped to ensure internal consistency and coherence in the research, as many readings and examinations of text were done in order to reach conclusions” (Smurthwaite 2006: 551-2).

As with any model there were weaknesses. Certain strengths of the model, proved also to be weaknesses in the application of the model. Thus, the model’s comprehensiveness meant a long, labor intensive, detailed and systematic research process with some overlaps of content and duplication of conclusions. In addition, the correlation made in the model between economic injustice indicators and corporate indicators and activities, presented a challenge in practice.



**Table 5: Comprehensive Ethical Model**

Ethical tool for analysis of unjust economy	SACBC INDICATORS ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	BUSINESS ↓	ETHICAL ↓	DOMAIN: Organisational Ethical issues ↓ ↓ ↓	Criteria for differentiating theoretical paradigm ↓	Possible paradigms ↓	TOOLS OF ETHICAL ANALYSIS:
		<p>PRACTICE ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓</p> <p>CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓</p>	<p>STRUCTURES ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓</p>	<p>POLICY ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓</p>	<p>↔ NATURE OF CORPORATION →</p>	<p>Legal entity Community Citizen Chance group Other</p>	<p>CSR assumptions on corporation CSR principles; CSR questions US Bishops</p> <p>Corporation CSR: community of persons</p>
					<p>← PURPOSE OF CORPORATION →</p>	<p>Profit Profit plus extras=?</p>	<p>Profit + need needs+ common good,</p>
					<p>← CORPORATE MORAL AGENCY →</p>	<p>None: legal only Individuals/community of individuals Is a moral agent</p>	<p>Individuals Community of individuals</p>
					<p>← ROLE RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY →</p>	<p>Profit only Profit plus extras=? ←←←←←</p>	<p>Work, creativity, solidarity, deep person, comm. good</p> <p>Principles: Dignity of the human person Common good Solidarity Subsidiarity Justice Option for the poor Questions: do for, do for, participate in</p>
<p>Unemployment →</p> <p>Discrimination against women →</p> <p>Rich/poor →</p> <p>Materialism →</p> <p>Greedy →</p>	<p>← FINANCIAL →</p>	<p>Job creation/Renewment Redundancy/ Training Affirmative action/equity empowerment Gender discrim.salaries, promotions, Jobs ,benefits maternity Salaries/wages/shares Benefits: pension, leave, health, housing Conditions of employment: Overtime, Sunday, Worker participation: unions, Financial products Black Economic Empowerment</p>	<p>What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←</p>	<p>Which Policies? In whose interest? Power? ←</p>		<p>←←←←←</p>	
<p>Poverty →</p> <p>Threats to family life →</p>	<p>← SOCIAL →</p>	<p>Donations Projects: poverty relief, empowerment</p>	<p>What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←</p>	<p>Which Policies? In whose interest? Power? ←</p>		<p>←←←←←</p>	<p>Principles and questions as above</p>
<p>Environmental degradation →</p>	<p>← ENVIRONMENTAL →</p>	<p>Positive contribution: compensation, proactive measures Negative contribution: pollution Unsustainable use of resources</p>	<p>What structures? In whose interest? Power? How structured? ←</p>	<p>Which Policies? In whose interest? Power? ←</p>		<p>←←←←←</p>	<p>Principles and questions as above</p>

For example, poverty had been placed in the area of social responsibility. Yet certain aspects of the financial area were found to relate to the relief of poverty. Unemployment was aligned with the financial area, but in the practice of the selected corporation, much relief of unemployment was actually part of the corporation's social practice and policy. These anomalies do not make the model unworkable, but adaptations have to be made when confronted by the data obtained. Thus, for example, greed and materialism often seemed to be best combined as one indicator in the actual evaluation" (Smurthwaite 2006: 552).

The researcher made recommendations for the adaption of the ethical model, such as adaptations necessary or desirable in the case of shorter research projects. These recommendations will not be detailed here (see Smurthwaite 2006: 580-581).

### Conclusion

Such examples from actual research illustrate the potential of CTS as the basis for ethical evaluation of our contemporary global and national ethical challenges. CTS provides a view which is often counter status quo and counter dominant culture. As such, it can provide a basis for insight into and critiques of many of the ethical challenges which face us today. These brief examples illustrate that CTS's richness lies in its being a holistic approach, the values and principles of which cross cultural boundaries. It can provide a flexible, robust, durable, and adaptable basis from which to generate specific ethical frameworks and models and can be applied in multiple and various contexts to examine diverse problems and issues. As previously stated, it can provide both a normative and an analytical framework for research and can be used to interrogate a variety of 'taken for granted' ways of understanding such areas as politics, economy, culture, society, and so on. Our task is to work to develop and extend its potential both in research and in teaching so demonstrating how CTS can be effectively integrated into courses along with other approaches and views on particular topics and how it can form the basis for ethical analysis and evaluation in research.

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