



Ethics
in the
Diverse World

STUDENT'S BOOK



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FACE2FACE

ETHICS IN THE DIVERSE WORLD

STUDENT'S BOOK



EDUC8

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

NAVIGATING THE BOOK

Terrorism, war, poverty, natural disasters, violence, cruelty to animals, destruction of the environment – things do not seem to be going so well in the world. Since our society is very diverse and consists of a multitude of worldviews, non-confessional ethics tries to find universal moral standards that are independent of particular religious views. It bases this search on the notion of a common humanity, meaning the fact that we are all human beings, equally worthy of consideration and respect. In this book, you will find and learn about important parts of ethics, parts that help us live together peacefully and recognize the value of each person, all living beings, and the planet as a whole.

How does the book work?

This textbook on non-confessional ethics is divided into four chapters, also called deep modules. Specifically, it covers the following four topics:

1. Encounter with the other: dealing with diversity
2. Encounter with sacred texts: texts of violence
3. Encounter with the environment: social and ecological issues
4. When encounter becomes conflict: just war and just peace



Figure 1
Video Clip

The first module on the encounter with the other investigates what it means to be “other” and what difficulties the persons who are “others” are facing. Here you will get to know more about the status of refugees and stateless persons. What is the appropriate, just, and benevolent response that we should have towards them? Are they posing a danger for us? Is their current situation unique, or have we learned something from history?

The second deep module focuses on encounters with and understanding of violence. Violence comes in many forms, and some of them are more easily recognizable than others. There are also various sources of violence. Sometimes, we as individuals or our communities are the perpetrators of violence. In the module, you will investigate the role of moral emotions such as guilt and shame in relation to violence.

The third deep module focuses on the basic ethical approaches to protecting the natural environment and our attitudes towards it. What is the value of nature? Why should we protect it? A special focus will be on our relationships with animals and the ethical status of our treatment of them.

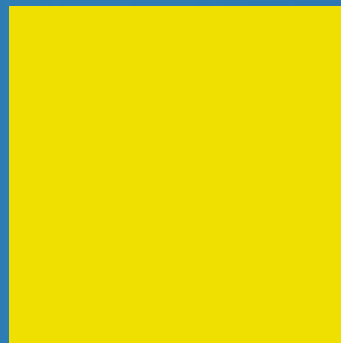
The fourth deep module is focused on the causes of conflicts that can lead to violence and war. We present the theory of just war that supports, under certain conditions, the use of military means to establish peaceful and just conditions for life. However, to establish world peace, it is crucial to ensure global justice, which will enable all people, regardless of their origin and belief, to live in dignity. The project of a global ethic is presented, which should serve as a basis for peaceful coexistence between different nations, religions, and cultures.

Getting started

At the beginning of each deep module, you will see an animated video clip about friends going on different adventures. Throughout the video, quiz questions will be asked. After watching this video clip and answering the quiz questions, you will start reading the textbook sections and completing the assignments on the modules’ topics.

We wish you a fun and insightful exploration of the field of ethics.

1



ENCOUNTER WITH THE OTHER:
DEALING WITH DIVERSITY

MODULE ONE

DEALING WITH DIVERSITY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this educational material, you will first get to know **the concepts of global ethics, global justice, and cosmopolitanism**. Humanity is facing several challenges, such as climate change, that we cannot solve without everybody working together for change towards a cleaner environment. In the second part of this lesson, you will learn about the question of **citizenship and the protection of rights that a (national) state offers**. Here the concept of **status justice** will be introduced, as will the concepts of a stateless person, displaced person, refugee, and asylum. Lastly, the issue of **immigration and hospitality** will be addressed concerning what it means to “meet others”, meaning others that are different from us but still equal in rights and status.



Figure 1.1
Refugee girl
Source: © Ahmed akacha/
Pexels.com

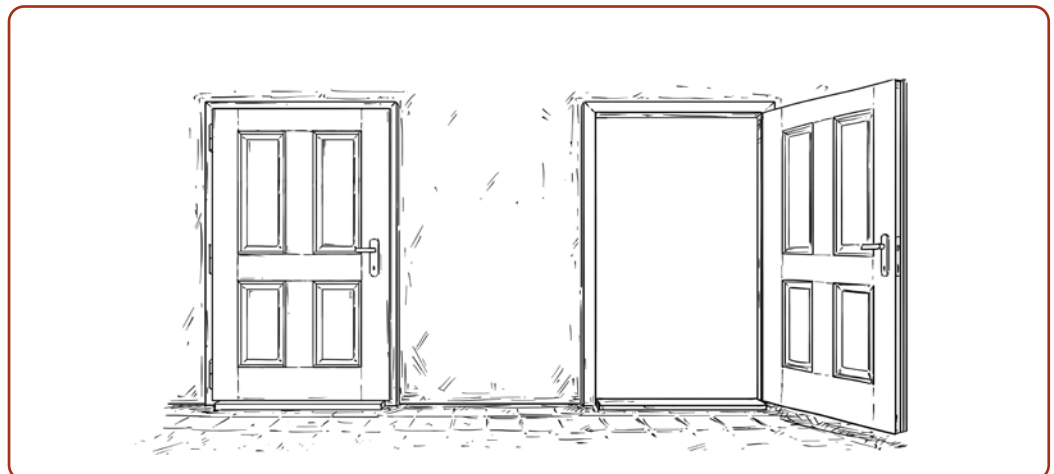


Figure 1.2
Doors and choices
Source: © Zdenek Sasek /
Adobe Stock

Questions about the animated video

Here are the questions that you were asked in the animated video. You can rethink the answers you chose and, in particular, why you chose them. Some questions are also relevant to the contents and assignments below.

QUIZ 1


 Question 1: Was holding the family at the immigration check-point the right thing to do and why? (multiple answers possible)

- Yes, it was the right thing to do, since the family did not have the proper documents for entry.
- Yes, it was the right thing to do, since it is important to know exactly who is entering another country.
- Yes, it was the right thing to do, since the family did not have the right to enter the country.
- No, because there was no way for the family to renew their passports or get new ones.
- No, because the family needed help and protection.
- I don't know.


 Question 2: Why are passports important? (multiple answers possible)

- Because we can identify ourselves with them.
- Because we can travel safely to other countries with them and stay there.
- Because we can prove our citizenship with them.
- Because we can reenter our own country with it.
- I don't know.

QUIZ 2

 Question 3: Do you think that making a distinction between citizens and non-citizens is fair?

- Yes.
- No.

 Question 4: Do you agree that everybody should be free to travel, move or live wherever they please?

- Yes.
- No.

QUIZ 3



Question 5: Why is accepting and protecting refugees important?
(multiple answers possible)

- Because their state does not protect them or even persecutes or maltreats them.
- Because they often cannot stay in the homeland because of their safety.
- Because often their states do not offer conditions for decent living (e.g., severe lack of food and hunger, climate change and severe drought, etc.).
- Because we need to accept people in our countries since we need workers.
- I don't know.



Question 6: Some persons are stateless. What would be the right thing to do in relation to their status?

- Accept them in other states and give them citizenships.
- Accept a universal and effective international system for the protection of the rights of stateless persons.
- Try to eliminate causes that create stateless persons in the first place.
- Nothing, in particular, if people gave up their citizenship freely.
- I don't know.

1.2 GLOBAL ETHICS, GLOBAL JUSTICE, AND COSMOPOLITAN ETHICS

Global ethics is an approach to ethical challenges and issues (e.g., climate change and pollution, human rights, foreign aid and helping the poor, fair trade and rights of workers, protection of refugees, development and regulation of the use of new technologies, etc.) that addresses these from the perspective of the world or humanity as a whole. The reasons for that is globalization, which is causing the world to be more and more interconnected and interdependent.



Figure 1.3
Globe in our hands
Source: © Valentin
Antonucci / Pexels.com

Global justice is an aspect of global ethics that is centered on justice on a world scale. It investigates the role of international and global institutions, for example the United Nations or the system of human rights. It also tries to formulate universal standards of justice that apply to all persons and states.

Global justice primarily concerns two domains. The first is **political and institutional** and concerns, for example, the question of (global) governance and protection of basic human rights. The second is **economic and cultural** and focuses on questions such as poverty and inequalities, distribution and exploitation of natural resources, among others. In all this, it defends a just distribution of benefits and burdens throughout the world.




Figure 1.4
Interdependence
Source: © ArtHouse
Studio / Pexels.com

Cosmopolitanism is one way to answer the challenges mentioned above. It is based on the idea that **we are all citizens of the world** (as opposed to merely a given national state) and thus members of a single community. **Ethical cosmopolitanism** is a view that we have obligations and responsibilities to others in that global world. **Political cosmopolitanism** advocates an idea of some kind of concrete global polity, world government, and associated global citizenship system. **Cultural cosmopolitanism** is a view that we should appreciate and protect different cultures.

Assignment 1

Complete the three-step assignment below by writing down your answers.

 In the left column, list five problems or challenges that humanity as a whole is facing in these times. Then think about their relative importance and rank them accordingly in the right column.



How would you define or describe justice to someone? What conditions would a just world have to meet?



How would the world be different if we were all regarded as citizens of the entire world?

1.3 HUMAN RIGHTS, STATUS JUSTICE, STATELESS PERSONS AND REFUGEES

Human rights are the rights of individuals and groups that belong to them solely for being human and are founded on the **dignity** and **value** of every human being. They are the foundation of a just and peaceful society.

“Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.” (OHCHR 2021)

Human rights are:

- **universal:** they belong to every person, which means that all are equally entitled to them
- **inalienable:** they belong to every person and should not be taken away from them; they can only be restricted in specific circumstances and for a limited amount of time,
- **indivisible and interdependent:** human rights make a unified whole (economic, social, political, and cultural rights) and are dependent upon each other, meaning that one cannot fully enjoy a specific right without other rights also being secured.
- **equal and non-discriminatory:** all human beings are equal in dignity and rights (OHCHR 2021).

Dignity is a basic and inherent value that all people have on the basis of their humanity. It is often regarded as the basis for basic entitlements and human rights of each individual. The dignity of each individual protects against types of improper treatment that would interfere with their dignity (e.g., degrading treatment, torture, etc.) or situations in which he may find himself (e.g., extreme poverty, slavery, statelessness, etc.).



Figure 1.5
Basic human rights
Source: © STOATPHOTO /
Adobe stock

Status justice is justice that enables an individual to have his or her right recognized. It is therefore described as “**the right to have rights**”. It facilitates other rights. The right to have rights is a human right that can be defended within the principles of global and cosmopolitan justice.



Figure 1.6
Status matters
Source: © RODNAE
Productions / Pexels.com

Stateless persons are those persons who are not recognized as a national or citizen by any state under the operation of its law (UN 1954). This means that a stateless person is someone who does not have the nationality of any country. As such, they are particularly vulnerable.

The main **causes** of statelessness are: laws determining the circumstances under which someone acquires nationality or can have it withdrawn, migration to a state that does not allow a parent to pass on nationality through family ties, the emergence of new states and changes regarding borders and the loss or deprivation of nationality (UNHCR 2021).



Figure 1.7
Entry denied
Source: © nalidsa /
Adobe Stock

Displaced persons or persons displaced by force are persons that have been involuntarily or forcibly moved away from their home or home region. According to the UN, there were around **80 million** forcibly displaced persons throughout the world, with an estimated 30–34 million of them being children below 18 years of age. Of all forcibly displaced persons, 26 million were refugees and 45.7 million were internally displaced people (UNHCR 2020).

Refugees are those displaced persons who have been forced to cross national boundaries and who cannot return home safely. They have a right to seek **asylum**. The 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees states that a refugee is a person, who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (UN 1951)

Internally displaced persons are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.” (UN, 2004)

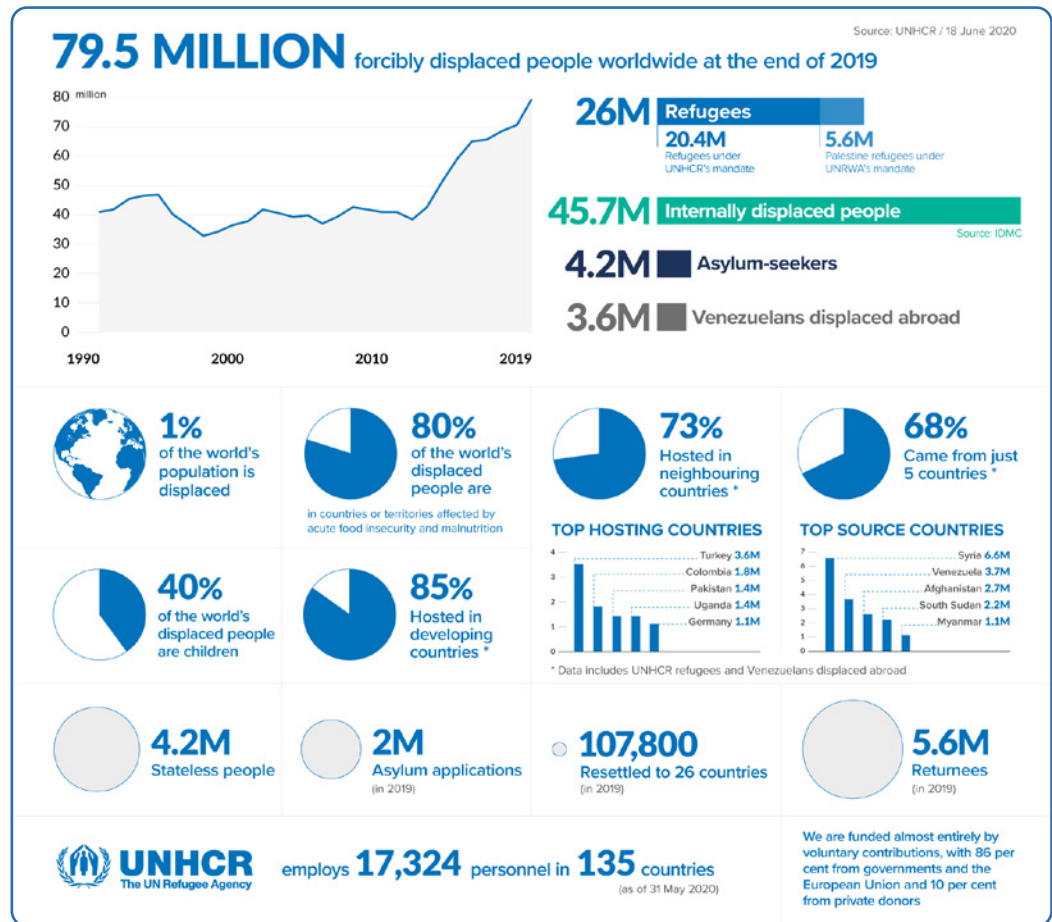


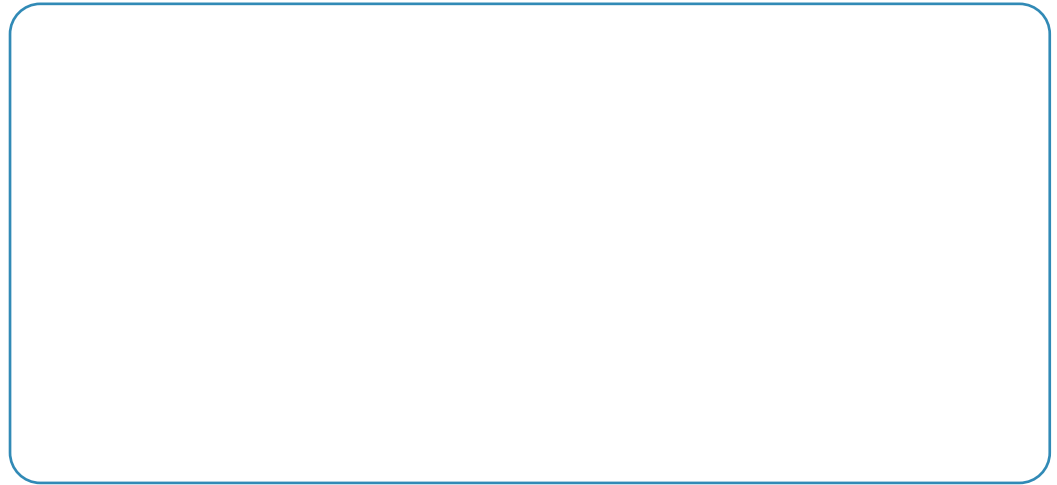
Figure 1.8
 Basic info related to displaced persons, 2020
 Source: © UNHCR / Younghee Lee

Assignment 2

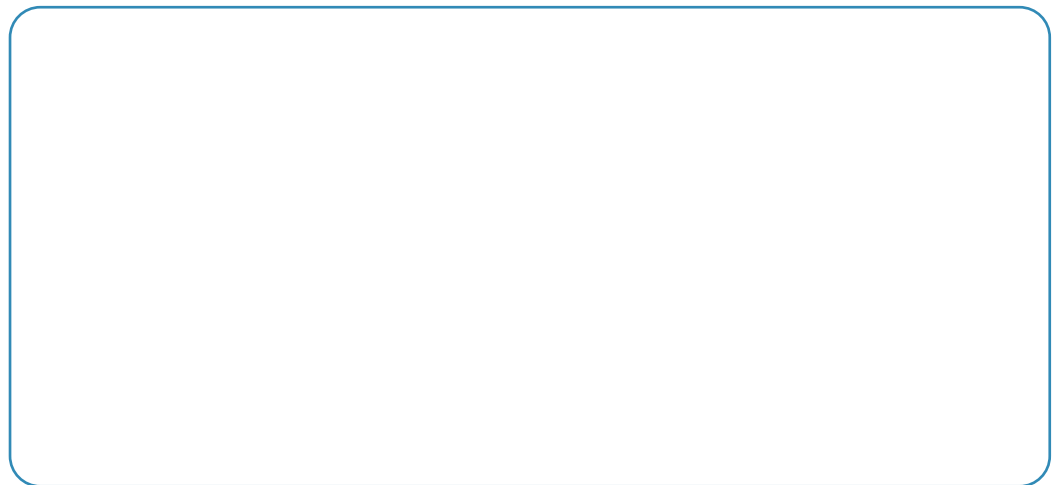
Complete the three-step assignment below by writing down your answers or completing the tasks

? Do you own a passport? To how many and which countries have you already traveled? Did you have to use your passport?

? All human beings are equal in dignity and human rights. Why and how is this important for refugees and stateless persons?



? What are your first thoughts or associations when you hear the word "refugee"? What are your feelings that accompany these thoughts? Please use the space below to try to draw these feelings. You are free to do this in any way you want.



1.4. IMMIGRATION AND HOSPITALITY

The issue of **hospitality** concerns the question of whether there are limits on states can completely close off their **borders**. It is a matter that concerns global ethics and global justice. Should refugees be allowed to enter a given state? Why? Who else must be welcomed and accepted? What about stateless people like the family in the video?



Figure 1.9
Armenian refugees in
Baku, 1918,
© IWM Q 24947,
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205213374>

The role, function or value of a national group (in this case) and group membership is that it offers effective **protection of an individual's rights**. For example, a state issues you a passport that allows you to travel and return home. A **visa** issued by a state allows you to visit and stay in that state. Stateless people often have no option to obtain a passport or a visa. That is why stateless persons are particularly vulnerable.



Figure 1.10
German prisoners in
a French prison camp
during the latter part of
the WWI
Source: National Archives
at College Park, Public
domain, via Wikimedia
Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:German_prisoners_in_a_French_prison_camp_French_Pictorial_Service_-_NARA_-_533724.gif

Fridtjof Nansen, a former polar explorer, League of Nations high commissioner for refugees and later a Nobel Peace Prize winner (1922), established the so-called Nansen passport system after World War I.



Figure 1.11
Fridtjof Nansen
Source: National Library
of Norway, via Wikimedia
commons

The Nansen passport was a recognized travel document issued initially by the League of Nations for refugees and stateless people who could not obtain travel documents from a national state or authority. Such passports allowed such persons to travel.



Figure 1.12
Example of the Nansen
passport
Source: © UNHCR

For more information about the Nansen passports and statelessness, you can visit an excellent online interactive map or exhibition of the EVZ Foundation.¹

¹You can use the following link: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=84ce7874a06a4c2897bd48561bf43a7d>

Assignment 3

Complete the three-step assignment below by writing down your answers or completing the tasks.

? Think of a moment in your life when someone showed or offered you hospitality. How would you define hospitality?

? To whom should we be hospitable?

? If somebody is different or alien, what makes him or her different? How can these differences be relevant to his or her rights?

1.5 GLOSSARY

Asylum: the protection granted by a state to someone who has left their home country as a refugee, usually a political refugee. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy asylum from persecution in other countries. A person that asks for asylum is called “an asylum-seeker”. Every year, around one million people seek asylum all over the world.

Citizenship: is a relation between an individual and a state. A citizen has certain rights and freedoms and is entitled to protection by the state but, in turn, also has responsibilities. It can be acquired by birth within a state’s territory, descent, marriage, and naturalization.

Cosmopolitanism: a view that argues that all people – independent from their citizenship or national state – should be afforded equal respect and consideration. Ethical cosmopolitanism is a view that we have duties, obligations, and responsibilities to others in that global world since we are all part of one global community.

Dignity: a basic and a special inalienable value that all people have on the basis of their humanity. It is often regarded as the foundation for basic the entitlements and human rights of each individual.

Displaced Person: an individual who has been forced to leave their home for a longer period, e.g. due to war, unlawful persecution, or a natural disaster. If such a person crosses the border of their country, they are considered as a refugee.



Figure 1.13
Travel with a passport
Source: © Tima
Miroshnichenko /
Pexels.com

Global Ethics (Also Planetary Ethics): is a view that recognizes the globalization and mutual interdependence of humanity as a whole, including the fact that the gravest challenges, including the moral challenges that we are facing today (economic, socio-cultural, technological, geostrategic, informational, ecological etc.), are global and can only be addressed within a similarly global framework.

Global Justice: an approach in global ethics that focuses on justice on a world scale and for the universal standards of justice, e.g., human rights or a principle that requires just distribution of benefits and burdens throughout the world.



Figure 1.14
Globe
Source: © Wesley
Carvalho / Pexels.com

Hospitality: in the broader sense, a sociable gesture of welcome, kindness and generosity; in the narrower sense, as employed in debates about immigration and refugees, it is considered as an aspect of justice. The right to hospitality is related to the right to membership.

Human Rights: basic rights that belong to every human individual (or a group of individuals) solely on the basis of being human, regardless of their age, ethnic origin, location, language, religion, ethnicity, or any other status. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.



Figure 1.15
Smile
Source: © Windo
Nugroho / Pexels.com

Passport: a formal travel document, usually issued by a national government to its citizens that identifies the bearer while traveling as a citizen or national with a right to protection while abroad and a right to return to the home country.

Refugee: according to the definition by the UN, refugees are persons who are outside their country of nationality or habitual residence and unable to return there owing to serious and indiscriminate threats to life, physical integrity or freedom resulting from generalized violence or events seriously disturbing public order.



Figure 1.17
Refugee camp
Source: © hikrcn /
Adobe Stock

Stateless Person: an individual who is not considered a citizen or national under the operation of the laws of any country, i.e. without nationality of any country, and is thus without the protection of a country or state

Visa: an authorization granted by a state or territory to a foreign person, allowing them to enter, remain within, or to leave that territory. Usually, visas are noted in the person's passport.

1.6 TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

1 INT AIRPORT LOBBY

The group of kids with their suitcases/luggage is standing together under the sign that says "EU passports/EU citizens." There is also another sign saying, "All other passports." The line of people waiting under the second sign is much longer.

Lindsay: I am so glad that this student exchange is over, and that we are returning home

David: I wouldn't mind staying a bit more ... if we would visit the beach every day. And Pieter-Jan was a fantastic roommate... he is even sleepier than I am.

Pieter-Jan: Hey! I am not such a sleepyhead. We just went to bed rather late on most days.

Sarah: I missed my family more than I thought I would.

Teacher (to the kids): Hey guys, pay attention ... find your passports and have them ready at hand. We are almost at the front of the queue.

Sarah: Here is mine. It's already kind of beaten up. Not from traveling, but from rolling around in my drawers. I hardly use it since you can go to so many places and countries without it.

Lindsay: Mine is like new. My mother always safekeeps all our passports in a special box.

The group moves towards the passport control check-point. They observe in the other line a family being pulled to the side by immigration officers. They hear one of the officers saying:

Officer: "I am sorry, but I must deny entry for you and your entire family. Your passports are not valid since the state that issued them is not in our records of recognized passports. According to the system, the Third Republic of Madagascar does not exist anymore as a country..."

The group of students now passes to the other side of the check-point, still a little bit upset about what they just witnessed.

2 INT AIRPORT LOBBY

This time on the other side of the check-point.

David: Yes. I do not know how they could just expect to make entry without passports! Just what were they thinking. Why don't they just go home and stay there or get new passports?

Lindsay: But... didn't you hear that they perhaps do not have such a home. Maybe they are without a country.

Pieter-Jan: That is silly. Everybody is from somewhere. I know since you must put your nationality or country of residence down on almost every legal form or document.

Lindsay: No, it is not so simple. There are many stateless people around the world. I know that Friedrich Nietzsche, a philosopher we spoke about last week, was stateless since he asked for the cancellation of his Prussian citizenship. And so are many others, most often not by their own choice.

Pieter-Jan: Well, if you want to live in solitude and as a weirdo that is your problem. But if you're going to travel abroad, you better think about getting a passport first.

The teacher sees that the students are debating quite intensely, but he must leave them and says: "Guys, guys... calm down. And wait for me here. I must check the bus schedule and get us some tickets. Wait here with all the luggage and don't move anywhere! I am talking to you, Pieter-Jan."

3 INT AIRPORT LOBBY

Lindsay (continues the conversation): I don't think it is right that they treated that family in such a way. The family was not hurting anyone.

Pieter-Jan: That might be so. But I do not think it is fair if they would just let them enter.

David: I am just glad that we have avoided the long queue and the long wait, and that as EU citizens, we have priority.

Sarah: I don't think this is fair at all. It is not people's fault that they were born outside of the EU. It is a pure accident. And it is not like Europe is ours; we are not entitled to it. And on this note, why we even have borders?

Pieter-Jan: Well, then everyone would just come here. It would be like an invasion. The land would be overpopulated, and nobody would want to stay. It is just sensible that only citizens have the right to entry and residence.

Lindsay: We have just been in Morocco. We were allowed to enter, and the people there were very hospitable.

Pieter-Jan: That is not the point. We had reservations at the hotel and passports. And we had no intention of staying there. Sarah:

But what if somebody doesn't have a home anymore?

David: Well, that is their problem. My father and I were at the protests the other month. It is clear that we should keep foreigners out since there are no jobs even for us. My father has been unemployed for more than a year now. We shouted, "Build the wall that is nice and tall!" I liked being there at the protest, there in the crowd, since it seemed that everyone understood what I think.

Lindsay is getting sadder and sadder. She pushes her suitcase away from the group, sits down on it, and starts to cry.

David: What is the matter, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Just leave me alone, please.

David: What? What did I say?

Sarah: You guys! Both of you. Stop with this nonsense! Don't you guys know that Lindsay's mother was a refugee from the Balkan wars. Most of her family died, her house was burnt down. She was barely 18 years old, and she had to move across borders, from country to country, to finally find a safe place where she could stay. She had no papers, no proof of her identity.

Pieter-Jan: I really did not know this up till now.

Sarah: It doesn't matter. Just stop with your stupid propaganda and what is someone's right and what is not. You do not know the background story of each person. It is easy to say, "Get a passport" or "Go home". I would like to see how you two would think and feel if you had no home and no way to get a passport.

David: I am sorry. I did not want to hurt Lindsay. This is why she said that her mother keeps their passports in a special box.

Sarah: And it is not only her mother. Many people are stateless and not by their own choice. Not belonging to a state, not having a recognized identity means having no rights. And such people often suffer crimes and further injustices, not just the inability to travel across borders.

David: I am really, really sorry. I guess I was wrong.

Pieter-Jan: Yeah. I am also sorry. In the end, we are all human beings, belonging to a common humanity. The difference between us and "All other passports" [REFERRING BACK TO THE SIGN ABOVE THE CHECK-POINT] is arbitrary.

David: I want to apologize to Lindsay for my hurtful words and thoughts.

Pieter-Jan: Me too. Let's go over there to her.

1.7 REFERENCES

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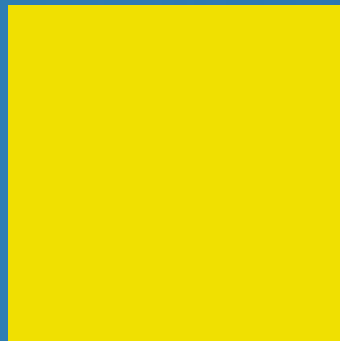
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2



ENCOUNTER WITH SACRED
TEXTS: TEXTS OF VIOLENCE

MODULE TWO

TEXTS OF VIOLENCE

This thematic module is part of the educational activities developed within the EDUC8 Project. It focuses on our encounters with and understanding of violence. Violence comes in many forms, and some of them are more easily recognizable than others. There are also various sources of violence. In what follows, this topic is presented through the lens of ethics. It particularly highlights moral emotions and attitudes that substantially influence how we act.



Figure 2.1
Video Clip

2.1 SCENARIO

In what follows is the text version of the scenario that you can look in the form of the animated video. It concerns the emotions or feelings of shame, guilt, pride, and what role they play in our lives. Feelings and emotions often impact both how we act as well as how we perceive the world around us.



Figure 2.2
(Un)covered
Source: © vika_hova /
Adobe Stock

You can choose to read the scenario by yourself or watch the animated video. (If the teacher agrees and other pupils are ready to do so, you can also read it out loud with your classmates or even decide to (re)enact the scenario as a school- or class-play. You can also change aspects of how it develops or write different endings of the story).

The scenario features students at a school and also invokes two stories, one about Oedipus and the other about a famous warrior Ajax. After the script, you can find both stories briefly explained.

2.2 THE STORY OF OEDIPUS

The story of Oedipus comes from ancient Greece and its mythology. It is dramatically described in several plays by Sophocles, the famous writer of tragedy plays (born c. 496 BCE, Colonus, near Athens, Greece; died 406 BCE, Athens). His play *Oedipus the King* (*Oedipus Rex*) is perhaps the most well-known depiction of his story.

As said, there are several different variants of the story. According to one of them, Laius, the king of Thebes (a city in central Greece, northwest of Athens), was cautioned by an oracle that his son would kill him. Thus, after his wife Jocasta (also Iocaste or Epicaste) gave birth to their son, Laius has ordered that the baby-boy should be exposed in the wilderness in the mountains near the city and left to die there. But a shepherd found the baby, took pity, and saved him. Oedipus survived and was adopted by King Polybus of Corinth (an ancient city and a state in south-central Greece, in modern times, known for The Corinth Canal, i.e., a passage for voyages of ships between the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea) and his wife that took care of him as their own son. When growing up, Oedipus visited Delphi (a famous place that issues prophecies) and has learned that he is destined to kill his father and marry his mother.

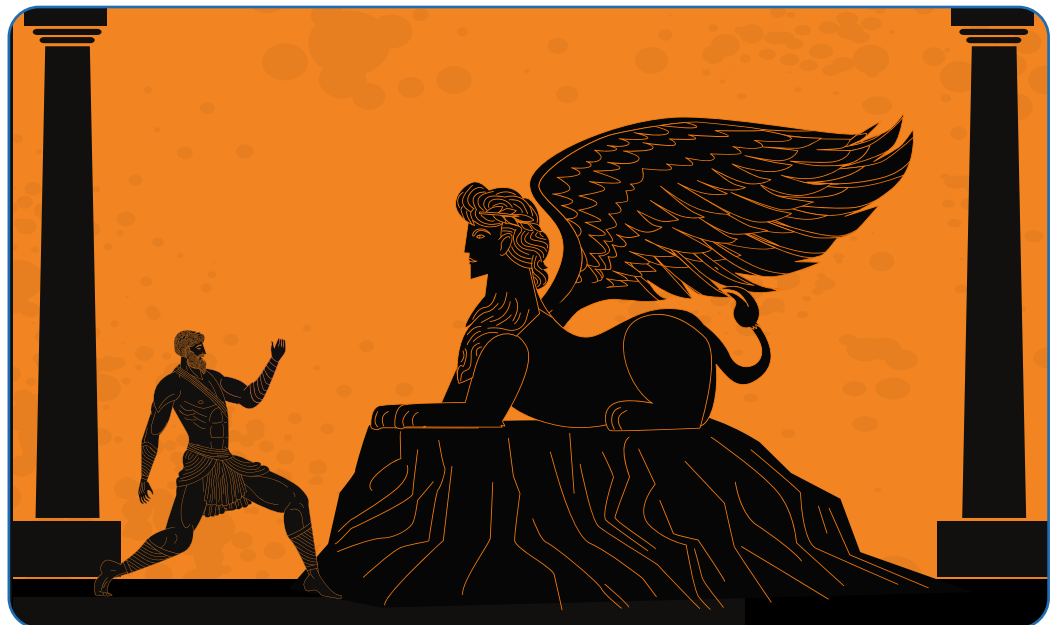


Figure 2.3
Oedipus and the sphinx
Source: @matiasdelcarmine
Adobe Stock

Fearing this fate, Oedipus never returned to Corinth as he saw would be the best means to avoid this dreadful fate (mistakenly thinking that Polybus is his father).¹ On his way to Thebes, he met Laius, his actual father, who provoked a quarrel, and Oedipus killed him (unknowing that he is his father) in the struggle between them. Arriving at Thebes later, he found out that the city is in need. Thebes were terrorized by Sphinx (a creature with the head of a woman, a body of a lion and wings of a bird; see image above) that posed riddles to people and those who could not answer them ended up killed by it.

Oedipus successfully solved the riddle, and as a reward, he received the throne of Thebes and the hand of the widowed queen, his actual mother, Jocasta. His fate was now completed, but he still did not know this. After learning the truth, Jocasta committed suicide, and Oedipus blinded himself and went into exile.²

¹Encyclopaedia Britannica, s.v. Oedipus.

²Encyclopaedia Britannica, s.v. Oedipus.

2.3 THE WORLD OF THE STORY

The story of Ajax also comes from Greek mythology and is depicted in by Sophocles in a play titled *Ajax*. According to the legend, Ajax (also “Ajax the Great” or “Enormous Ajax”) was a hero, a brave Greek warrior of great stature that fought with Hector (the chief warrior of Troy, a kingdom in western Anatolia that fought with the Greeks in the so-called Trojan wars) and he rescued the body of another hero, Achilles that was killed in battle. There was a dispute between him and Odysseus for the armor previously worn by Achilles, but Ajax lost the fight. He nonetheless believed that he has earned to have it and wear this armor, and this flamed another dispute.³



Figure 2.4
Dispute over the armor
of Achilles between Ajax
and Odysseus
Source: © Archivist /
Adobe Stock

According to the story, as described by Sophocles, Ajax attempted to assassinate Odysseus and the judges (Agamemnon and Menelaus) that were judging the fight between Odysseus and him. He set himself for this planned attack but was made confused by the goddess Athena. Due to this “blindness” caused by Athena, Ajax mistakenly slew the animals that his army has seized as the spoils of war and their keepers. Once realizing what he has done Ajax, feels shame. He feels humiliated and he fears that others will laugh at him for making such a foolish mistake (even though the mistake itself was not his fault but the working of Athena). After struggling with this, he decides to take his own life. Agamemnon and Menelaus order that Ajax’s corpse is left unburied as punishment. But the wise Odysseus persuades the commanders to relent and grant Ajax an honorable burial. In the end, Odysseus is the only person who seems truly aware of the changeability of humans.⁴

³ Encyclopaedia Britannica, s.v. Ajax.

⁴ Encyclopaedia Britannica, s.v. Ajax.

Again, this story reveals that we react to actions that we have done and that it is important to us how others perceive us. In relation to shame, we talk about shaming and stigmatization.

Shaming occurs when we publicly expose somebody for their flaws, wrong actions or characteristics, direct attention to them and invite them to feel shame for these flaws. Beware, that we can also be wrong to see something as a flaw.

Stigmatization can be understood as marking somebody out for something that he or she is or has done, excluding the person from the others.



Figure 2.5
Abusive words and
stigmatization
Source: © soupstock /
Adobe Stock

In the scenario in the animated video, Pieter-Jan is in danger of being excluded from his classmates since he is forced to wear special badges. People also often react violently to shaming and stigmatization in actions that can be additionally fueled by their feeling of powerlessness.

2.4 ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO THE STORIES

Write down the assignments and answers to the questions below.



Figure 2.6
Writing a story
Source: © gerasimov174 /
Adobe Stock




Tell the stories of Oedipus and Ajax in your own words.

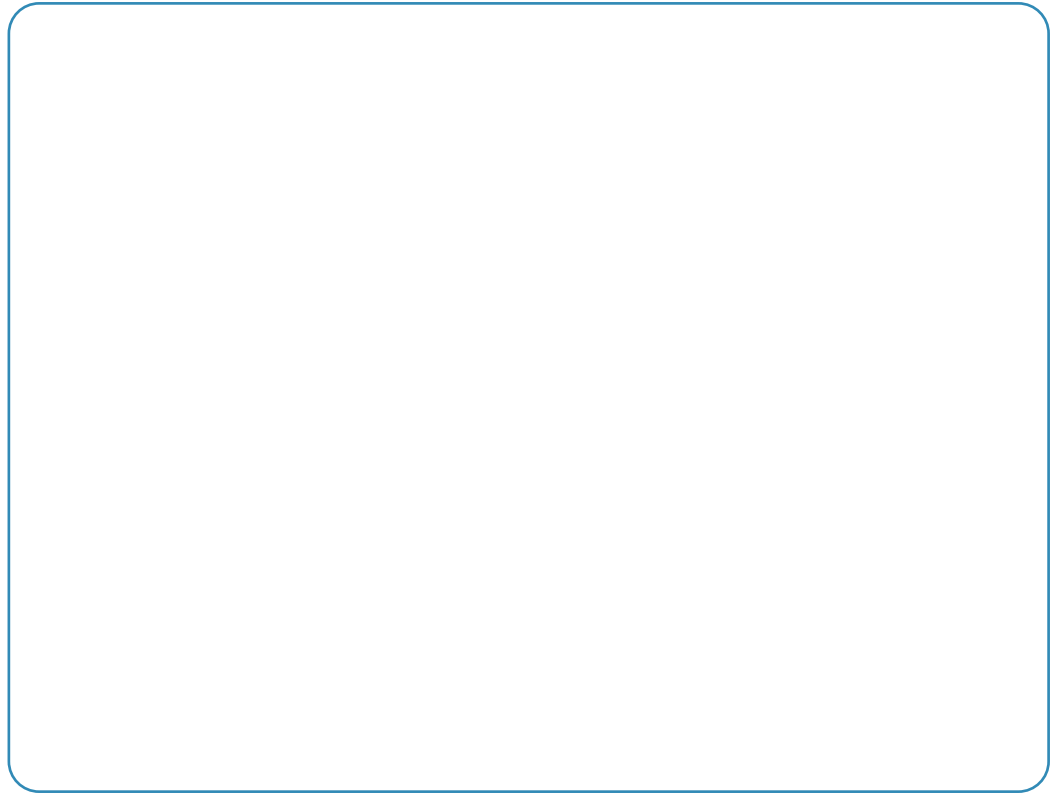


What are the similarities between the stories of Oedipus and Ajax and the scenario featuring Pieter-Jan and other students?



What are the differences between the stories of Oedipus and Ajax and the scenario featuring Pieter-Jan and other students?

 What would it be like if these two stories (Oedipus and Ajax) were happening not in ancient Greece, almost three millennia ago, but in present times? Write down, in brief, how would these stories played out if there were happening now, around you. You can choose to sketch both stories anew or only focus on one of them.



2.5 QUIZZES AND ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO THEM

The assignments that follow are optional and can be completed if you are willing to discover more on these topics.

There are three quizzes with overall six questions related to the animated video and also to what was said above. Your assignment here is to answer these questions and briefly explain why you answered as you did. Please write down your thoughts below each question.

Question 1:

Is it fair that Pieter-Jan must wear the two mentioned badges? (You can choose more than one answer)

- Yes, it is fair since they are only stating what is the fact, what is true.
- Yes, since he deserved it, not doing his assignments and being behind with his work.
- No, because perhaps it is not his fault that this happened.
- No, because in this way, he is the only one singled out.
- Yes, because he was behaving badly towards some other classmates.
- Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?



Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?

 **Question 2:**

When do we feel shame? (You can choose more than one answer)

- When we disobey the rules.
- When we do something wrong.
- When others observe or come to know, that we have done something wrong.
- When we are disappointed about ourselves.
- When others exclude us from their company.



Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?

 **Question 3:**

Why do you think Oedipus was trying to hide himself before others and why he could not even stand his own look? (You can choose more than one answer)

- Because he has done something wrong.
- Because he did not want to be the person, he ended up being.
- Because others were angry at him.
- Because if he had known these things, he would not have done them.



Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?

? Question 4:

Why was Ajax ashamed? (You can choose more than one answer)

- Because he made a mistake.
- Because the goddess Athena put a spell on him and confused his perceptions.
- Because he failed to kill Odysseus, Menelaus, and Agamemnon.
- Because he was no longer seen as a great warrior.
- Because he killed the innocent animals.



Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?



Figure 2.7
Decision
Source: © Itummy /
Adobe Stock

 **Question 5:**

When and why do we feel pride? (You can choose more than one answer)

- When we are helping others.
- When we are better than others and excel in some aspect, e.g., win a medal.
- When others are respecting us.
- When others praise us and give us their attention.
- When we have done something that was hard for us to do, even if nobody noticed this.



Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?

 **Question 6:**

Had Pieter-Jan done something that merited others excluding him and avoiding him? (You can choose more than one answer)

- Yes, because he failed to complete his assignments.
- Yes, because he is doing worse than everybody else in the class.
- No, because he did not know what the right thing is to do.
- No, because by excluding him, he cannot get any help from them.
- No, because he is just a student, like all the rest of them (us).



Why did you choose the answer(s) you did?

2.6 ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Bob Dylan: Hurricane

? Read and/or listen to the song Hurricane by a famous folk singer Bob Dylan. Did you hear it before? Do you know the story that it contains about a boxer named Rubin Carter?

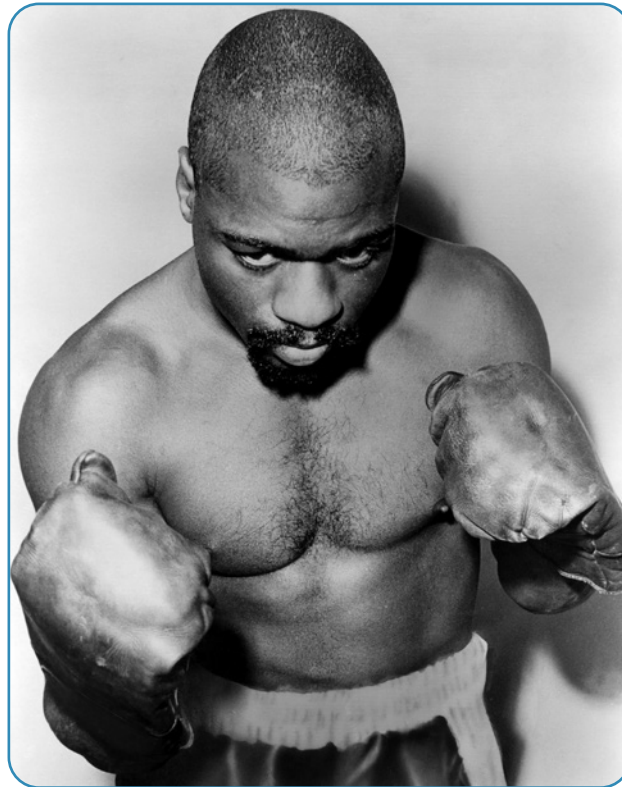


Figure 2.8
Rubin “Hurricane”
Carter, 1964.
Source: © CSU Archives /
Adobe Stock

Here is a brief version of the story. Rubin Carter, a boxer with the nickname “Hurricane” because of his swift boxing moves, was falsely accused of a triple murder that happened on June 17, 1966, in a town called Paterson in New Jersey (US). Two men entered a bar, started shooting, and three people ended up dead. Ten minutes after this shooting took place, the police stopped the car in which Rubin was traveling with two of his friends. The witnesses at the scene of murder reported that they saw two black men entering the bar and described a car

that was similar to the one that Carter was stopped in. However, none of these reports were particularly reliable. There was no evidence that Rubin was guilty of the murder, and it turned out that some of the evidence was framed and that the witnesses were forced or solicited to accuse Carter falsely. Later that night, Carter’s car was stopped again by the police, which ended up in the arrest. The charge for Carter was triple murder. There was no evidence that Rubin was guilty of the murder. It also turned out that some of the evidence was framed and that the witnesses were forced or solicited to incriminate and accuse Carter falsely. After several trials, the court and the jury found Rubin guilty and sentenced him to life imprisonment. It was only in 1985 that after several appeals, Rubin Carter was released from prison, and the initial indictment was dismissed. After being released, Rubin Carter was, among other things, executive director of the *Association in Defence of the Wrongly Convicted* and motivational speaker. His story was portrayed several times in books and movies. It shows how quickly one can be judged by the colour of their skin and how certain groups are highly stigmatized. Back to Dylan’s song “Hurricane.” In the song, Bon Dylan sings “Couldn’t help but make me feel ashamed to live in a land ... Where justice is a game”.



How do you understand this verse after knowing the story?



Why would somebody feel shame for something that his or her country has done in the past or is doing in this moment?



Do you know some other similar examples?



Figure 2.9
Henri Vidal, Cain
Source: © Renáta
Sedmáková /
Adobe Stock

Images and expressions of shame


There are numerous depictions and other artistic expressions of the feelings of shame and guilt. One of the most famous ones is the statue of Cain by Henri Vidal (1864 - 1918), the French sculptor. It depicts Cain after murdering its brother in rivalry as described in the Bible and in the Quran. The statue is in Paris.



Figure 2.10
Ashes by Edvard Munch
(1895)
Source: National Gallery
of Norway via
Wikimedia Commons

Another depiction used here is the one by Edvard Munch, a picture titled “Ashes” (1895).

Take a few moments to look at the statue of Cain and to the painting Ashes and complete the assignments below.

 What emotions does the statue of Cain express? How are these emotions expressed in the posture of the body? Try to point out as many details as possible.



Looking at the picture “Ashes”, how would you describe it to somebody who cannot see it? Write this description down.

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners and a thin blue border, intended for writing a description.



The final assignment for this section is for you to take a piece of blank paper or use the blank space below and draw the emotion of shame. You are free to do this in any way you like.

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a thin blue border, intended for drawing the emotion of shame.

2.7 GLOSSARY

Common Humanity: an ethical ideal according to which we are all equal in our moral status as human beings and which requires treatment of all others, regardless of their race, color, social status, religion, gender, age, language etc., as equals.

Guilt: a painful feeling that we have when we realize that we have done something wrong, for example, harm someone.

Humiliation: pointing out someone's mistakes in front of everyone else, reducing one's status and causing embarrassment.

Prejudice(s): preconceived and unfounded beliefs and attitudes towards individuals, groups, activities or ideas. They often include evaluation or classification of another person based for example, on gender, values, social class, religion, race, etc.

Reactive Attitudes: attitudes that we form in our relationships with others and in response to the actions of others, for example, resentment, gratitude, forgiveness, anger, spite, love, contempt.

Shame: our sense of excessive exposure, of not being covered, or being powerless in relation to the other(s). Moral shame is a sense of weakness and powerlessness that we feel about our moral wrongdoings or not living up to the ideals we have set for ourselves.

Shaming: enticing people to feel shame while publicly exposing their flaws, wrong actions, characteristics, etc.

Stigmatization: calling notice to a characteristic, trait or misdeed of someone or some group with the intention of excluding them. It is often connected with negative attitudes, prejudices and ignorance.

2.8 TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

1. EXT PLAYGROUND SCHOOL

We see 3 students, David, Sarah and Lindsay talking to each other.

David: Did you see Pieter-Jan?

Lindsay: No, I did not. Where is he?

2. INT CLASSROOM DAY

We see Mr Roberts, the teacher, giving 2 badges to Pieter-Jan, who looks sad...

David: He was forced to wear two badges for the rest of the week by Mr. Roberts.

We see the badges on Pieter-Jan. First a yellow one and then a Red one.

David: The yellow one is for not using his time wisely... He didn't get his tasks done this week. And the red one is because he was last in class.

3. EXT PLAYGROUND SCHOOL

Lindsay: Huhhh!

Sarah: Well, he deserved it. He has been a total jerk. And everything these badges say is actually true. So, he should be ashamed of himself and wear them, proudly. (laughs a bit)

Lindsay: It's true that he has been slacking lately. But a lot of us are not doing our best and he was the only one singled out. It doesn't seem fair.

David: I saw him punching a wall a few times, saying "I hate you all!!!" and look at him now ... with his face down, ...

We see Pieter-Jan in a corner being sad, with his hands in front of his face listening to music.

Sarah: Yeah... at least he can now think about what he has done! If the best students are awarded medals and distinctions of recognition at the end of the year, why wouldn't we also use distinctions for those that are doing the worst among us?

Lindsay: I do not know what to say. I feel sorry for him. He is now certainly hiding from the rest of us.

David: I just hope that he will get back on track.

Lindsay: If this would be me, I would just want to vanish and never return. Do you remember the story of Oedipus that we choose for our school play last month?

Transition to ... school play 'The Story of Oedipus and Ajax'



4. INT SCHOOL STAGE DAY

We see a stage with Sarah on the left side dressed in an ancient Greek gown.

There is a Greek temple background in a schoolplay. They are re-enacting the story.

Sarah as a narrator on stage while we see other students play the scenes: Oedipus was subject to a terrible prophecy, that that he would end up killing his father, marrying his mother and bringing vast disaster and plague to the city and his family. His father, the king of Thebes ordered a shepherd to take Oedipus to the wilderness and leave him there to die in order to circumvent the terrible prophecy. But due to the peculiar turn of events Oedipus survived and the prophecy became a reality, without him knowing anything about it. After recognizing what he has done, he is very ashamed and in agony. He says that he cannot bear the looks of others...

Oedipus: "I am dirty", ... "unpleasant and disagreeable even to the goods." "O, I adjure you, hide me anywhere, far from this land, or slay me straight, or cast me, down to the depths of ocean out of sight."

Back to the Playground:

David: Oedipus ended up taking his own eyes out, since he could not even bear looking at himself. He then begged to get exiled from Thebes.

5. INT SCHOOL HALLWAY DAY

The 3 students are now in the School hallway and continue their conversation.

Lindsay: I can imagine Pieter-Jan feeling like that at the moment...

Sarah: Well that's his own mistake... If he would just get his act together.

David: But what if he did his best but just didn't make it? Then it would be a bit like Ajax, not getting what he thinks he deserves...like we did in the other play about the story of Ajax.

6. INT SCHOOL STAGE DAY

We see a stage with Lindsay on the left side dressed in an ancient Greek gown.

Lindsay as a narrator: And Ajax, he was a great and proud warrior. Nonetheless, he decided to kill Odysseus, Menelay, and Agamemnon out of revenge and retaliation because he - as the greatest of the Greek warriors - was not given Achilles' armor. In relation to this intent, the goddess Athena baffles him in a way that he thinks he has indeed killed them, but in reality, he slayed the animals that his army has seized as the spoils of war and their keepers. When he realized his mistake, Ajax was ashamed to be seen in such a light, unworthy of a famous warrior, and he wandered off by himself to an isolated place. There he took his own life by throwing himself on his sword.

David: "O darkness, now my daylight, O gloom of Erebus, for me the brightest light there is, take me, take me now to live with you. Take me, a man no longer worthy to seek help from families of gods or men, those creatures of a day."

7. INT SCHOOL HALLWAY DAY

The students are continuing the discussion. The school is in the background and the school motto is clearly visible: **"Be proud!"**

Lindsay: I remember him having a big discussion with the teacher about this story. He had a very interesting point of view....

We see Pieter-Jan walking out of the classroom with his backpack and books in his hands.

Lindsay: Look, there he goes. He seems to be carrying all of his stuff. Is he going home?

Sarah: Well, I am sure I do not want him around me. I do not want to be seen with him. My mum always says that I should not be around losers and failures if I want to succeed. (Goes away.)

Lindsay: We must convince him not to go home this early and missing more classes.

Lindsay and David walk towards Pieter-Jan.

David: Hi, Pieter-Jan.

Pieter-Jan: Aaaah..., hi. I really do not want to talk to anybody right now.

Lindsay: I get that. We understand that it's rough baring those badges... But I also remember you saying something interesting about our school play on the story of Ajax.

Pieter-Jan: What? I do not recall discussing all that much.

Lindsay: Remember when we have read the story of Ajax? You were the only one saying about him, that he sure was not a brave, proud and honored warrior to begin with if he decided to murder other people just because he was not awarded with Achilles' armor.

Pieter-Jan: Yes, and I still think so. The teacher kept insisting that it was all Athena's fault and that she tricked him. But it was him. Of course, things can go wrong for anybody, but it is important to have good intentions.

Lindsay: I agree. I guess it's a bit like you at the moment... I'm sure there is a reason why school isn't working out at the moment.

Pieter-Jan: yeah... I was really trying hard to complete the assignments, but we were forced to move from our apartment this week and go live with our grandfather in his tiny studio. That is why I am late with everything.

David: I did not know that. Do you need some help with the assignments? Maybe I can help.

Pieter-Jan: No, I will manage to complete them. I have them designed in my mind already. I just want this week to pass. I know that I am not the best in class. These badges they made me wear do not mean anything to me. They do hurt me, though...

Lindsay: But I think others can hurt you, Pieter-Jan, even though the badges themselves wont. I think it is not fair that the school decided to handle things this way. Here, I will make you another badge that you can wear, saying "A friend." And this one you can keep even after he end of this week.

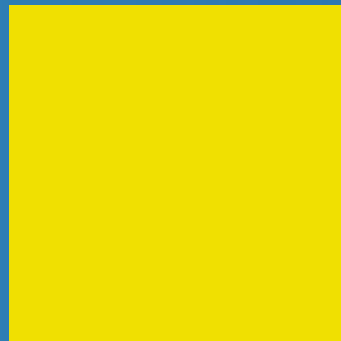
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3



ENCOUNTER WITH THE
ENVIRONMENT: SOCIAL AND
ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

MODULE THREE

SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Our natural environment is endangered. The United Nations reported in 2019 that around “1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many within decades, more than ever before in human history” (UN 2019).




Figure 3.1
Saving our environment
Source: @markus spiske /
Pexels.com


In this module, you will get to know some of the basic ethical approaches to protecting the natural environment and our attitude towards it. A special emphasis will be given to our relationships with animals and the ethical status of our treatment of them. At first, you will revisit the scenario of the animation.

Questions about the animated video


Here are the questions that you were asked in the animated video. You can rethink the answers you chose and, in particular, why you chose them. The questions are also relevant to the contents and assignments below.

 Q1: What do you think Pieter-Jan and his friend should do?
(multiple answers possible)

- Leave the bird alone because they should not interfere with nature.
- Leave the bird alone since they do not know if it needs or wants their help.
- Leave the bird alone since it might be dangerous for them.
- Help or get some help for the bird since it appears hurt and in pain.
- Help the bird since birds are important for the ecosystem.

 Q2: Do you think having (or lacking) compassion for animals is related to compassion for human beings? How? (multiple answers possible)

- Having compassion for animals means also having compassion for people.
- Having compassion for people means also having compassion for animals.
- One can feel compassion for people but have no compassion for animals.
- One can feel compassion for animals but have no compassion for people.
- I do not know or don't want to answer.

 Q3: Do you think it is ethical to use animals for food and other products that we use? (multiple answers possible)

- Yes, since there is nothing wrong with this if they feel no pain?
- Yes, since we are dependent on eating meat.
- Yes, since people have always eaten animals and use them in other ways?
- No, since this causes animals needless suffering and pain?
- No, since we can live without eating meat.

? Q4: Is having animals as pets ethically acceptable? (multiple answers possible)

- Yes, since we take care of them, and they have comfortable lives.
- Yes, since this benefits these animal species, e.g., we create new breeds of dogs.
- Yes, since they keep us company.
- No, because pets do not live freely.
- No, because it is unethical to own a living being.

? Q5: Why are animals important or valuable? (multiple answers possible)

- Because we are dependent on them.
- Because they are in an important sense like us, e.g., they feel pain and are vulnerable.
- Because they are our companions.
- Because they are an essential part of the whole ecosystem.
- Animals are not particularly valuable or important

? Q6: Why is the preservation of the natural environment important? (multiple answers possible)

- The natural environment has value on its own.
- The natural environment is beautiful, and we can enjoy its beauty.
- Our own existence is depended on the natural environment, and it makes our lives better.
- The natural environment is something we must preserve for future generations.
- The natural environment is not particularly valuable or important.

3.2 WHAT ARE ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND ANIMAL ETHICS

3.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Environmental ethics deals with questions about

- the value of the environment (or ecosystem),
- our relationship with it (primarily with the questions of our duties towards an ecosystem),
- and how to think about practical problems concerning the environment and formulate solutions to preserve it.

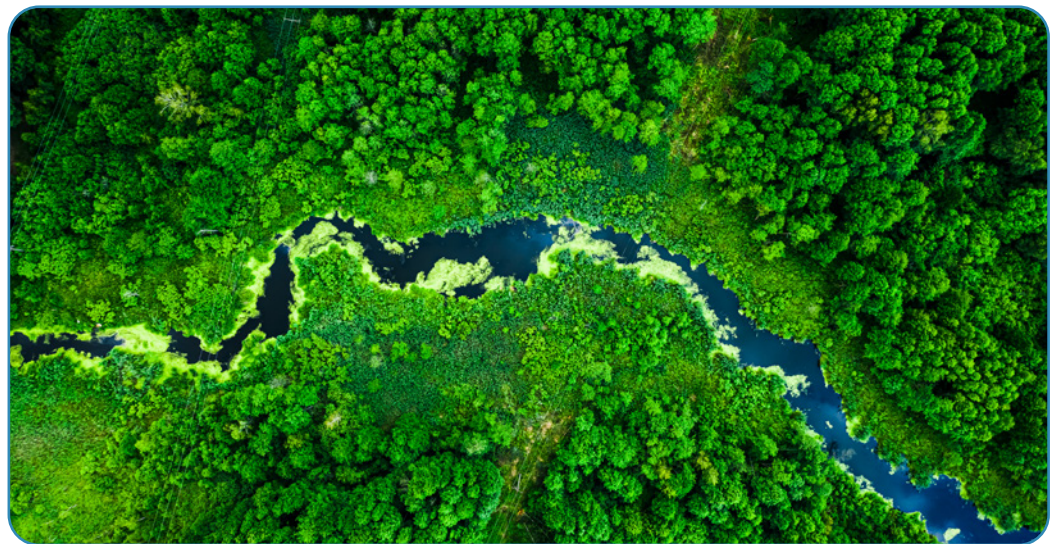


Figure 3.2
River
Source: © shaiith /
Adobe Stock

Environmental ethics is also connected with **ecology** (a field in biology that investigates the relationships between organisms and their environment) and environmental law that investigates ways of protecting the natural environment through legislation.

Ecosystems provide us with many of our basic needs, such as clean air, food and water, pest control, etc. In recent decades there have been numerous calls for more concrete, extensive, and organized efforts to limit the **pollution** and other types of harm that humans are causing and to protect the environment. One (if not the most) well-known figure in these efforts to promote the protection of the environment is Greta Thunberg from Sweden as an originator of the Friday environmental protection and climate change protests that emphasize our responsibility towards future generations of the planet.



Figure 3.3
Protest
Source: © Nicola /
Adobe Stock

3.2.1 ANIMAL ETHICS

Animal ethics deals with questions about:

- the moral status of animals, meaning the questions about how we should **regard** them,
- the moral permissibility or impermissibility of our practices that include animals, meaning the questions about how we should **treat** them,
- the relationship between other animals and us, meaning the questions about **similarities** and differences between them and us, and about our interdependence.

Several approaches address these questions, and you will get to know some of them in what follows. Questions in animal ethics (and the same goes for environmental ethics) can and often are hotly contested and can be a source of disputes, polarization, and violence.

Environmental ethics deals with questions about

- the value of the environment (or ecosystem),
- our relationship with it (primarily with the questions of our duties towards an ecosystem),
- and how to think about practical problems concerning the environment and formulate solutions to preserve it.

Environmental ethics is also connected with **ecology** (a field in biology that investigates the relationships between organisms and their environment) and environmental law that investigates ways of protecting the natural environment through legislation.

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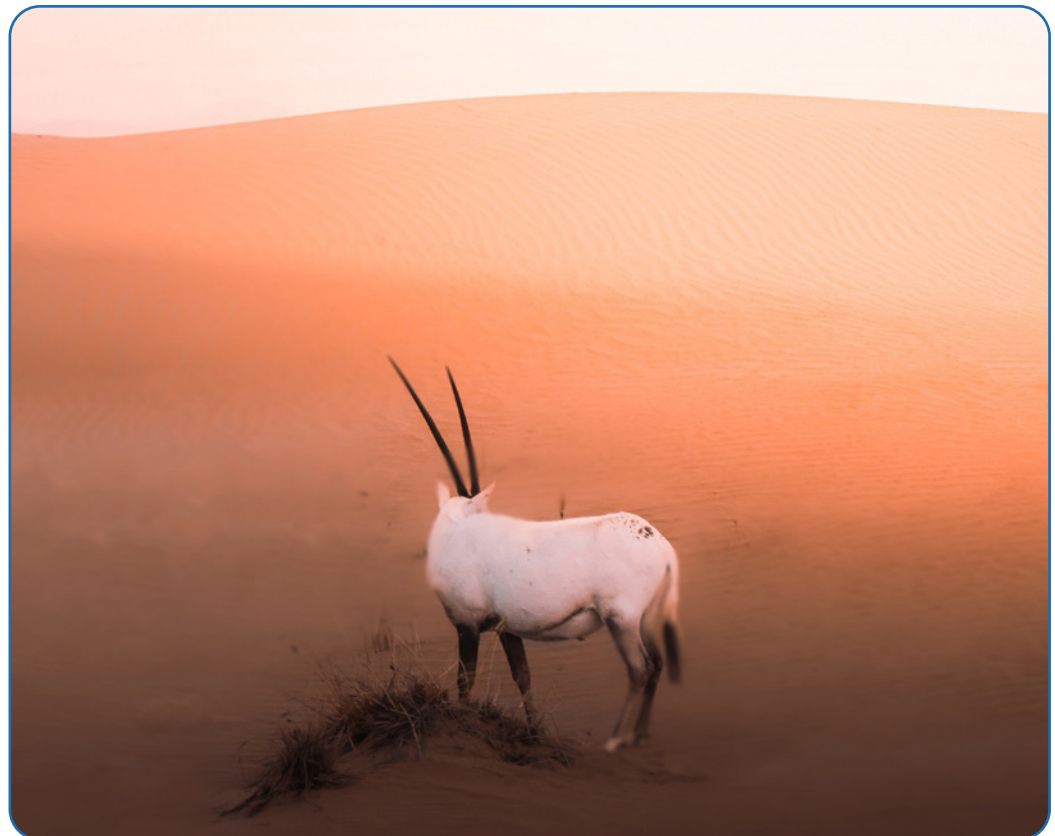


Figure 3.4
White antelope in the
desert
Source: © Pat Whelen /
Pexels.com

Assignment 1

There are several problems that we and the natural environment are facing on a global scale. Write down whether they fall under environmental ethics (EE) or animal ethics (AE); some can fall under both. In the last column, write down at least one and up to three possible solutions or changes in our behavior that you can think of that would circumvent the problem in question.



Problem	Environmental ethics and/or animal ethics	Solutions
Soil degradation is the loss of soil fertility, soil biodiversity, and ultimately the loss of soil itself. Almost 40% of the soil on our planet is already degraded.		
Animal experimentation and testing: over 100 million animals are used every year in experiments and product testing (a large majority of them are rodents like mice and rats, but the figure above includes fish, birds, reptiles, rabbits, monkeys, swine, sheep, etc.).		
Water scarcity is caused by an increased need for water and diminishing water resources. Global water demand is expected to increase greatly in the future. It has been estimated that over two thirds of the world's population will live in water-deprived zones ten years from now.		
Three-quarters of the land-based environment and about 66% of the marine environment have been significantly altered by human actions (deforestation, intensive monoculture farming, urbanization, pollution, etc.). This is one of the causes of biodiversity loss, including the extinction of species.		

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental ethics is concerned with the value of nature, the ecosystem, the environment, and our relationship to them. One way of thinking about these issues is through the question of what is or what should be included within the circle of our ethical or moral concern.

- Should our moral concern include animals?
- Should our moral concern include being and things that are not sentient, which means that they cannot feel or experience enjoyment and pain?

There are several possible answers to these questions, as presented in the table of views below.

View	Who/what is included in the circle of moral concern?
Rationalism	All and only rational or autonomous beings.
Anthropocentrism	All and only humans.
Sentientism	All and only sentient beings.
Biocentrism	All and only living beings.
Ecocentrism & Ecoholism	All natural entities, living or non-living.

The ecocentrism or ecoholism view is part of the so-called deep ecology movement. Ecoholism also holds that the well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves, and this value is independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.

Usually, one can articulate three reasons to protect and preserve natural environments. They can be stated in the following way:

- A. Preserving natural environments is in our own economic self-interest.
- B. Preserving natural environments is in the long-term interests of humanity, even though it may not benefit you personally.
- C. Nature is intrinsically valuable, independent of its effect on humans.

We will add to these views the view (D) that claims that the natural environment (including animals) has no value and should not be part of our moral concerns.

Assignment 2

After seeing the animated video for this module or reading the scenario that is included in this book, try to categorize the claims and views of Pieter-Jan, Lindsay, Sarah, David and others in the three categories of view above. Write down the answers (A, B, C, or D) in the right column.



Lindsay: This is just a wild bird. Let's leave it alone.	
Sarah: Let's pick up the bird gently and take it to the vet so that it will no longer feel pain. They can help this poor fellow, and then if somebody is willing to adopt it and take it to their home, this would solve the situation.	
Pieter-Jan: I want to help this bird. We must do something.	
David: Yeah, but it's just a bird. It is not like you could benefit from it.	
Sarah: It is lovely here in the middle of all these trees. They are also a home of a sort. Just look around. We are almost in the middle of the city, and there are so many animals and plants here.	
David: These trees are like air conditioning, just free.	
Sarah: These trees are beautiful. I hope it stays that way, and no one will build something here. The trees are living beings just like us, even though they do not think or feel.	

Deep ecology stresses the importance of the third reason (C). One of its pioneers was Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), a conservationist, forester, and philosopher (image below).



Figure 3.5
Aldo Leopold bow
hunting, Chihuahua,
Mexico, January 1938,
Courtesy of the Aldo
Leopold Foundation and
University of Wisconsin-
Madison Archives.

The motto of his land-ethic was:

“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” (Leopold 1987, 224)



Figure 3.6
Land ethics
Source: © rick /
Adobe Stock

3.4 . ANIMAL ETHICS AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ANIMALS

Animal ethics is a domain of ethics that deals with the moral status of humans, animals and the ethics of our practices that include them. It includes many topics as well as approaches. Some of the main approaches are briefly presented below (see A, B, C and D below).

3.4.1 SUFFERING OR THE ABILITY TO SUFFER

One of the most common approaches in animal ethics focuses on the disposition of (sentient) animals **to feel pain and suffering**. In this, they are similar to human beings. We must acknowledge the needless suffering that animals undergo due to many of our practices and try to change them. This idea has been most clearly expressed by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), when he said that concerning animals.

“The [relevant] question is not, Can they reason?, nor Can they talk?, but Can they suffer?”.

A writer and a social reformer, Henry S. Salt (1851-1939) added to this a very simple line of thought that:

“[P]ain is pain ... whether be inflicted on man or on beast; and the creature that suffers it, whether man or beast, being sensible of the misery of it while it lasts, suffers evil.”

The characteristics that animals share with humans, particularly sentience (the capacity to feel, perceive or experience), followed by the fact that humans can refrain from many practices that cause animals unnecessary suffering, leading to the demand that we much change or even abandon these practices. It is hard to find sensible reasons for the exclusion of animal suffering and pain from our consideration of welfare. A view called ethical humanism or anthropocentrism that all and only all human beings deserve moral consideration claims that animals lack moral standing.



Figure 3.7
Pigs in a stable
Source: © Matthias Zomer
/ Pexels.com

The prevalence of ethical humanism throughout most of history results in the state we are facing today, where over 80 billion nonhuman animals are killed annually, predominantly for food and as part of various testing and experimenting methods, having to endure a miserable, painful, and frustrating existence before their end. As far as the suffering of animals is concerned, we should substantially change our practices (meat production, intensive animal breeding, experiments on animals, uses of animals in zoos, etc.) that involve the latter.

What is the difference?

The crucial point in the rejection of ethical humanism is related to the search for distinguishing characteristics between humans and nonhuman animals. Such a characteristic would then supposedly define the (proper) set of beings that share equal minimal moral status.





Figure 3.8
A cat companion
Source: ©Pixabay /
Pexels.com

What could be offered as an explanation for why we should treat animals differently from human beings? Perhaps because they lack language and/or speech, rationality, reason, ability to agree to social and moral rules, they do not have a soul, they themselves do not have moral obligations?

Assignment 3

Us and Them

 Think about and find three differences between human beings and animals (these could be very general or specific, for example, some animals have feathers while humans do not have them). Write down your answers.

 Think about how these differences are important (for animals and for us). Pose to yourself questions like “Would birds still be birds (or animals) if they lost all their feathers?” Would somebody cease to be a human if he/she grew feathers? etc.) In doing this, try finding commonalities between humans and animals. Write down at least three commonalities that you share with animals and that are very important to you.

3.4.2 RIGHTS

Another approach to the question of animals includes an appeal to the **rights** of animals. At least some animals have negative rights of non-interference, such as the right not to be killed, not to be harmed or not to be tortured. Most of our existing practices involving nonhuman animals involve some kind of violations of such rights and are in this regard considered morally wrong and unacceptable. A rights approach is based on the ascription of intrinsic (inherent) value to all sentient beings. The rights-based approach sees the attribution of protective rights to them as the best way to implement this general aim of **securing the well-being of animals**.



Figure 3.9
What are you looking at?
Source: © Josiah Farrow /
Pexels.com

3.4.3 ABOLITION

The abolition approach in animal ethics advocates the **abolition of the use** of animals. The main issue is that they merely focus on how we should treat nonhuman animals and not on a more pressing issue that *we should not treat and use them at all*. In a consumer society, we often focus on “animal-friendly” products, such as “free-range meat”, “cage-free eggs”, “happy meat”, and alike. Abolitionism takes a more radical stance of seeing any use of animals as morally unacceptable and claims that any “humane treatment” or “humane consumption” is merely an illusion.



Figure 3.10
Dinner
Source: © Kirsten Bühne
(left), © Lukas (right) /
Pexels.com

Assignment 4

Animal Room

(First, choose a room in which you will do this assignment. It can be your room or any other room in your home).

Do you know of any product made from animals, substances derived from animals or their labor (e.g., leather shoes or bags)? Many other things are also made in a way that uses animals or their products (e.g., toothpaste, chewing gum, crayons) are often made from substances derived from animals; almost all plastic bags include substances from animals. Also, things colored in red, orange juice, varnish, sugar, fabric softener that we use for washing our clothes have a high chance of including at least some animal substance. Do some research on your own using the internet. What else might be on the list? Now use post-it notes or removable stickers and mark and stick them to the things that are on the list. Try to mark as many as possible. Now sit down where you feel the most comfortable in the room. Take at least 30 seconds to just observe what the room with all the stickers looks like.



Now write down the thoughts that came to you immediately after this activity

3.4.4 CARE AND COMPANIONSHIP

The approach of care ethics and similar approaches focus on seeing animals as our **companions**. They advocate a change in our attitudes towards them and for the elimination of **barriers** that our culture has put between humans and animals.

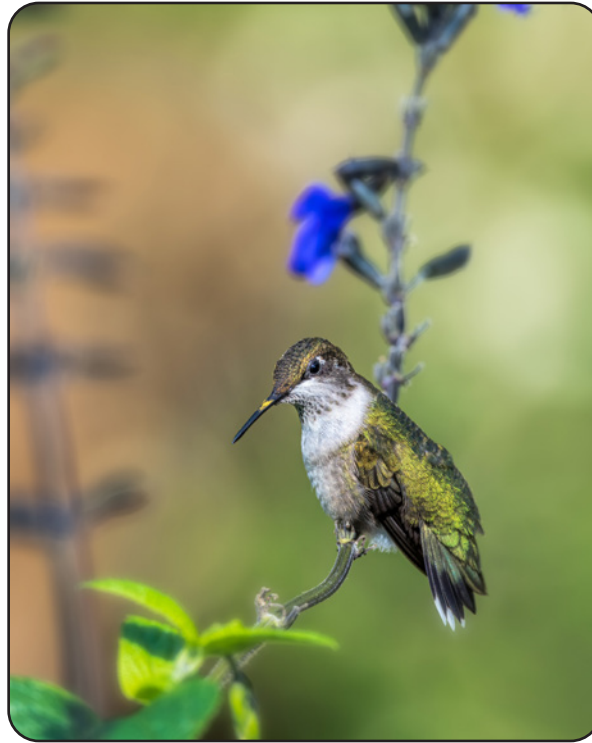


Figure 3.11
A flying companion
Source: © Skyler Ewing /
Pexels.com

Animal liberation (liberation from pain and suffering) and the animal rights movement can be successful only in combating some of our current treatment of animals, but they cannot, on the whole, represent a new basis for establishing an inclusive model of an **ethical community** of animals and us. The way to achieve this is to develop an enhanced concern for human animals based on our common evolution and ways of **living together**. We are all part of a mutually dependent and interconnected ecosystem.



Figure 3.12
Be kind
Source: © Brett Sayles /
Pexels.com

Our relationship with nonhuman animals can also be framed as a relationship of our fellow creatures or companions, which may be sought as company.



Figure 3.13
Let's share a snack
Source: © Luca Nardone /
Pexels.com

3.5 TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

Characters featured: students David, Sarah, Pieter-Jan, and Lindsay, one older male student, pet shop owner.

I.EXT School playground. We see four kids walking home from school. Suddenly alongside the fence, Pieter-Jan spots a black rook (bird). It appears injured and scared.

Pieter-Jan: Look at this bird, guys! It seems that it needs help. There is something wrong with one of its wings and part of its foot is missing.

Sarah: We could take it back to school and the biology teacher can look at it.

David: The teacher's parking lot is already empty.

Lindsay: It is just a wild bird. Let's leave it alone.

Pieter-Jan (reaching for the bird): I will try to pick it up. C'mon, little birdie.

Lindsay: No!!! Just leave it. We should not intervene in nature. What if the bird is just lost?

Pieter-Jan: I can't just leave it and pretend that I did not see it. If you don't want to be a part of this, just go on.

Lindsay: Birds can carry bird-flu and my mother always tells us not to get near them. Leave it here.

Pieter-Jan reaches down to pick up the bird again, Lindsay is very uncomfortable with this. Pieter-Jan says to Lindsay: That is not very kind of you. Those who have no respect for animals will end up having no respect for people.

Lindsay (very angry and upset): That's it. I won't hang out with you anymore. I am going home. You and your stupid animals. You are stupid, just like this bird. You always find something and you are always in trouble. Here is some logic for you. There were dictators who loved animals but were very kind towards the animals. (Lindsay leaves the group. Pieter-Jan looks sad because she left.)

David (after a moment of silence, he doesn't really know what to say): These big black birds live in the countryside, in large fields. They have no place in the city. Perhaps this is why the bird is sick.

Sarah: Well, once this area was an open field. And then the city expanded. The pollution also. This is just as well the home for birds as it is for us. Remember, last month we were talking at our Environment class about Aldo Leopold. He said that we have destroyed the wilderness and the land without asking it.

David: Well, it is perhaps because you cannot have a good conversation with the land. Believe me, I have tried last time when I fell on a pile of dirt with my mountain bike. And the same with animals. They cannot speak and that is the difference between them and us human beings.

Pieter-Jan: Us or them, it doesn't matter. We must do something.

Sarah: Let's pick up the bird gently and take it to the vet. They can help this poor fellow and then if somebody is willing to adopt it and take it to their home, that would solve it.

Pieter-Jan (reaches to pick up the bird): OK. I will gently pick it up and carry it in my sweater. There is a pet store down this street. Maybe they can help us.

II. EXT City streets. Kids are walking together with Pieter-Jan holding the bird in front of him. The conversation continues.

An older kid, passing the group (ridiculing them): Hey! Where are you going with the bird, Pieter-Jan? Will have it as a pet? Or will you eat it? I heard that your mother is a vegetarian. Are you too? Some day you will turn into monkeys. Or sheep... they only eat grass.

Pieter-Jan gets furious and wants to rush to the other boy. Sarah stops him by grabbing his shoulder.

Sarah: Ignore him Pieter-Jan. Be better. Let's just go on.

(They continue walking for a bit.)

David: But... perhaps there is a point. There are wild animals and there are pets. And wild birds are not pets and we are not obliged to take care of them. We do not intervene when a lion wants to eat a gazelle. They are on their own.

Pieter-Jan: I just want to help this bird and not all other animals.

David: Yeah, but it's just a bird. It not like you could benefit from it. A dog could at least bring you your slippers in the morning and bark at the intruders. And a cat... well, cats really don't do anything. But at least they can be cute.

Sarah: My great-grandfather often tells me this story. During the war he had to hide from the Nazis and he lived in a really tiny room in the attic of a large apartment building. It was more like a closet than a proper room. His friends brought him food whenever they could, but days passed not seeing anybody. The room had no windows and the only light he could see was from the hallway if the doors were slightly open.

But this could be dangerous. One night my great-grandfather heard a tiny noise above his head. First a little screech, followed by an even quieter sound of flapping. At first, he had no idea what the sound is, but after a few evenings, he figured it out. It must have been a small bat, retuning back to its hiding spot underneath the roof. He or she must have entered through a small gap between in the roofing and then use its wings to continue along the wooden beam to the spot above his head. Once he paid enough attention, he could hear the bat coming and going, several times a night. He told me that the bat companion, even though he never saw it, was making his days more bearable. And that he waited every late evening to wish good luck to the bat in hunting insects. Animals are our companions.

David: Having a companion can really is important. I enjoy nothing more than hanging out with you guys.

Pieter-Jan: Me too, David. We are almost there. And the bird is much calmer now.

III. EXT Children arrive in front of a pet store. They aim to go inside.

Pet store keeper (holding his hand in front of him): No, no, no. Don't bring this inside. It might infect our animals. And we do not have permission to take in wild animals from the wilderness.

David: Aren't all animals wild?

Pet store keeper: Don't be smart now.

Pieter-Jan: But surely you must know somebody who can help the bird. It is injured and needs a bit of care.

Pet store keeper: OK, OK. I will call the vet that works with us and see what she can do. Just stay outside and try to keep the bird in a shade.

Sarah: Thank you. You are very kind.

(The kids move in a nearby park, under the shade of trees.)

David: It is getting late guys. I will have to go home soon.

Sarah: I guess it won't take much longer. It is lovely here in the middle of all these trees. They are also a home of a sort. Just look around. We are almost in the middle of the city, and there are so many animals and plants here. I heard that in Sri Lanka there is a giant fig tree that was planted 300 years BC, which means that it is now 2300 years old. Imagine feeding and cooling generation after generation of children.

David: Well, I have to admit that I like the cool air of the shade of these trees. It's like air conditioning, just free.

Pieter-Jan: I hope that the birdie will be OK and that it will be able to fly among these trees. And I wish Lindsay was here.

Sarah: You can call or message her!

Pieter-Jan: I can try... (Reaches in his pockets for a smartphone and starts typing.)

Sarah: Well, what did you write?

Pieter-Jan: I told her that we are sharing the planet anyway... so why not sharing this park bench too.

Lindsay approaches: Sorry, guys. I really didn't want to react as I did. And I checked ... black rooks... yes, this little guy is called a black rook ... don't carry bird-flu.

Sarah: These trees are beautiful. I hope it stays that way and no one will build something here. The trees are living beings just like us, even though they do not think or feel.

David (looking at the bird in Pieter-Jan's hands): Hi, birdie. You are looking around as well, just like we do. You like it here, don't you!?

(In the distance the pet shop owner approaches.)

3.6 GLOSSARY

Abolitionism: a view that argues for the complete abolition of the use of animals by humans.

Animal ethics: a field of ethics that investigates the moral status of animals, their values and the ethical status of our practices that include them

Anthropocentrism: the belief (and associated practices) that only human beings should be included in the circle of our moral concerns (values, duties, etc.) (also ethical humanism)

Biocentrism: the belief (and associated practices) that all living beings should be included in the circle of our moral concerns (values, duties, etc.)

Care ethics/ethics of care: a moral theory that takes care, that is caring about individuals as the central ethical consideration

Deep ecology: a view that the natural environment or nature as a whole has a special, intrinsic or inherent value and that we should change our relationship to nature

Ecocentrism/ecoholism: the belief (and associated practices) that all nature, all natural entities, living and non-living should be included in the circle of our moral concerns (values, duties, etc.)

Environmental ethics: the field of ethics concerned with the value of environment (or ecosystem), our relationship with it (primarily our duties towards it) and the application of ethical norms to practical problems concerning the environment.



Figure 3.14
Source: © Pok Rie /
Pexels.com

Land ethic(s): a holistic and eco-centered approach in environmental ethics first developed by Aldo Leopold, which argues for a change in the relationship between humans and nature so that the human being ceases to be a conqueror of nature or land, but only part of it. It argues for respect for the whole ecosystem (animals, plants, soil, water, the land itself, etc.).

Rationalism: the belief (and associated practices) that only rational beings should be included in the circle of our moral concerns (values, duties, etc.).

Sentientism: the belief (and associated practices) that only sentient beings, meaning beings that can feel pleasure and/or pain, should be included in the circle of our moral concerns (values, duties, etc.).

Utilitarianism: a moral theory that claims that the morally right action (or our duty) is the action that brings about the most utility/value (usually understood in terms of net surplus of pleasures over pain, happiness, or well-being of individuals).

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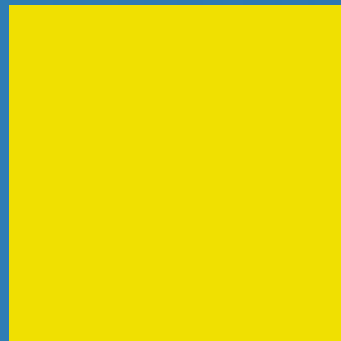
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4



WHEN ENCOUNTER
BECOMES CONFLICT: JUST
WAR AND JUST PEACE

MODULE FOUR

JUST WAR AND JUST PEACE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this module, we will focus on a better understanding of the **causes of conflicts** that can lead to war. We will guide you through different aspects of war, conflict, and a just society, fully aware that you would like to think about something more pleasant. In fact, your happiness is very important to us, which is why we need to address this issue – so we can have a **non-violent social discussion about emerging challenges**, and so you and your friends can enjoy peace and prosperity in the future.

Let us start with basic concepts.


Conflicts are serious and enduring differences in values, beliefs, interests, and attitudes between individuals or between social groups. As such, they **are part of human life**. They occur in various forms in the family, among friends, on the street and at school, and between nations, countries, and races. They can also often develop into **violence**.





Figure 4.1
Protest against unjust
Source: © JP Photography
Adobe Stock

Wars are intense conflicts between social groups (classes, races, nations, states, interstate communities, etc.) in which different groups fight to achieve their goals with military weapons. Wars have been a part of human history from the beginning.


Members of certain social groups worshipped their soldiers and their courage and wrote hymns about the military achievements of their community. But every war leaves its victims behind and deepens the gulf between the different social communities. To prevent wars and violence between nations, the most important thing is to establish a just order at the global level, meaning sharing goods and burdens fairly, thus enabling all people to live in dignity.

 What are your first thoughts when you hear the word “war”? What feelings does this word evoke in you?

 Write spontaneously your first thoughts and feelings about war in the box below.

 Underline in the textbox above those thoughts and feelings that you think are negative. Which thoughts and feelings are more negative or positive? Why does a certain attitude towards war prevail? Write a short comment in the textbox below.

4.2 VIDEO CLIP

 In this lesson, students in the video take a trip to a memorial for the victims of all wars. Pay attention to the spoken words and the reactions of students and the teacher.

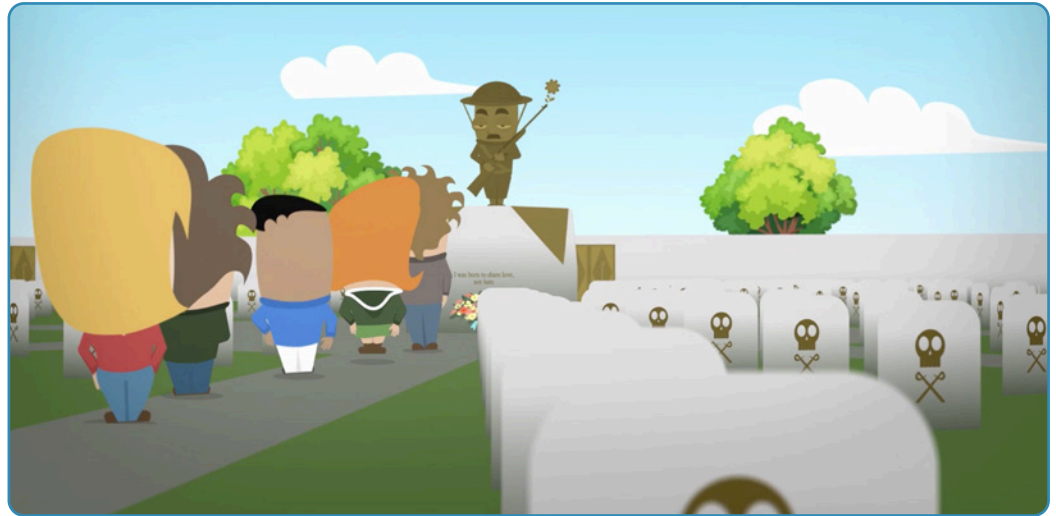



Figure 4.2
Video Clip

During a football match in the schoolyard, Ahmed and Pieter-Jan got into an argument about a foul play. Pieter-Jan claiming that Ahmed tripped him just before he could score a goal, Ahmed objects that the foul never happened. The other classmates take sides, and schoolmates are divided into two groups. The tension between the divided class rises is later interrupted by the teacher and is resolved during the school trip to the memorial for the victims of all wars.

 If you have questions, comments, or ideas while watching the video, you can write them down.

4.3 THE REALITY OF WAR, JUST WAR, AND PACIFISM

The results of archeological excavations show that **prehistoric societies** were quite **violent**. More than 10% of the deaths were due to murder. Wars have shaped the entire history of humanity.

4.3.1 FACTS ABOUT WAR

In the 20th century, **from 136 to 148 million people died as a result of wars**. The First World War caused about 9 million deaths and more than 21 million serious injuries. There were many more victims of the Second World War: 15,600,000 soldiers and 39,200,000 civilians. In the concentration camp in Auschwitz, more than 1.1 million prisoners were murdered. On 6 August 1945, an atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima, killing 140,000 people. From 1945 to the end of the century, 41 million people died in hundreds of wars around the world.



Figure 4.3
Little child standing on
ruins of destroyed
Source: © ruslanshug /
Adobe Stock

The **worldwide military budget is about \$1.8 million per minute**. Military spending is one of the main causes of poverty in the world. **In the 1990s, more people died of starvation worldwide than were killed in both world wars combined.**

Today, **conflicts within countries predominate** (civil wars, terrorist attacks, ethnic persecution, and ethnic cleansing), although there are also wars between countries. In 2020, there are military conflicts in 69 countries worldwide, 15 of which are wars, 23 limited wars, and 196 violent conflicts.

Today, countries no longer have a monopoly on the use of **weapons; they are easily accessible** to different groups on the world market. Even the aims of modern wars are not entirely clear, as they are a mixture of different motives and causes: greed for property, power, ideological beliefs, ethnic and cultural conflicts, corruption, and similar. All this makes it **difficult to end wars and create a lasting peace**.

4.3.2 JUST WAR

The international community (**United Nations**) is committed to intervene in countries where there is a clear **violation of human rights**. In such cases, the UN Security Council has the task of authorizing military intervention to prevent further human rights violations (for example, genocide, ethnic cleansing, use of weapons of mass destruction). The main elements of the theory of just war continue to serve as the basis for the use of military means against acts of violence.

The theory of just war argues that **under certain conditions it is moral to use military means** to bring about justice. Throughout history, six basic principles of a just war have been formed:

- a. Just cause:** self-defense, defense of others, protection of human rights (genocide, ethnic cleansing); not to acquire wealth or power;
- b. Right intention:** to promote good and avoid evil with the aim of restoring justice and peace; not to achieve other goals, such as economic interests or dominant geopolitical positions;
- c. Last resort:** when all peaceful solutions have been tried and failed;
- d. Probability of success** the probability of success must be real; it is not allowed to send soldiers on a mission for an unreachable goal;
- e. Proportionality:** The evil consequences of war must not be greater than the evil to be fought by the war;
- f. Competent authority:** The military action must be based on legitimate authority.

To be able to speak of a just war, therefore, **all conditions must be met**. Military means are sometimes necessary to protect life and human rights. The problem with the theory of just war is that it is often difficult to determine whether all conditions are met.



Think first of all about the reasons for the use of weapons today. What kind of war, if any, can be just? What do you think is a justified reason to use violence today? What conditions are justified for armed resistance?

4.3.3 NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Many representatives of different religions and non-believers argue that **peace can only be achieved by non-violent means**. **Pacifism** is a movement that refuses to use weapons and violence to achieve its goals. In their view, no war can be justified. In its radical form, pacifism also rejects any violent defense against violence. It only permits non-violent defense.

An example of non-violent resistance was the struggle for Indian independence led by **Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948)**. He defended the attitude of ahimsa (**non-injury**), which means “the avoidance of harm to any living being in thought, word or deed”. Millions of supporters defied the British by not cooperating with laws that were considered unjust. Their non-violent way of fighting for justice **has sparked movements for civil rights and freedoms around the world**. However, Gandhi did not advocate absolute pacifism in the sense that the use of force is never justified. He defended the position that it is better to resist with physical violence than to be a coward when one’s family is threatened by armed robbers.

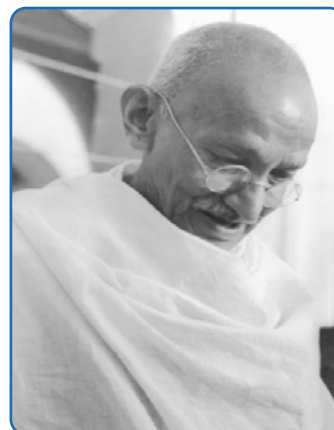



Figure 4.4
Mahatma Gandhi
(1869–1948)
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

 What do you think about pacifism? Is the use of force always wrong? Even in self-defense? How should people fight against injustice and violence? Should a country remain passive when it is (unjustly) attacked?

4.3.4 ANCIENT MYTH OF ANTIGONE

Establishing peace and reconciliation after a war is a long process. Every war leaves many victims behind: those fallen in battle, the wounded, the displaced, the relatives of the fallen, and others. It is very important to respect all the victims in order to ensure the possibility of lasting peace.

In the animated film, the ancient Greek myth of the heroine Antigone was mentioned. Antigone was characterized by the courage **to follow the voice of her conscience** and bury her brother despite the king's ban on doing so. **Respect for all the dead is one of the fundamental elements of civilization.** Every person, regardless of his life, has the right to be buried.



Figure 4.5
Antigone in front of
the dead Polynices by
Nikiforos
Source: National Gallery
of Athens Collection via
Wikimedia Commons

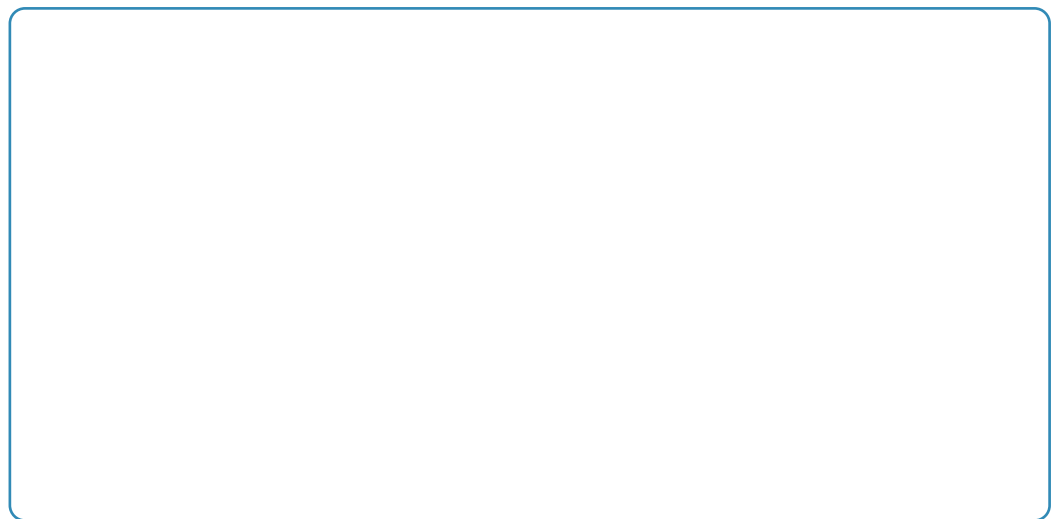
After the death of King Oedipus, ruler of Thebes, his sons Polynices and Eteocles fight for the throne, killing each other in battle. Therefore, their uncle Creon takes power. After a lavish funeral service for Eteocles, he forbids the transfer of Polynices' body, condemns it to lie unburied, and declares him a traitor. Antigone, moved by the love for her brother and convinced of the injustice of the order, buried Polynices

secretly. She is convinced that every man deserves to be buried. For this, she was ordered to be executed by order of Creon; she hanged herself before the order could be carried out. Her lover, Haemon, son of Creon, committed suicide. The king's wife, Eurydice, also committed suicide. In the end, Creon is left completely alone and crushed because he realizes that he has violated the basic laws of civilization.

In European culture, Antigone has become a symbol of respect for the fundamental values of civilization, expressed in particular by her words: "I was born to share love, not hate".

Many other thoughts about war and peace have been formed throughout history. Read the thoughts below and choose the one that appeals to you the most or write down a sentence of your own.

- "In peace, sons bury their fathers. In war, fathers bury their sons." (Herodotus, 484–425 BC)
- "I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word." (Martin Luther King, Jr., 1929–1968)
- "An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind." (Mahatma Gandhi, 1869–1948)
- "Never think that war, no matter how necessary, nor how justified, is not a crime." (Ernest Hemingway, 1899–1961)



4.4 GLOBAL JUSTICE & PEACE

Peace is not just being without war, but it represents a way of life that allows everyone in society to live **a dignified human life** and **develop their potential**. The unjust distribution of good and resources, exploitative attitudes and disrespect of dignity are constant sources of conflict and tension.



What do you think are the main steps we need to take to avoid our conflicts turning into wars? How could we ensure more just distribution of goods globally? Who is responsible for addressing the unjust situation in today's world?

4.4.1 TOWARDS A GLOBAL ETHIC

We often hear that religions, which are alleged to encourage the use of weapons to achieve their goals, are primarily to blame for wars and violence. Almost all religions are accused of justifying violence when it comes to asserting their interests. More thorough historical studies, however, show that **religions themselves were largely not the source of wars**, but politicians and military leaders abused religious sentiments in promoting military action. Today, leaders of different religions are united in the pursuit of **world peace**. Efforts are also being made to create **a global ethic**, which should serve as a basis for peaceful coexistence between different nations, religions, and cultures.

The initiator of the movement for the global ethic, **Hans Küng**, attempts to find the fundamental and **connecting elements** of all religions and non-religious people. The Global Ethic Project does not attempt to create new ethical values or norms but rather draws attention to values that all people, regardless of religion, worldview or nationality, already share in their traditions.

One of the common elements in all religions and cultures is **the golden rule**:

- Confucius (551-479 BC), Chinese philosopher: “What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others.”
- Rabbi Hillel (110-10 BC), Jewish religious leader: “Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.”
- Jesus Christ: “Treat others as you want them to treat you. This is what the Law and the Prophets are all about.” (Mt 7:12)
- Prophet Mohamed: “Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.”
- Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), German philosopher: “Do so that the maxim of your will could at any time be considered a principle of general law.”



Figure 4.6
Together strong
Source: © Jürgen Fälchle
Adobe Stock

4.4.2 GLOBAL JUSTICE AND PEACE

In 2015, UN members adopted **17 Sustainable Development Goals** as a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice.

One of the goals is also peace, justice, and strong institutions. Sustainable development is only possible within communities that live based on just relations and mutual respect, which are the foundation of peaceful coexistence. This also requires efficient and trustworthy institutions at the local, national, and transnational levels.



Figure 4.7
Sustainable
Development Goals
adopted by the UN in
2015 to be reached on the
global
Source: © UN /
Adobe Stock

The work for peace and justice **begins with each individual**. We must know how to resolve conflicts peacefully and that we are looking for just and sustainable solutions. Conflicts arise because different parties want the same thing, such as economic resources, money, power, recognition, or social status. We see others as obstacles to the implementation of our desires. **If we deal with conflicts in a non-violent and constructive way, we become more creative and humane.** Conflicts can also be an opportunity to clarify the views of individual parties and to deepen cooperation between different actors. Dutch philosopher Bart Brandsma defines peace as follows: “Peace is a long series of conflicts that we have dealt with successfully.” We will never be able to avoid conflicts completely, but we must know how to deal with them in a peaceful and civilized way.



Think for yourself next to the questions below and write short answers in the box.

- What can I do personally and with my friends to strengthen justice and build a culture of peace?
- What are currently the biggest challenges in building peace at the local, national, and global levels?

4.5 ADDITIONAL MATERIAL: ARTISTIC PRESENTATION OF WAR

Throughout history, many monuments to the victors of wars have been erected, magnificent paintings depicted, hymns written and powerful musical works composed. Art is often used for propaganda purposes; however, the artists also have the power to remind the people about the atrocity of war and violence.

Two pictures below are from the same period of history and present both perspectives – from the side of military leaders and from the side of innocent victims.



Figure 4.8
Charles Baron von Steuben: Napoleon's Return from Elba
Source: Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Retour_de_Napoleon_d%27Isle_d%27Elbe_by_Charles_de_Steuben.jpg



Figure 4.9
Francisco de Goya: The Third of May 1808
Source: Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:El_Tres_de_Mayo_by_Francisco_de_Goya_from_Prado_in_Google_Earth.jpg

Compare the two pictures with the following questions:



What do you see in the pictures?

- a. Who is the central person? Who are the other people? What is the relationship between them?

- b. What role do light and colour play in both images? What kind of atmosphere do they create?

- c. Where are the scenes set?



How do you feel when you look at the picture? What emotions overwhelm you?



What is the main message of the pictures? What is the difference between them?



Write what titles you would give to the first and second pictures.

4.6 TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

1. ON THE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

Students are playing football on the school playground. During the game, Pieter-Jan falls on the ground claiming Ahmed committed a foul.

Pieter-Jan claims: "You tripped me!"

Ahmed raises his hands, objecting: "Not true. I didn't even touch you."

Two different interpretations divide the rest of the players. Some of the children side with Ahmed protesting there was no foul play, while others side with Pieter-Jan demanding the foul. Both parties are trying to persuade each other by yelling. During the heated situation, the teacher arrives and calls the students to head towards the bus stop. The students are on their way to the memorial to the victims of all wars. On the way to the bus stop, they are still arguing whether there was an offence or not, and who is right.

2. ON THE BENCHES – WAITING FOR THE BUS

While waiting for the bus, the youngsters are sitting on benches.

The teacher asks: "What happened?"

Pieter-Jan starts: "I almost scored a goal, and Ahmed tripped me!"

Ahmed replies: "Man, you know better than this. You threw yourself to the ground. There was no foul!"

Again, some of the class members side with Pieter-Jan, and the others support Ahmed.

From the back of the group, Sarah speaks out loud: "I saw Ahmed intentionally pushing Pieter-Jan. Ahmed always plays rough."

David murmurs in a low voice: "... so typical of Muslims..."

The teacher calms the situation: "Well, slow down now everybody, not so hasty. You need to cool down your heads and leave this issue aside. Or better still, we can use this dispute as an introduction for today's trip to the monument to the victims of all wars."

He continues with the question: "Why are there tensions and conflicts between people?"

Ahmed says indignantly: "Because some people are unfair, they cheat, and can't stand defeat..."

Lindsay tries to calm things down: "People are different, and sometimes we can't get along."

Everyone wants to be right – just like Pieter-Jan and Ahmed at football today."

The teacher continues: "let us look more broadly at who or what you think is to blame for the conflicts and wars in the world?"

Sarah says confidently: "I think religions are to blame for most wars. Religions have always encouraged wars. They used weapons to expand their power. Just look at what Muslim terrorists are doing today because of their faith in Allah."

Ahmed is still upset, as he is sure he didn't foul Pieter-Jan, and now these people condemn all Muslims for all the wars in the world, so he also responds emotionally: "Are Muslims now to blame for everything? What about the Crusades? At that time, Christians killed a lot of people in the name of the Christian God!"

In defense of Ahmed, Lindsay says: "Yesterday I saw the news on the internet that Hindus had set fires to Muslim homes in India. Some time ago, there was also talk of Buddhist violence against the Muslim minority in Myanmar. Muslims are victims of violence in those countries."

Pieter-Jan had calmed down a bit and feels like sharing his thoughts on the subject with confidence: "It's clear from history that religions are the cause of most wars to date. Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists - they are all violent. Therefore, it would be best if we all turn atheist! Don't you think it is foolish to argue about different gods for there is no evidence whatsoever they exist?! We live in the 21st century, and with all the technological progress, we should stop believing in things that are not scientifically proven. Those who believe in gods and supernatural power today are stupid!"

The teacher tries to reason with Pieter-Jan: "Pieter-Jan, I see your point, but don't you think your idea can be disrespectful towards people with different religious beliefs? Just as you have the right to hold your opinion and beliefs, so have your other classmates the same right to believe according to their tradition, world view or personal faith. Wouldn't you agree? Now, I don't believe faith in God in itself leads to violent acts. Our beliefs can, however, be manipulated when someone is trying to use violence

to reach their goals.”

3. CONVERSATION ON THE BUS

The bus is approaching, and the teacher encourages the students to talk in pairs on their way to the memorial.

Teacher: “We have a half-hour drive from here to the monument. During this time, you can talk to the person sitting next to you about what should be done to prevent new wars. What are the necessary steps if we want to maintain peace between us?”

Students get on the bus. On one side of the bus, Pieter-Jan sits together with Sarah; on the other side, Ahmed talks with Lindsay. You can hear the children’s chatter in the background.

4. VISIT THE MEMORIAL DEDICATED TO THE VICTIMS OF ALL WARS

The students get off the bus and walk towards the hill where the memorial is located. On the memorial, we read the inscription: “I was born to share love, not hate” (Antigone). Below: “Dedicated to the victims of all wars.”

The teacher breaks the silence: “This monument has been made to cherish the memory of those who have fallen in war and to all who have suffered as a result of the war. It is a place of remembrance and a living memory for us that we should never go to war again. Who will read the inscription out loud?”

Lindsay reads: “I was born to share love, not hate”

The teacher asks: “Who said these words?”

Ahmed replied first: “Antigone.”

The teacher replies: “We have already talked about Antigone in class, haven’t we? Why do you think this idea is on this monument?”

Lindsay says: “Because, despite the king’s ban, she buried her brother who had fallen in the war.”

David adds: “In the war, her brothers Eteocles and Polynices fought and finally killed each other.

King Creon buries Eteocles as a hero and declares Polynices to be a traitor to the state. The king issues an order threatening the death penalty to anyone who would bury Polynices.”

Sarah continues: “Despite the ban, Antigone courageously buries her dead brother, and the king sentences her to death. Antigone takes her own life in prison. Her fiancé Haemon, who is the king’s son, also takes his own life. In the end, the king’s wife Eurydice also committed suicide.”

The teacher sums up: “You see how the decision to sentence Antigone to death led to other deaths! Violence always gives birth to new violence. As you know from your own experiences, a violent act does not solve the problem, but on the contrary, it makes things worse.”

The students now reflect on the teacher’s words, some of them nod in agreement. Pieter-Jan, on the other hand, stands still.

The teacher continues: “Antigone resisted hatred and pledged her whole life to resist the king’s unjust laws. If we want peace, we must strive for justice. However, we must also be careful not to allow hatred towards others to spread inside us, but to resolve our conflicts promptly and peacefully. Let’s not forget: ‘I was born to share love, not hate.’”

The students walk towards the bus.

5. ON DEPARTURE FROM THE MONUMENT

Pieter-Jan approaches Ahmed and stops him.

Pieter-Jan: “I’m sorry. You were right. There was no foul, I was really eager to score a goal, and I couldn’t get through.”

Pieter-Jan offers Ahmed his hand. The class is closely watching to see what will happen next.

Ahmed shakes his hand saying: “No worries, mate, I’m glad we can put this behind us.”

There is silent relief for everyone in the group. Everyone is happy Ahmed, and Pieter-Jan have reconciled. Lindsay hugs Ahmed, Sarah taps Pieter-Jan on his shoulder: “You see, tomorrow is another game to be happy about.”

4.7 GLOSSARY

Conflict is a serious and lasting contrast in terms of values, beliefs, interests, and attitudes between individuals or between social groups.

Democracy is a form of government in which the people have the authority to choose their governing legislature.

Ethnic cleansing is the systematic forced removal of ethnic, racial and/or religious groups from a given territory by a more powerful ethnic group, often with the intent of making it ethnically homogeneous.

Genocide is the deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular nation or ethnic group.

Global justice is a principle that requires just distribution of benefits and burdens throughout the world.

The Golden Rule is a principle that is found and has persisted in many religious and ethical traditions of humankind for thousands of years. It requires: "What you wish done to yourself, do to others."

Human rights are fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled simply because she or he is a human being and which are inherent in all human beings regardless of their age, ethnic origin, location, language, religion, ethnicity, or any other status. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For sustainable development to be achieved, it is crucial to harmonize three core elements: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. These elements are interconnected, and all are crucial for the well-being of individuals and societies.

The United Nations (UN) is an intergovernmental organization that aims to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation, and be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations. It was established in 1945 and has 193 member states.

War is an intense armed conflict between states, governments, societies, or paramilitary groups. It is generally characterized by extreme violence, aggression, destruction, and mortality, using regular or irregular military forces.

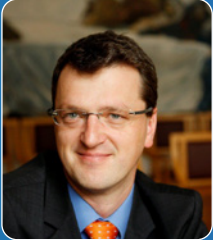
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