



- 1 Dirty hands
- 2 Compromises
- 3 Responsibility

Things you hear in politics

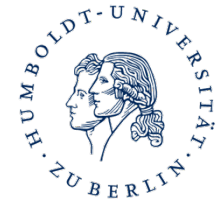
1. “If you cannot stand the heat get out of the kitchen”, “to make an omelette you need to break some eggs”, (...)
2. “I was just doing my job”, “I was just following orders”, (...)

The questions of political ethics

1. Do political leaders face particular ethical challenges and what makes for a good politician?
2. Does being an actor in politics make a difference for what you may or ought to do? Is political morality different from ordinary morality?

Two sets of distinctions

- Prohibition vs. permission vs. obligation.
- Excuse vs. justification.



The dilemma or puzzle of dirty hands

An intuitive grasp of the phenomenon

To be successful in politics you have to get your hands dirty

It is impossible to govern innocently

Sometimes politicians have to do terrible things

Examples

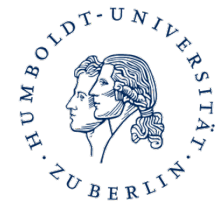
You cannot win the election without lying

You have to torture the terrorist to find the bomb

Questions

- (1) Is there a genuine problem/dilemma of dirty hands?
- (2) Is it true that political leaders are subject to different requirements?
- (3) If yes, what exactly are these?
- (4) What is the right individual and institutional response to the problem?

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The consequentialist perspective

There is no real problem / dilemma of dirty hands.

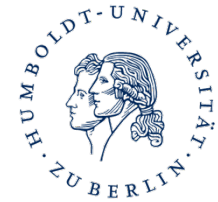
Reasoning in a nutshell

- Whether an action is right depends solely on its (expected) consequences.
- There is neither a dilemma nor a genuine phenomenon because either the politician does what brings about best overall consequences (and hence acts rightly) or he does not (and hence acts wrongly).

Problems for the consequentialist perspective

- Independent objections, including:
 - Use as means, distributions, demandingness, etc.
- The phenomenology of getting hands dirty:
 - We feel guilt and seek excuses and justification
 - There remains a residue of wrong

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Max Weber and *Politics as a Vocation*

Two kinds of ethics

Ethics of ultimate ends versus the ethics of responsibility.

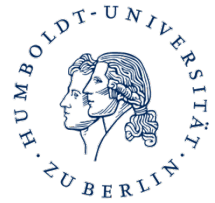
The political leader as a tragic hero

Sacrifice soul to do good, face reality and assume responsibility.

Questions

- (1) What type of political leader is desirable? Without soul?
- (2) Should leaders cultivate and learn not to be good?
- (3) How should political leaders deal with predicament?
- (4) Are political leaders responsible for all consequences of action?
- (5) What should happen to those who do terrible things to avoid even worse things from happening?

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Thresholds and supreme emergencies

The idea

- There are extreme circumstances where so much is at stake that it is permissible to violate standards that ordinarily apply
- Right and constraints have to be observed up to a point.

Analogy from different domain of political philosophy

Just war and supreme emergency

Difficulties

What is the point where it gives in? A function of numbers?

Would that be specific to politicians or turn into general permission?

Could we explain cases where politicians face less than emergency?

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The role morality diagnosis

Political ethics is different from individual ethics.

Role morality

There are special role-related obligations and permissions, i.e., reasons that arise to achieve aims of role within practice.

Practice of politics and role of political leader

The practice of politics (providing stability, legitimacy, etc.) and virtuous role within it (passion, responsibility) give rise to special permission and obligations.

Questions for the role morality account

What accounts for difference & why special obligations/permissions?*

Which should take priority in cases of conflict?

What exactly are the limits of political ethics?



Thinking systematically

Case

Jim and the villagers

Questions

What is the right thing to do?

Does it make a difference whether Jim is politician/official?

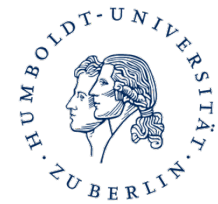
What exactly would you be responsible for by (not) acting?

Is there a genuine dilemma?

How do you hope a political leader would react?

Answering questions matters for figuring out the problem of dirty hands

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The nature of compromise

- Sacrifice of principled importance to improve over status quo.
- Different from consensus / common ground / agreement.
- Magnitude of sacrifice determined by will of other party.
- Political: Not just one off but embedded in relationships, etc.
- Spirit: a) Practical prudence (adapt principles) b) respect (opponent).

Different types of compromise

- Substitution: 1 {A,B,C} / 2 {D,E,F} > compromise {x} (e.g. terminally ill)
- Intersection: 1 {A,B,C} / 2 {C,D,E} > compromise {C} (e.g. need & benefit)
- Conjunction: 1 {A, B} / 2 {-A, -B} > compromise {A, -B} (e.g. policy-comb)



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The promise of compromise

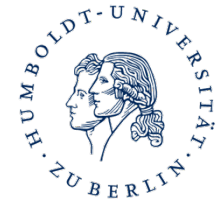
- Politics as art of possible and compromise as using possibility.
- Important political virtue of democrats in light of disagreement.

The value and need of compromise

- Only possible improvement over status quo (getting things done).
- Fosters respect which is vital to democracy.
- Contributes to stability and civil peace.

Difficulty and pre-conditions

- Governing requires compromise, campaigning makes it difficult.
- What makes compromise possible? Mind-set, institutions, etc.



The danger of compromise

Even if only way to achieve good, you further the bad.

Two types of moral responsibility

- Co-Principality: Wrong through committing and omitting.
- Indirect: Enabling / inducing / permitting wrong-doings of others.

Questions

- Is regret appropriate even if on balance right thing was done?
- How to figure out whether or not to compromise?
- Anyone not to compromise with?

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The significance of 'responsibility' in politics and policy

Responsibility is ubiquitous but slippery and ambiguous:

Case 1: Who is responsible for the disastrous consequences of the 2010 Haiti earthquake?

Case 2: Is the EU responsible for resolving the refugee crisis?

Case 3: Is Obama responsible for the bumpy start of Obamacare?

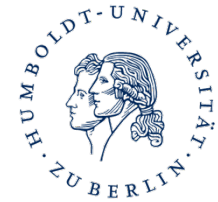
Case 4: Who is responsible for the BP oil spill in the gulf of Mexico?

> *There are different types of responsibility at stake in each of these cases*

> *Different types of responsibility might be linked in various ways*

> *The cases raise distinct but important ethical challenges*

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Different types of responsibility

1. Causal responsibility (c.f. consequences of earthquake)

- Who caused a particular event/its consequences?

2. Moral responsibility (c.f. BP and oil-spill)

- Who should be blamed? Who should bear the cost?
- Presuppositions: Control, agency, intentions, alternatives?

3. Remedial responsibility (c.f. refugee crisis)*

- Who has a special obligation to fix a problem?

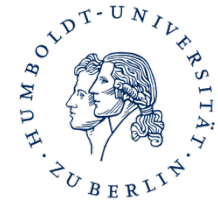
Four philosophical/ethical questions of responsibility?

What would a convincing theory of moral responsibility look like?

How should one assign remedial responsibility?*

How to assign moral responsibility for political outcomes?

Does it make sense to hold collectives responsible?



The basis problem of remedial/substantive responsibility (1/2)

How do we assign special responsibility to address a particular problem?

Who is responsible for resolving the refugee crisis?

Basic options: Forward looking versus backward looking.

Candidate 1: **Causal responsibility:** Those who broke it should fix it

Candidate 2: **Moral responsibility:** Those to blame for breaking should fix

Candidate 3: **Capacity principle:** Those who can fix it should fix it

Candidate 4: **Community principle:** Those with special ties should fix

Who would be remedially responsible?

Which principle is most convincing?

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The problem of remedial/substantive responsibility (2/2)

Systematic problems with individual options

Against 1: What if causes are natural?

Against 2: What if those morally responsible do not have capacity?

Against 3: What about negligent incapacity?

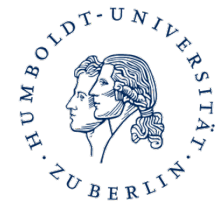
Against 4: What if nobody has a special link?

Miller's proposal

- Starting point: Everyone has interest in clear & effective assignments
- Need to avoid harm or protect interest determines magnitude.
- Connection determines who has to do what, pluralistically combining capacity, moral responsibility, and community.

Is this convincing (more than pluralism?, patient focus?)

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Distributing responsibilities under conditions of non-compliance (1/2)

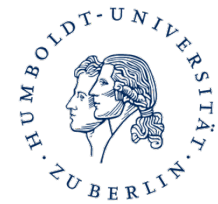
Examples

- German firms have responsibility to compensate forced labour but some do not contribute to the fund. Should those willing to pay more?
- Countries have responsibility to reduce CO₂ - emissions by certain amount but some do not do their bit. Should those willing reduce by more?
- European countries have obligation to admit their contingent of refugees but some refuse. Should those willing admit more?

Structure of the problem

A group of actors has (a) joint responsibility to avoid a particular harm, (b) it is clear what everybody's fair share would be, (c) but some fail to do their bit.

What is the responsibility of those initially willing to do their fair share?



Distributing responsibilities under conditions of non-compliance (2/2)

There are three basic options of dealing with the situation:

Option (1): Just do your fair share.

Pro: For after all, the failure of others is their responsibility.

Con: Reasons grounding duty may support strong remedial responsibility.

Option (2): Do more than your fair share (pick up the slack).

Pro: There is a new moral situation, in light of which we determine share.

Con: Responsibility does not simply shift.

Option (3): Do less than your fair share (grouch).

Pro: Fairness > You should not be disadvantaged as result of failure of others.

Con: Reasons grounding duty are stronger than horizontal equity.

Relevant Factors: (a) Costs?, (b) rights?, (c) difference?, (d) reversible?

Right thing to do: Climate? Refugees?

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