

On ethics, from norms to vigilance

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Abstract

Ethics may be approached on two bases: either on the basis of *norms* and indignation (how people *should* behave), or on the basis of etymology (ethics is to be traced back to *ethos* in Greek, which means mere *behavior* (how people do behave), as well as in Latin: *mores* also means mere behavior). As an indomitable consequence, the most comprehensive understanding of ethics concerns the *relationship* between norms and behavior.

When people approach ethics on the unique basis of norms, they will most often, if not systematically, accuse those who are supposed or who were supposed to behave a certain way and did not. This is all the more evident and radical when people believe that action may be totally under control. If people are supposed to master what they do, and fail, they will automatically be considered as being guilty for their errors and failure, for they did not all what they *should* to master their actions and operations. Whereas when people are *not* supposed to systematically master their action (due to the changing environment, to global complexity, to uncertainty), they will not be systematically accused not to have done the right thing on real time when acting, operating a system or making a decision. They will of course be considered as responsible if not accountable for their actions, but a general learning process is then implicitly able to start from the observation of previous deviations.

Biography

Laurent Bibard is Professor at ESSEC Business School since 1991. He was Dean for MBA Programs (2005 to 2009), and is currently Full Professor, Management Department and Head of the Edgar Morin Chair on Complexity. Laurent is the only French Professors in being Tenure in Management and Philosophy as well. Some of his recent researches concern organizational vigilance interpreted as the organizational conditions favouring collective as well as individual mindfulness. Laurent was invited in many prestigious universities in Germany (Mannheim), Canada (UQAM) Japan (Keio Business School, Keio University), etc. His publications include "Management and Philosophy: What is at Stake?" (*Keio Business Forum*, March 2011, Vol 28, n° 1, p 227-243) and *Sexuality and Globalization* (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2014). His book *La sagesse et le feminine (Wisdom and Femininity)* was as well published in Japan end of 2014. Last book published: *Terrorisme et féminisme, Le masculine en question (Terrorism and Feminism: The masculine in question)*, march 2016.