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Reflections on morality in Renaissance thought

Vasil Gluchman

Abstract

We can read about the morality of that time in works by authors who describe or criticize the conduct and activity of the members of those classes taking the lead in the morality of that time. Thus, we can find a lot of information about ancient Greece and its morality in Plato's presentation of Socrates, Peter Abelard presenting the Middle Ages, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Niccolo Machiavelli, Baldesar Castiglione, but even also Slovak authors such as Martin Rakovský and Juraj Koppay presenting very interesting contemporary facts about the Renaissance.

Keywords: Renaissance, morality, Erasmus, Machiavelli, Castiglione, Rakovský, Koppay

Introduction

Each period of time has classes, estates or groups of people determining the standards of conduct and activity, including moral norms and rules valid and accepted in a particular time. Free citizens in ancient Greece, the clergy in the early Middle Ages, later monarchs, this role was performed by aristocratic courts and courtiers during the Renaissance and humanism, the bourgeoisie and its morality in modern times, capitalists in the time of the development of capitalism, etc. In the recent information age, the role is performed by the media and media stars, whether real or just imaginary, or one-timers (Gluchman, 2008, pp. 234–245).

What was the morality of that time is presented in contemporary sources by authors who describe or criticize the conduct and activity of the members of the particular class taking the lead in contemporary morality. We can read a lot about ancient Greece and its morality in Plato's presentation of Socrates, Peter Abelard (1079–1142) presenting the Middle Ages, Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469–1536), Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527), Baldesar Castiglione (1478–1529), but even Slovak authors such as Martin Rakovský (1535–1579) and Juraj Koppay (1550?–1580?) originally presenting very interesting contemporary facts about the renaissance.

Reflection on morality by Erasmus of Rotterdam and Niccolo Machiavelli

The characteristics of contemporary morality presented by Erasmus of Rotterdam is distinguished mainly by the irony of its particular approaches, but even the overall contemporary moral atmosphere that is evident for instance in his book *The Praise of Folly* (1511), but also in other works, such as dialogue *Julius Excluded from Heaven* and many others which are part of his *Colloquia Familiaria* (1522), but many of these dialogues had been developing from 1500. We can find many similarities between Erasmus' ironic criticism of contemporary morality and Machiavelli's picture of contemporary morality, for instance, in his work *The Prince*

(1513). Erasmus' picture of the Pope Julius II (1443–1513) is an example of Machiavelli's politician, or prince. The presented Pope (Julius II) was one of Machiavelli's prototypes when writing his masterpiece. In the personality of the pope we can probably find almost all the attributes that Machiavelli recommended to his prince: stealth, treachery, hypocrisy, craving for power, greed, etc. Pope Julius II convinces Saint Peter in Erasmus' dialogue that he does not deserve a place in heaven, explains to him everything he did for the honour and the glory of the Christian Church, how he increased its property in the way he sold bishoprics for six to seven thousand ducats, regained Bologna for the Holy See, conquered Venice, Ferrara, cursed everybody who criticized him for his sacred life style, summoned an anti-council to which he invited just his faithful followers to prevent his opponents of accusing him of not fulfilling the promise of calling the council within two years of being elected pope (Erasmus, 1990, pp. 216–238) and helped the Christian church, their wealth and sacred power in many other ways. He did everything to ensure he and the Church were the strongest authorities in this world. In the crucial moment, when we acquire power, we promise everything with no hesitation (Erasmus, 1990, pp. 216–238), said Pope Julius II paraphrasing by Erasmus.

Similarly Erasmus had suggested to the prince that we need to care about people or ruin them: they will get revenge for light offences but they will not seek it for grave ones, therefore if we have to hurt somebody, we have to do it properly not letting them get revenge (Machiavelli, 2005, p. 11). It probably came out of his too pessimistic perception of people and their attributes, because he wrote that people are ungrateful, unreliable, hypocritical, cowardly, greedy, they are simply bad and capable of betrayal if they see any profit for themselves (Machiavelli, 2005, pp. 57–58). Likewise, he stated that “there is no secure means of holding on to cities except by destroying them. Anyone who becomes master of a city accustomed to living in liberty and does not destroy it may expect to be destroyed by it, because such a city always has as a refuge in any rebellion the name of liberty” (Machiavelli, 2005, p. 19). In spite of such cruel advice, many authors, such as Michael White, claim about Machiavelli that his work is primarily a modern political discourse varying from all previous works in the fact that Machiavelli's objective was to make general rules, instructions that could be used by real people in the real world. He did not strive for theoretical instructions that would have never been anything more than illusions for the world of real people (White, 2007, p. 207). White considers Machiavelli's *The Prince* as a timeless work, because in his opinion, he describes the world how it is and probably always will be regardless how Christians and other moralists would like it to look (White, 2007, pp. 208–209).

I think we can appreciate Machiavelli's work *The Prince* because he was able to realistically describe his time, just as he had seen it, with its mistakes

and negatives. On the other hand, we can equally reproach him for trying to reform this political reality in the time when he was a member of the diplomatic services and had some real political influence. Even though we can feel some indications that he did not identify himself with the contemporary political reality, he sees an “ideal” of the prince in what he is. He did not provide any vision of what it ought to be. His ideas were based on the political situation in renaissance Italy that did not allow him to think too much about bringing morality and moral virtues into politics, but that hectic time of political chaos turmoil in the corridors of power could be the stimulus for searching for and formulating the vision exceeding his time. On the other hand, we can understand such a pessimistic view of the world as an effort to balance religious faith practically in the character and the virtue of princes who were often presented in the Christian world as “princes from God’s will”, as “anointed by God”, etc.

**Contemporary morality reflected on by Martin Rakovský
and Juraj Koppay**

Martin Rakovský perceived it in such an idyllic way. In his opinion, based on reformation-renaissance humanism, suzerain is a person who rules people in their benefit and has been recalled for this position by lot as god’s instruction or has been elected by people to raise goodness and rule a common state to horrify unrestrained people, spread truth and honour, punish crimes, force the observation of the laws of the almighty as well as human laws. A suzerain is, according to Rakovský, supposed to protect the peace that is a blessing for the public and to protect virtuous people by force, reward them and stimulate the virtuous by what they deserve. God is the first point of reason for a suzerain. He claimed that a suzerain has to strive to respect faithfulness, shame, peace, piety, wisdom, to value truth and justice the most. In the spirit of reformation humanism, he refused any disbelief in the fact that a suzerain was not created by God who is the source of each act of goodness and is the father of truth and good itself is sourced in it. In his opinion, God is the wellspring and author of virtue (Rakovský, 1974b, pp. 260–263).

Secondly, according to Rakovský, human common sense and human nature are the source of the suzerain. However, he claimed that man is a being that is created for life in a village. God determined the objective that is the good and the borders of that objective for man during his creation, and man is looking for what seems to be good in a way he can to perform it. According to Rakovský, spiritual gifts, art, virtue and sense, as well as dignified morality are a great virtue. Man prepares a blissful life when he acquires this. Who acquires these great goods is delighted and wants to share it with others. Who possesses more virtues, strives to share it with others, their effort is focused on the entire good. The good ones usually let themselves be lead by the good ones, they gather in various groups. Leaders

guarantee the security of people and their property. He was convinced that based on this they create more ideal good and glorify God for it (Rakovský, 1974b, pp. 266–267).

According to Rakovský, real fame and glory of princes rest in virtues. In his opinion, true love, justice and kindness are such virtues. In virtues, there is divine power, because there is a light related to what God the Father himself has. Man is mostly a heavenly creature, he inclines upwards by his spirit, to God, to the kingdom of stars (Rakovský, 1974b, pp. 302–303). Common sense leads all the other virtues. Based on this, we can distinguish good from evil, useful from harmful from dishonest. The prince selects what is nicer from nice, and what is less harmful from evil, what is more useful from useful. According to Rakovský, the closest virtue to common sense is justice that cares about the interest of a given state more than about private property. He claimed that justice acts out what the law preaches, prayers or tears won't surrender it, there is no family role in it, it rewards those who deserve it and punishes the lazy. Thereafter, the prince, acting in accordance with justice fulfils contracts, promises and performs devotion; he is not harming those who do no harm to him. There is a middle way to justice, however, two more ways are around it. One leads to need and the other to excess. The first is harmed by excessiveness and evil is the downfall of the second. However, both of them do harm. Virtue is in the middle of them (Rakovský, 1974b, pp. 312–315). Daniel Škoviera claims that Rakovský surpasses his predecessors in the Kingdom of Hungary in his system and even in the scope of elaboration on the particular virtues of a prince (Škoviera, 1998, pp. 29–30). Zuzana Kákošová adds that Rakovský models not only an ideal prince but even the ideal of society, its structure and operation (Kákošová, 1998, p. 43).

Unlike Machiavelli and Erasmus' Pope Julius II, Rakovský held the view that the prince has to be a guardian, not a robber. The prince should protect property and support everybody according to the law. He claimed that if crime spreads throughout the country, wounded patience will change into immense wilderness (Rakovský, 1974a, p. 170). Most of the causes of injustice and riots are bred from inequality, in his opinion, and it is the originator of unhappiness in people. Inequality is present in the inconsistencies and arbitrariness of officials and administrators as well as in the re-distribution of wealth. Rakovský also claimed that God allows harm to be done, however can only perform good on his own. The public, who defy God's commandments, are the reason for all unhappiness. Thirdly, the reason is tyranny by a hard and grim hand unaware of any rights. God is forced to send punishment even when the king is present, as he shows false piety to God (Rakovský, 1974a, pp. 173–175). Thus, we can state that Rakovský, unlike Machiavelli, was not so pessimistic in his view of the world and man, especially the prince, although he had seen his negatives, too. On the other hand, there is a question whether he had seen the

personality of prince too idealistically. We can see the contradiction in himself between the ideal message of ancient times, Machiavelli's image of the time and his religious belief enshrined in Lutheranism (Gluchman, 2009, pp. 560–567). However, a different picture of contemporary morality in aristocratic court is presented by Baldesar Castiglione in his work *The Book of the Courtier* (1528). The work is a virtuous guide for aristocrats and formulates the ideal of the virtuous aristocrat, presents the attributes that should be characteristic for courtiers. The author was inspired by his own experience and many inspirational discussions that were led during his stay in the aristocratic court in Italian Urbine. In his opinion a courtier has to be “an honest and upright man; for in this are included prudence, goodness, strength and temperance of mind, and all the other qualities that are proper to a name so honoured” (Castiglione, 2003, p. 55). He continued to calculate the requirements for being a courtier who should “... to be cautious in his every action, and always to mingle good sense with what he says or does. And let him not only take care that his separate parts and qualities are excellent, but let him order the tenour of his life in such fashion, that the whole may be in keeping with these parts and be seen to be always and in everything accordant with his own self and form one single body of all these good qualities; so that his every act may be the result and compound of all his faculties...” (Castiglione, 2003, p. 80).

Martin Rakovský and Juraj Koppay presented the contemporary morality of aristocratic courts in the Habsburg monarchy in a slightly different way than Castiglione and his picture of the Italian courtier. For instance, Martin Rakovský stated that now we have many who do not tell the truth, unless they are bribed. They are able to lie because of money; they call willfulness as their right and godlessness as honour (Rakovský, 1974a, p. 161). He warned of the constantly increasing significance of money in the life of contemporary man and society. In his opinion, activity is the mother of virtue and everything that a man does is measured by money. He took the view that if you do not have enough money, you do not have enough strength. Wealth is often considered to be the hands and the wings of virtue (Rakovský, 1974a, p. 163). In his opinion, the greatest unhappiness for states and people comes from because people being too ambitious, they are extremely hungry for profit, there is inequality, violence, pride, egoism, sordid thoughts and fear (Rakovský, 1974a, p. 169). We can see a certain similarity with Machiavelli's criticism of and pessimism in such a view of contemporary man, but unlike Machiavelli, it was not general pessimism in the case of Rakovský, but rather just partial, related to the conduct of the aristocracy, or courtiers.

A much stronger critic of contemporary court morality was Juraj Koppay who states in his work *Vita aulica* (1580) in a similar vein as Castiglione that the noble court is the father and inmate of the good. According to Koppay, firstly, man acts humbly and straight at court, but when he tastes

the offered meals, he walks proudly with all the money he possesses, and is able to do everything and does not remember his past life (Koppay, 1980, p. 191). Unlike Castiglione, he holds the view that there are perverse courts in most cases where vices dominate, fraud is a virtue; deceit is divine. In his opinion, such a life is the enemy of good. The highest godlessness rules noble courts because each member is godless and they despise those who have a pure heart, clean hands and pure words. Koppay held the view that courts mainly keep and spoil the blunt and the perverse people who possess hideous hearts, eyes, hands and speech (Koppay, 1980, pp. 161–163). We cannot see any virtue, piety, faith, nobility, honesty or devotion there. Fraud, deceit and pride reign there (Koppay, 1980, pp. 175–179).

No crime can hide, according to Koppay, therefore he came to the conclusion that divine anger comes slowly, but certainly comes and with an even tougher effect, because the greatest prince won't let crime happen without punishment and he refuses mercy for the unjust. In his opinion, the court is empty and shallow. A predatory tyranny does not respect the law, disparages divine commands just for godless deeds. Courtiers sharpen their minds with wine and release their swollen guts and loosen their belts in readiness of future feasts. In his opinion, the one who fought off Trojan troops, Hector and defeated the lion-hearted Achilles, as a wine-lover who can empty a full glass of wine in one sip, won't get praise at court. According to Koppay, God is a delight for such greedy guts, pride is their piety, jealousy is their prayer, deception is their faith, tyrannous reign is their divine wisdom, bird catching is a religion, pubs are churches and false cards are Holy Scripture for them (Koppay, 1980, pp. 197–199).

He formulated eschatological prophecies that all spoiled courtiers are heading towards a cruel death; they will get life for their good deeds and hell for their crimes. In his opinion, honesty is expelled far away from home, religion is in a deep sleep and without any honour. He claimed that the world has been divided by various delusions and until the world collapses and starts its cycle again, until then heaven will look at this world where disagreements constantly arise (Koppay, 1980, pp. 201–203). According to Kákošová, Koppay reflects on life in aristocratic courts where nothing is idealized and its face is revealed too mercilessly. In her opinion, this honest effort is sourced in Koppay's belief that contemporary world is heading towards moral damnation, where, in actual fact, it already is (Kákošová, 1998, p. 44). However, Peter Burke claims that the court has been often drawn as a place where jealousy, defamation, lip service and all types of scams reign, which refers to the way renaissance courtiers have been perceived by other people. However, he claims that there is no need to take this criticism literally. In his opinion, there is jealousy on the part of less successful people shown towards those who were luckier (Burke, 1997, p. 120).

I think that the explanation of the criticism of the way of life at court and of courtiers rests partially in it, but I rather incline towards the fact that Koppay's above-mentioned pessimistic and eschatological conclusions have to be understood in the context of the time he lived in and the great social, religious, political, economic turmoil that happened in the 16th century. It was the century of reformation, religious controversies, conflicts and wars, threat to Europe posed by Turkey, great overseas discoveries, economic exploitation of newly discovered countries, etc. Everything has been followed by ideological, worldview and spiritual turmoil that disrupted typical contemporary morality and aristocracy, or courtiers were too often the subject of jealousy, criticism and hate. Within contemporary sources, it seems that it was often legitimate.

Conclusion

Apparently, the past was not much better than present. Hence, we can conclude with the thoughts of William Makepeace Thackeray who expressed the core of the life cycle and human history, including moral life all too eloquently when he wrote: "All types of all characters march through all fables: cowards and boasters; victims and bullies; dupes and knaves; long-eared Neddies, giving themselves leonine airs; Tartuffes wearing virtuous clothing; lovers and their trials, their blindness, their folly and constancy. With the very first page of the human story do not love and lies too begin? So the tales were told ages before Aesop; and asses under lions' manes roared in Hebrew; and sly foxes flattered in Etruscan fables; and wolves in sheep's clothing gnashed their teeth in Sanskrit, no doubt. The sun shines to-day as he did when he first began shining; and the birds in the tree overhead, while I am writing, sing very much the same note they have sung ever since there were finches. Nay, since last he besought good-natured friends to listen once a month to his talking, a friend of the writer has seen the New World, and found the (featherless) birds there exceedingly like their brethren of Europe. There may be nothing new under and including the sun; but it looks fresh every morning, and we rise with it to toil, hope, scheme, laugh, struggle, love, suffer, until the night comes and quiet. And then will wake Morrow and the eyes that look on it; and so *da capo*" (Thackeray, 2004, p. 11).

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Being and Morality in Ethics of Social Consequences (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen 2003), *Slovak Lutheran Social Ethics* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen 1997), editor of *Ethical Thinking on Past & Present (ETPP 2013)* (Prešov: VPU 2014), *Morality: Reasoning on Different Approaches* (Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi 2013) and *Morality of the Past from the Present Perspective: Picture of Morality in Slovakia in the First Half of the Twentieth Century* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2007).

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The modern history of ethics of teaching in Slovakia (16th – 17th centuries)

Marta Gluchmanová

Abstract

The author refers to the opinions as well as ethical and moral aspects of the teaching profession in the 16th and 17th century. She deals with the claims placed on a teacher's attributes, relationships among the students themselves, the relationship of the family towards to school, mutual relationship between students and teachers, teachers and their superiors, relationships among the teaching staff and even the overall position of the teacher within society, or perspectives for the future.

Keywords: teacher, student, parents, the ethics of teaching, ethical and moral aspects, society.

Introduction

The education and science of the 16th–17th centuries held a special role within the history of education and science in Slovakia. A significant feature of Slovak culture and education during the given period was its confessional character, since education was in the hands of the church, although there was the undeniable influence of secular literature. The development of city education systems and the first attempts to make schools independent from church authorities were important stages in the development of education. Even though we cannot find any reference at all to the ethics of the teaching profession within the mentioned period of time I will try to assess the activities and conduct of teachers from this point of view. I will focus on the opinions and ethical and moral aspects of the teaching profession at that time, the claims placed on a teacher's attributes, relationships among the students themselves, the relationship of the family towards to school, mutual relationship between students and teachers, teachers and their superiors, relationships among the teaching staff and even the overall position of the teacher within society, or perspectives for the future.

There were many claims (ethical and moral) posed on teachers in the past as well as now. Vajcik stated about teachers in a school in Banská Bystrica in 1574 that they were not allowed to dislike the school, they should be models of all the virtues, they had to be hard-working, diligent, not avoid too much work at school; they had to be nice to students; should live together with solidarity and get well with each other, should not be jealous or competitive; all the teachers should be disciplined and observe the school rules. Teachers should treat the students as their parents treat their children; furthermore, they asked them to be moral and kind; they should not let their students sit alone during classes or enable them to conduct vices; their duty was to remind the students how to conduct themselves outside the school, etc. In his opinion, moreover, the school principal should be as respectable as the others, he should lead everybody in his duties, supervise class work;

he should not tolerate spoilt, bad or impolite boys at school (Vajcik, 1955, pp. 94–98).¹

The school rules of a school in Levoča in 1589 stated that there were double duties for teachers at schools, with one part consisting of education and the second one of forming manners (Vajcik, 1955, pp. 115–122). This should be something that all teachers should be focused on; not just caring about study, but also about morals. Thus, they cared not just about education in 16th–17th centuries, but also emphasized the education of pupils and students within the educational process. Vavrinec Benedikt from Nedožery (1555–1615) deserves special attention due to his works *Penitoris scholae structura* (*Internal school system*) and *Oratio Therapeutica* (*Corrective Speech*), as he claimed that obtaining at least a Bachelor's degree would contribute to raising the quality of schools, and illiteracy and powerlessness of teachers would be eliminated, which he considered to be one of the main reasons of unsuccessful work in public schools. Benedikt reproached the lack of discipline in students, as well as some professors, badly organized education activities. Juraj Čečetka states that Benedikt demanded that rules be set in lectures, moreover that these rules be set among professors, place and time of lectures, care for proper students' attendance and proper performance of the pedagogic duties of their professors, "on the one hand, there were serious gaps in the education system, students listened to various subjects, but in a haphazard fashion, and did not gain any systematic, profound or permanent knowledge" because of disorganization during lectures (Čečetka, 1955, p. 31).² We can appreciate this viewpoint concerning the need to increase the competence and qualification of the teachers at that time, because professionalism is one of the most fundamental features of the successfulness of the teaching profession regardless the time.

The teacher – pupil – parent relationship

The mutual relationship of the teacher to their pupils and students, their cooperation and reciprocal understanding has an impact on the results of their work in the past as well as in the present. I presume it was a relatively progressive tendency for that time, because in Vajcik's work *Education, Study and School Rules in Slovakia in the 16th century* we can learn that

¹ Matej Bel (1684–1749) also emphasized that, within the duties of a principal that he should stay as the head of the school and surpass all others in his dignified behaviour. He should know the school's work, listen to the teachers and observe the progress of the students in their studies in the form of more often careful inspections of particular classes (Bel, 1947, p. 58).

² Vajcik draws attention to the appeal to approach one's teaching duties responsibly in his work *Educational Systems, Study and School Rules in Slovakia in the 16th century*. Principals carried out their duty to emphasize to all their colleagues the importance of attending classes on time, and of noticing if those in attendance had understood what had been said, etc. (Vajcik, 1955, p. 122).

“cities urged teachers to adapt to the individualities of particular students during their education and if he was not following particular school rules, they would punish him for it. Moreover, he stated that there was a need at that time “...to lecture and teach different students in different ways, not the same way, but tailoring the process to their characters and competences, because even experienced physicians cure various diseases by using different medicines and similarly, each medicine is used for various diseases. The first virtue of wisdom was to respect the person who needs to be taught. Later on, sanctions have been set. If any of the teachers did not strive to teach his students properly and rigorously and appropriately for the competences of his students in the stall of science, let him consider him to be useless and nominate somebody else who can and wants to fulfil all that is necessary in his position” (Vajcik, 1955, p. 27). Matej Bel (1684–1749) made a significant and considerable request on the part of students to show necessary respect to teachers, listen to constructive criticism, do not do anything that could insult their authority and bring shame to the entire school (Bel, 1947, p. 63). I consider the statement regarding the respect shown to teachers to be very interesting. Nowadays, I can observe a teacher can even contribute to his work by letting the students learn how to show respect, as well as to respect human dignity in mutual relationships and their relationships to others. However, the teacher cannot be alone in his efforts, because it is in the interest of the whole of society to raise the new young generation which cannot only accept but even spread positive values, or produce them.

The rules of a Bardejov school in 1540 determined that students show mutual respect in order to fulfil their obligations, “let us not hear about them being immodest or superior” (Vajcik, 1955, p. 63). Ján Bayer (1630–1674) in *School Rules Set and Prescribed for Evangelist Youth and Its Teachers* drafted competences and laws not only for teachers, but he expressed his opinion even on questions of students’ discipline, while he urged them to respect each other, not to treat each other superciliously and behave in a friendly manner. None of the students of any class could hit another student, swear at them or treat them violently in any way, even if he was angry or upset (Bayer, 1986, p. 433). According to Vajcik, among the other obligations of students in the 16th century was to show relevant respect and obedience even to parents, teachers, colleagues, superiors, the principal; love for their studies; avoiding recklessness and vigorousness; part of school rules was not to carry any dangerous objects (swords, knives) at school and not allow them to “booze, guzzle or feast; wander the streets, making noise at night etc. were prohibited” (Vajcik, 1955, p. 103).

It seems they dealt with questions of discipline much more in the past than now, which leads to a manifestation of violence in and out of school these days in the cases of breaking or not following discipline and it can wrongly influence not only the mental state of the teacher, but also the

student. We often observe abuses of human dignity, or dishonesty among individuals or some groups of students together with problem of aggressiveness and violence. Often, if a teacher does not respect a student's dignity, he cannot expect his own dignity to be respected.

Primarily, the formation of the young generation is influenced by family; it being in closest contact with every individual from an early age. Moreover, parents directly influence the personality of a child, indirectly form it through their way of life, family atmosphere, overall behavior, mutual relationships and the respect among parents, etc. Regarding teacher–parent relationships, we need to be aware that a parent is a morally equivalent partner to a teacher in the questions regarding the education of his/her child. On the other hand, we also need to understand the fact that the teacher represents the parents in their educational role during education; therefore even parents should respect the opinions and statements of the teacher to their children that should result in their mutual cooperation with parents within the process of education. Regarding discipline, what educational instruments to use if school rules were broken, teachers looked for solutions both in the teacher–student relationship as well as in the education received within the family. Earlier on, we have learnt that students were familiar with the rules of mores (a form of modern-day school rules).³ Moreover, Vajcik's publication says the *chancellor* (note – this term is obsolete. Today's equivalent is the principal of a seminary, high school, etc., the principal at secondary and high schools) of the evangelical town school in Banská Bystrica in 1580 observed the influence of humanism which could partially be seen even in the school's laws, as it warned teachers to avoid corporal punishments that, however, were preserved. Other offences were supposed to be punished by beating,⁴ locking up (the punishment of school prison in secondary schools – author's note), deprivation of food, financial penalty or their classmates' mockery. In his

³ Winter stated they even observed the aversion of students towards their discipline at that time which resulted in a joyless state of old-fashioned discipline. A teacher's compliments and punishments should be used for encouragement and keeping a school's discipline and ensuring the students' work hard. At that time, the gentlest punishment was swearing, mockery, sarcasm (offence – author's note) towards a student. Teachers usually used to use words such as "Here you are, 'Mr Bad Guy', not thinking about anything just playing, go to hell, etc. ... Students also talked about their teachers impolitely, although, not straight to their faces. Teachers acting offensively were opposed by equally offensively weak parents who only took action immediately after a teacher had touched their child. They came to school, swearing and not waiting to hear the teacher's side, and angry fathers revenged slaps with slaps" (Winter, 1901, pp. 480–493).

⁴ We have also learnt about the use of punishment in school practice from Bayer's school laws in which he presented that "the one who damages something, breaks something, dirties or devalues some part of the school building for instance windows, desks, walls, tables, stoves, etc., in any way, shall recover the damages and be beaten as well" (Bayer, 1986, p. 436).

opinion, the wise teacher should speak nicely to students rather than beat them (Vajcik, 1955, p. 36).

Education within the family and in school as well as the use of corporal punishment by parents and teachers has been discussed at great length elsewhere. Corporal punishment used to be common in many families. It engendered feelings of despondency and helplessness in a child, it made them scared, or made them defiant and angry. These forms of activity had uncomfortable consequences for children and parents or teachers tried to prevent or restrict the carrying out of wrong acts and reduce the chances of them being repeated in schools. Punishment usually caused the immediate interruption of improper or wrong behaviour. The offender had been punished and it was even in accordance with more general moral and educational visions. The role of educational methods was to support and regulate the behaviour of a child to always act correctly on his/her own and using his/her own reasoning and moral motives (albeit motivated by a fear of punishment). Thus, it was about their long-term and perspective effect, because the preference for corporal punishment was based on its immediate effect.

Origins of teaching ethics

The question of education and the related ethical and moral aspects of the teaching profession are as old as mankind. They became the subject of systematic interest and observation, especially with the rise of the Renaissance and the Modern Age. It also refers to the relationship to our territory. Regarding this, Mária Novacká states that the culmination of correctional proposals in education in Slovakia in the 17th century was the result of relatively short, but intense activity by the philosopher and pedagogue Ján Bayer from Prešov, speaking of his dissatisfaction with the education system in the Kingdom of Hungary, because of the neglect of practical disciplines that need to be constantly inculcated in the youth. Except for this, Bayer even emphasized the ethics that should lead man towards obedience, abnegation and inferiority, to make man blissful.⁵

The important role of schools was to lead students to polite manners. According to Čechetka, in his works *Internal School System* and *Correctional Speech*, Benedikt states that Latin city schools in humanism, through the cultural benefits of Ancient times, used to raise the youth towards a new moral outlook, towards new social ambitions. Benedikt's wish was to teach the youth not only towards salvation of the soul in the afterlife, but also towards what general temporal welfare and happiness. However, it was not

⁵ According to Novacká, Bayer cared about the virtues of each man in terms of achieving well-being, not in narrowly understood hedonism that repeatedly refers to the term of well-being, but rather of a deep optimistic scope of the abovementioned value which possesses not only physical but also spiritual dimensions and we need to understand it as a reduction of passive living and the application of virtues (Novacká, 1986b, pp. 373–380).

just about moral enlightenment; it was also put to practical use in new life systems. Čečetka claims that Benedikt extricated a student from formalistic explanation of doctrines, he wanted to bring him up as a well-informed, independently thinking scholar. He wanted to educate a student in language, literature, history and even ethics and other teachings (Čečetka, 1955, pp. 17–25). Thereinafter, Benedikt stated that some university professors neglected their lectures, as they repeatedly relied on the fact that students could learn by studying in libraries, therefore, there was no special reason to care for correct lecture conduct; exams were considered adequate proof. He did not consider individual study at university as the only form of education. He proposed students be led by professors who were obliged to provide such leadership for them and carefully conduct their lectures (Čečetka, 1955, pp. 20–36).

Martin Rakovský (1533–1579) asked the question, “how will one become a good man and lead an economy or judge in peace, as one is not able to recognize honesty from dishonesty, politeness from impoliteness and has not learnt to know and love the truth from his youth?” (Rakovský, 1974, p. 139). In the above mentioned statements, we can see that ethical and moral aspects have been emphasized (although in their latent form) during the process of education within the teaching profession. Even Rakovský reflects on right and wrong, honest and dishonest conduct and behaviour of individuals that, in my opinion, is respectable when the education of children and youth has been successfully carried out at that time (Gluchman, 2009, pp. 560–567).

The position of the teacher within society

We can learn many facts about the position of the teacher in society from Vavrinec Benedikt who knew the culture of status at that time, the pros and cons of society and economic conditions related to the questions of the education system. Benedikt came well to the opinion that the main source of mistakes, disorder, and the low status of a university was poverty. This naturally manifested itself in an appeal to materially provide students and professors who could deal with their main obligations; study or teaching. Benedikt did not forget about care for students, or the care for professors (Čečetka, 1955, pp. 20–36). Thus, the teacher was and is not only a pedagogue, but must have knowledge of psychology that enables him to know the spiritual life of his students, he is often confronted by different mental illnesses with which he needs to deal properly even in particular social circumstances.

Rakovský in his work *On the Dignity and Usefulness of Schools* (1557) stated that if mankind did not study, it would die out entirely and be reduced to animal naturalism as soon as possible. Such a great disaster would affect humanity if teachers were neglected. He stated further on that the “illiterate public considers teachers wrongly and unjustly, because they do not respect

them any more than goat and cow shepherds and think that their work is nothing more than an unskilled game and therefore are not worthy of bread and water” (Rakovský, 1974, p. 141). Even now we can hear similar statements and opinions about teachers made and held by mainly disinterested people. However, work success depended on the man and I suppose, especially, on teachers.⁶ Caban’s work *Dissertation*, in which he examined the moral question: Can a teacher or professor, released by force, do business with a clear conscience? As Novacká states, its source can be found in the perception of poorly materially equipped schools and teachers.⁷ Analysing the social position of the teacher Izák Caban (1632–1707), referred to the difficulties of teaching profession that, otherwise, has been emphasized, but the real social significance wasn’t often appreciated or underestimated. He experienced it especially when the Town Council and Church Offices either poorly or wrongly rewarded a teacher or a professor for his hard work. Caban’s dissertation reviewed this particular problem within the wider moral-theological, social and economic context of reformation thinking. The first topic of Caban’s dissertation was the understanding of man and his relationship to work (Novacká, 1986a, pp. 461–463). The questions of material equipment of schools (teachers) were an important aspect in the past, but the real problem was the remuneration of teachers. There was a rule that teacher could never earn his living as a teacher and had to earn a little extra by other employment (in public administration as notaries, in business, etc.).

Benedikt wanted to supply schools with equipment for the future, therefore, he was looking for greater significance, purpose and usefulness of schools for the future development of students. Cities were not able to maintain their schools, provide qualified teachers, pay them properly because of economic recession. Misunderstandings, disputes occurred not

⁶ Winter presented the example of Adam Kliment Plzeňský from 1613 who wrote about teachers that they were idle, neglected the youth, incite inaction and all other manner of evil in their immorality and incompetence. When students came to the class, a teacher could often not be found, and, if he was, they also had to listen to his foolish excuses. The Chancellor of the university in Prague wrote a rebuke to all Prague schools without exception in 1599, because everywhere he went, he found that principals and assistants either did not do anything or did something else than what were supposed to do. The angry chancellor warned teachers not to spend their time drinking. In 1620, they accused Prague officers of finding neither teachers nor students during their school visit. On the contrary, teachers were blamed they did not care about their work, were not trying hard and results were very bad at some schools. Some teachers went to prison for negligence at that time (Winter, 1901, pp. 707–713).

⁷ Similarly, Winter stated the main reason for the bad state of German universities was considered to be a salary not worth of professors, therefore, as soon as they found better employment, they ran away from university. Many only became teachers towards the end of their careers (even now we know similar cases – author’s note). It was the same in the Czech Republic. There were many Czech refugees abroad who would like to teach at home, but their salaries were incomparable with their work, therefore would rather stay abroad (Winter, 1901, p. 61).

just between teachers and students, but also between teachers and cities. He had seen old troubles, teachers and students wandering from school to school, a boom in migrating and begging students and other vices (indiscipline, fighting, bullying, thefts, etc.) (Čečetka, 1955, pp. 20–36). Novacká states that Bayer demanded teachers have a satisfactory “pension” (regular salary – author’s note) at that time to earn a living for themselves and their families with no further burden of public employment. Moreover, he stated that schools accused them of being confused, uncaring people, trying to get more money than their worth regarding their material provisions. He presented education in the second half of the 17th century, highly assessed the schools and teaching environment, but also stated that the conservative bourgeoisie led by a not much progressive town-council and church office did not pay enough attention to the development of education, although they verbally greatly appreciated the school and teaching profession, but in actual fact condemned teachers to the search for ‘on the side’ side earning possibilities in order to earn a dignified living for himself and his family. According to Bayer, teachers had the right, the obligation (if school pensions were not enough) to work in other positions while not neglecting their interests at the same time. A lack of appropriate finances caused a huge turnover of teachers, and therefore led to the degradation of the level of education. Bayer, who knew how culture and education are valuable for society, had a vision of prosperous teachers with the funds for dignified clothes and the means to purchase the literature and other things necessary for study (Novacká, 1986b, p. 398). He confronted the social position of teacher with the economic reality. Teachers did not have access to possibilities of earning some money and depended on charity and corruption of town councils and church offices which, of course, thought of themselves most highly, and they, “the superior officers who did not face so much work in one week as teachers did in one day, get ten times or multiple rewards for minimum work as they do for much harder work” (Novacká, 1986b, p. 398).

Likewise, Matej Bel emphasized that teachers need to increase their salaries and pensions in future in order to not be forced to turn their attention and effort they had to spend on the public behalf of the youth, to family and home matters. If they had to care for their family, they had to consider where they would get food, clothes and other resources necessary for life (Gluchman, 2013, pp. 776–790). Hereafter, they either neglected the school where insufficient salaries were offered to them, or the household, which would be even worse. He stated that schools accused them of being confused, uncaring people trying to extort more money than they were due regarding the material provision of a teacher and his family. Further on, he encouraged supervisors and town council to notice whether teachers held their office properly, performed their jobs with enthusiasm and also reinforced duties on those who neglected them or were constantly interested

in other things. Another reason was not to have a town council being forced to look for new teachers annually or after each semester, which caused harm to the youth and an unnecessary waste of money. If school pensions were insufficient for a dignified living and teachers had the chance to leave for better place at the first sign of trouble or at the earliest opportunity, they left the school “to take care especially of their own business, otherwise, they would have stayed longer, providing family matters did not compel them to leave” (Bel, 1947, pp. 447–451). As we can see, the position of an intellectual, a proprietor of knowledge and new ideas, was not trouble-free even in the urban environment of the 16th and 17th century. In spite of the often emphasized fact that the best invested resources are finances invested into the education system and education itself, society was and still is currently lacking the finances to fund it sufficiently.

Conclusion

Thus, in conclusion, I state that many questions and problems related to the position of a teacher in society (to which we have recently made some effort to solve) were also a problem in the past. Therefore, not only teachers but especially school governing bodies need to pay special attention to those problems, because it is of special significance for the later lives of students as well as achieving good moral maturity in future. But the reality is that, more and more, it is not enough to state the problem, but we also have to act rightly and responsibly. This is not happening, especially in many crucial instances in our society. It seems that the problem of schools was and perhaps still is most distant to politicians who do not show adequate will in principal reforms of the education system in which the position of teacher and, in addition, the overall character of educational work could be rapidly improved.

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Overdiagnosis in psychiatry: The complexity of new forms of harm

Šárka Šafářová

Abstract

Over the last few years more and more psychiatrists have started to recognize overdiagnosis as a problem. Overdiagnosis is commonly explained as a consequence of the properties of diagnostic instruments, but the present paper shows that overdiagnosis is a more complex problem caused not only by the validity and reliability of diagnostic methods. There are more factors contributing to overdiagnosis and several actors involved in the overdiagnosis process. Overdiagnosis is a result of the interplay between psychiatry, patients, the drug industry and society. The article describes the chief factors and the links between them, illuminating the participation of the involved parties in the overdiagnosis process.

Keywords: overdiagnosis, psychiatrization, mental disorder, risks and benefits, ethics

Introduction

Clinicians and researchers are more and more concerned about the increasing prevalence of mental disorders, expanding prescription of psychotropic drugs and rising psychiatric health care costs that has occurred during the past 30 years (Batstra & Frances, 2012; Double, 2002; Steel et al., 2014; de Graaf et al., 2012). There are no signs indicating that the trend will stop in the near future. For describing the disquieting trend the expressions “epidemic of mental illness” and “overdiagnosis epidemic” are used. Studies suggest that a considerable number of patients with a psychiatric diagnosis are actually false positive cases whose common life problems became labelled as mental disorders. Overdiagnosis is often presented as a result of high sensitivity and low specificity of diagnostic instruments (Bolton, 2013; Moynihan, Doust & Henry, 2012; Moynihan, Henry & Moons, 2014). Studies investigating causes of overdiagnosis are commonly focused only on diagnostic methods, but overdiagnosis is a complex phenomenon emerging from the interaction of several factors, while a few actors are involved in the process. The involved parties have a varying obligation to follow ethical principles, and there are also conflicts of interests. This article comprises an analysis of the chief factors contributing to overdiagnosis and illuminating their mutual relationships.

Overdiagnosis

Over the last few years overdiagnosis has become more and more recognized as a problem. In psychiatry, overdiagnosis has been discussed and criticised by the anti-psychiatric movement since the 1960s (Bolton, 2013), but has become frequently discussed again in relation to accelerating diagnostic inflation, expanding use of psychotropic drugs, and considerable increase in psychiatric health care costs (Batstra & Frances, 2012; Double, 2002). However, the definition of overdiagnosis is not shared across medicine. Overdiagnosis is defined as pathologizing normality (Bolton, 2013) and can also be seen as a process when a wide range of life

circumstances become classified as medical problems, though they are not diseases in the conventional sense (Winkelman, 2009, pp. 297-298). It is difficult to provide a definition of overdiagnosis in psychiatry, because it requires a definition of mental health and normality. Psychiatry does not formulate a general definition of mental health and instead mental health is defined indirectly as the absence of mental disorder. In this article, overdiagnosis in psychiatry means a process when normal life problems, normal reactions to extraordinary events and benign abnormalities, which can be called non-mental health problems, are classified as psychiatric illnesses. Despite the not entirely unified approach to overdiagnosis, clinicians and researchers agree that overdiagnosis and related overtreatment is a major problem spread in many fields of medicine (Moynihan, Henry & Moons, 2014; Bolton, 2013).

The idea behind the diagnostic and therapeutic process is congruent with certain fundamental ethical principles, namely non-maleficence and beneficence (Bloch & Green, 2005). Non-maleficence (“above all, do no harm”) is one of the most crucial principles and is considered as more important than the patient's autonomy principle. Beneficence includes maximizing benefits and minimizing risks or harm and refers to the obligation to act so that benefits outweigh negative effects. Another important principle, justice, involves the rule that health care interventions should be provided for those who need such interventions and inadequate allocation of resources should be avoided (Beauchamp, 2007, pp. 3–10).

The purpose of diagnosis and treatment is preventing suffering caused by mental disorders and improving health and well-being, however, excessive diagnosis and treatment have serious negative effects for patients and their families, society and for psychiatry as well. Overdiagnosis is associated with waste of public money and inadequate allocation of resources. Wrongly diagnosed people suffer from stigmatization and side effects of treatment, which can be potentially dangerous for their health, and can in some cases become lethal. Generally, overdiagnosis is regarded as an adverse phenomenon whose negative effects outweigh benefits (Bolton, 2013; Batstra & Frances, 2012; Doust & Glasziou, 2013). Overdiagnosis struggles with fundamental ethical principles and, in the context of concrete patients, overdiagnosis, primarily, has direct relevance to two of them, non-maleficence and beneficence. The focus of this investigation is on those factors contributing to overdiagnosis which also promote intensifying the conflict between overdiagnosis and the principles of non-maleficence and beneficence. If this unsatisfactory situation should be solved, it is necessary to map how overdiagnosis occurs.

Overdiagnosis problems in the diagnostic systems

The current level of knowledge in psychiatry does not allow connecting a concrete mental disorder with a specific physical marker or with an

unambiguously detectable or measurable etiological factor. Therefore, definitions of mental disorders are constructed as the presence of specific mental symptoms and syndromes signalling impairment or disruption of concrete mental functions. However, mental functions are widely variable and it is not clearly defined what grade of abnormality is significant and may be considered not only as an innocent abnormal variety, but rather as a pathological sign (Batstra & Frances, 2012), and this complicates distinguishing mental disorders from non-pathological reactive conditions caused by stressful life events (for example, sadness may be interpreted as depression) (Bolton, 2013).

The validity and reliability of two diagnostic manuals, International Classification of Diseases (ICD) and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), has been widely discussed in relation to overdiagnosis. Previous revisions of DSM and ICD were criticised by clinicians and researchers for vagueness and unclear definitions of disorders and the later versions reacted to this criticism by refining these definitions for the purpose of increasing reliability and avoiding overdiagnosing. It resulted in extending the number of diagnoses by creating new categories, which includes conditions with milder symptoms. Diagnostic inflation culminated in DSM-5, that has 541 diagnoses (Blashfield et al., 2014), and ICD-10, which contains as many as 787 diagnoses (Sorel, 2013, p. 39). Paradoxically, the expansion of diagnostic codes, intended from the beginning as a tool to prevent diagnosing of non-psychiatric problems as mental disorders, led to the introduction of new diagnoses in the manuals, whose “symptoms” are more often manifestations of non-psychiatric problems rather than genuine mental disorders (Bolton, 2013).

Psychiatrization of everyday life events has bizarre influence on prevalence. Lifetime prevalence of mental disorders has increased since the 1970s and is recently estimated between around 30% (Steel et al., 2014) and 40% (de Graaf et al., 2012), but depending on the method prevalence can reach even higher values. In prospective studies lifetime prevalence is estimated at around 60% (Moffitt et al., 2010). It is alarming that up to 60% of the population will meet the criteria for a mental disorder during their lifetime. Undoubtedly, the rise in prevalence includes some previously incorrectly undiagnosed cases, but this change inevitably reflects overdiagnosing as well (Batstra & Frances, 2012). A particularly strong increase in prevalence has been observed in mood and anxiety disorders (Steel et al., 2014), which are the categories most suspected of including non-mental disorder (Batstra & Frances, 2012).

The current manuals are not able to distinguish pathological conditions from normal reactions to unusual events, because the context of the conditions is not included in the criteria. The proposed solution consists of providing a general definition of mental disorder and a clear statement what kinds of conditions are categorizable as mental disorders. This may help to

demarcate benign abnormal conditions and conditions characterized by non-mental health problems from genuine mental disorders. A general definition of mental disorder would prevent overdiagnosis and in this respect regulate psychiatric health care, which is in greater accordance with the non-maleficence principle.

Interplay between drug industry, society, psychiatry and patients

Overdiagnosing is not only determined by the construction of diagnostic systems and the process leading to overdiagnosis consists of the use of these diagnostic systems as well. The desired attitude of clinicians is to act in accordance with fundamental ethical principles and to help the suffering (Strous, 2013). Prescriptions of psychotropic drugs demand a diagnosis and without a mental disorder diagnosis the patient is regarded as mentally healthy and cannot receive access to treatment. This rule covers all therapeutic methods. Drug advertisement convinces clinicians and the general public about the harmlessness and effectiveness of psychotropic drugs for a wide range of symptoms by presenting positive claims about their effects on symptoms and diseases and by illustrating their positive effects by emotionally laden scenes with minimum text. The claims are often incomplete and inflated, sometimes misleading (Spielmans et al., 2008). This could result in overprescription of psychotropic drugs and thus harms patients (Spurling et al., 2010).

The rapid increase in psychopharmaceutical prescriptions is alarming and affects mainly patients with mild to moderate symptoms, i.e. conditions with the highest risk of overdiagnosis. This group of patients makes up approximately 80% of all psychiatric patients in Europe (Wang et al., 2007). Care for less severely ill patients with mild and common symptoms is provided in primary care practice, where drug companies are focusing a great proportion of their marketing activities (Spielmans et al., 2008). Most psychotropic drug prescriptions are provided by primary care physicians (Gardner, 2014) and primary care physicians tend more than specialists to prescribe drugs requested by patients (Gellad & Lyles, 2007).

There are strong connections between pharmaceutical industry and psychiatry. More than half of the experts working on DSM-IV had some connection to the drug industry (Cosgrove et al., 2006) and so do the experts working on clinical practice guidelines or medication prescription recommendations. Studies found that up to 87% of guideline authors had connections to drug companies (Norris et al., 2011). However, conflicts of interest are greatly underreported (Bindslev et al., 2013). Some prestigious psychiatrists in partnerships with the pharmaceutical industry are called key opinion leaders (KOLs) and have significant positive impact on drug sales due to influence on prescription habits. The drug industry offers them research grants leading to rapid career advancement (Jureidini, 2012). The drug industry is promoting the idea that many conditions including

unpleasant feelings and discomfort are caused by neurophysiological imbalances in the brain and can therefore easily be solved by the administration of psychopharmaceuticals despite their origin and circumstances (Batstra & Frances, 2012). Wang et al. observed that some patients without symptoms receive treatment, whereas many severe conditions do not receive minimally adequate treatment according to evidence-based guidelines (Wang et al., 2007). One factor contributing to this unsatisfactory distribution of treatment is aggressive drug advertising focusing just on the less severe ill, who are, in comparison to patients disabled by a serious mental disorder, able to seek out mental health services and request a concrete psychotropic drug. Information underlining the positive effects of psychotropic drugs, which is often accompanied by trivialization of the adverse effects, influences the request from patients (Gellad & Lyles, 2007).

Studies provide strong evidence that the actions of pharmaceutical companies do not follow basic ethical principles (Gulland, 2014). Their efforts are chiefly aimed at obtaining the greatest possible profit, not at mitigating suffering and enhancing well-being. The assessment of the benefit-to-harm ratio for patients is almost completely absent. Despite drug advertising focusing on both doctors and patients, psychiatrists are the key element in this process causing overtreatment, because they decide whether the patient will receive a drug prescription or not. Psychiatrists have to manage multiple conflicts between different interests such as: the patient's well-being, drug companies' financial interests, society's balance in financial and non-financial revenues and expenditures, and their own professional and personal interests. The current situation is not satisfactorily balanced, which is indicated by evidence of overtreatment and overdiagnosis.

The risk for exposure to overdiagnosis depends on the tendency to seek help. Voluntary help seeking relies on the person's belief that he has a problem, which is possibly a mental disorder and for which he can obtain effective help. There are differences between men and women in help seeking (Kessler, Brown & Broman, 1981). Public media has an impact on what kind of difficulties tend to be considered to be a mental illness by the public. Psychiatrization of problematic behaviour in children is reinforced by public media. The media is spreading a specific conception of ADHD (Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), which can differ from the psychiatric construct of ADHD presented in diagnostic systems. The media present a specific picture of parental roles with associated responsibilities that includes seeking psychiatric health care for their children if needed (Gray Brunton et al., 2014). In this way requests for psychiatric assessment and treatment from society are promoted. Research shows that the requests from patients have an effect on prescriptions, at least in cases of depression and adjustment disorders where patients requested antidepressants (Kravitz

et al., 2005). The shift from the paternalistic model of doctor-patient relationship and emergence of the principle of patient autonomy and self-determination in medicine results in a greater acceptance of patients' requests (Chin, 2002).

There are more factors contributing to overdiagnosis and one of them is increasing access to mental health care. Consumption of psychiatric health care services has generally increased (Double, 2002). Psychotropic drugs are offered more often than psychotherapeutic treatment even for those with mild to moderate symptoms, despite studies showing equivalent effect of psychotropics and psychotherapy (Batstra & Frances, 2012). For example, in England antidepressant prescriptions rose by 36% between 2000 and 2005, and costs increased by 20% to €100 million (Moore et al., 2009). Similar trends have been observed in other Western nations (Pratt, Brody & Gu, 2011). The proportion of patients receiving antidepressant prescriptions, while having no indication for treatment, was rated between 30% (Moore et al., 2009) and nearly 60% (Cruickshank et al., 2008) of the participants in the studies that were on antidepressants.

The part of the population exposed to overdiagnosing depends on the tendency to seek psychiatric care, which is influenced by widespread popular notions of mental illnesses and the belief that treatment methods provided by psychiatry can solve their problems. Those factors influence psychiatry and results in new categories of conditions, which could be defined as new mental disorders probably requiring treatment.

Conclusion

Overdiagnosis is a phenomenon associated with many negative effects for patients, society, as well as psychiatric health care, where patients experience the most serious consequences. Overdiagnosis harms the patients and leads to misallocation of resources in psychiatric health care and the drug industry is nearly the only part benefiting from overdiagnosis and overtreatment. This is in conflict with fundamental ethical principles and is in direct conflict with the purpose and aim of diagnostic methods and treatment. Moreover, damaging health care interventions provided to mentally healthy, but troubled patients, are presented as medical help.

Overdiagnosis is caused by the interplay between many participants with their own interests and a few other contributing factors. One group of factors is associated with constructing categories of mental disorders and their criteria in diagnostic manuals. There are problems with validity and reliability and with practical usage of manuals. The revision process has been embroiled in controversy by involving certain lobby groups, especially those with links to the drug industry. Pharmaceutical companies also exert considerable pressure on clinicians to prescribe psychotropic drugs and on the general public to request such prescriptions. The drug industry invests in the career development of selected psychiatrists through partnerships. Those

psychiatrists are often invited to give lectures, write clinical guidelines and diagnostic manuals. Certain social and psychosocial factors influence primarily health-care seeking, but indirectly also affects the revision process of diagnostic manuals and expansion of treatment indications.

Despite the fact that overdiagnosis is caused by the interplay between psychiatry, patients, drug industry and society, the main agent responsible for this unfavourable situation is psychiatry. Clinicians and researchers within psychiatry have to start a reform aiming to minimise overdiagnosis by careful revision of diagnostic systems and by proper use of those diagnostic methods. Reforms should also involve greater emphasis on patients' benefits and consider various relevant aspects such as health, psychosocial and financial aspects, when setting a diagnosis and initiating treatment. Fundamental ethical principles may work as a guide, which help to act in accordance with the purpose of psychiatry: to reduce suffering caused by mental disorders and minimize patient's exposure to risks from provided health care.

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The human embryo: Moral status and arguments by analogy

Paweł Jaranowski

Abstract:

The article attempts to present and analyse examples of arguments based on the similarity and analogy in the debate over the moral status of human embryos. It follows the investigation offered by Robert George and Christopher Tollefsen in their book “The Embryo: a defence of human life”. Those authors argue on purely scientific and philosophical grounds that human embryos, from the instant of conception, are human beings, with all the moral and political rights inherent in that status. They provide analogies based on biological evidence designed to support three claims: a) the early human embryo is a human being; b) all human beings deserve full moral respect; c) embryos cannot be used in research involving their destruction. Moreover, they challenge contrary arguments with counterarguments and methodological scrutiny.

Keywords: human embryo, moral status, research – moral and ethical aspects, informal logic, analogy

1. Debate background

Current bioethical work in the field of embryo ethics seems to be driven by emerging possibilities of embryo technology, just to mention research on embryonic stem cells or the so-called “therapeutic cloning” based on Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer. This embryo-destructive experimentation relies on access to human embryos produced for research or obtained as “spare” or “surplus” during in vitro fertilisation procedures. The question about the moral status of human embryos neglected by their biological parents “is a crucial issue – as Hołub points out – for the moral assessment of further undertakings, including in vitro procedures themselves” (Hołub, 2011, p. 111). Economic factors and dominant naturalistic anthropology somehow set the direction of philosophical thinking. The concept of “pre-embryo” may be evoked as an example. Exclusive implementation of the term to humans and not to any other mammalian species reveals the pragmatic genesis of this putatively philosophical distinction (Machinek, 2003, p. 97). “There are a number of scientists unable to recognise the personal status of a group of cells smaller than the period at the end of a sentence on a printed page. Eventually, they agree for gradual protection increasing with its development” (Machinek, 2002, p. 315). Such partial recognition of the human embryo’s dignity is a part of logic of production with all the elements of economic and productive character (Morciniec, 2003, p. 113). In this article I am going to present and analyse examples of arguments by analogy supporting and contrary to this perspective. First, the paper makes some methodological remarks on analogy argumentation in general. Second, it presents scientific evidence concerning human embryology to create the background for further analysis. Finally, it applies the framework of multi-constraint theory of analogy to arguments from the bioethical debate quoted by George and Tollefsen in their influential book

2. Qualities of arguments by analogy

Formal logic development began with the efforts of Greek philosophers and found long-standing fundamentals in the work of Aristotle. However, twentieth century theoreticians pinpointed the practical incapacity of formal logic methods to analyse every-day life argumentation not fulfilling requirements of strict deductive reasoning. Such a position had led to a rejection of serious ethical, legal and philosophical arguments (Szymanek, 2008, p. 14). The well-known phrase “analogies never prove anything” reflects that formal stance, qualifying all analogies as types of inductive thinking incapable of acting as logic proof. The need for deeper analysis of non-deductive arguments has driven theorists to establish a new branch of logics – informal logic. While noting the controversial character of informal logic claims, I will follow B. N. Waller in distinguishing three types of analogies: figurative, inductive and deductive. “The key to distinguishing analogies lies in examining what the analogy is designed to accomplish. A figurative analogy uses more familiar images to help us understand something that is complex, confusing, or unfamiliar; but it does not offer reasons for a conclusion. A deductive argument by analogy reminds us of a principle which (it is assumed) we all share, and demands that we draw a consistent conclusion. An inductive argument by analogy makes a probable projection based on relevant similarities” (Waller, 2001, p. 213). In addition to that taxonomy, I accept Govier’s proposition to distinguish *a priori* analogies, even though Waller and other authors are eager to qualify them as deductive analogies with the hidden generalisation: “The difference between a priori analogy and inductive analogy, as I’m employing the terms here, is that in an a priori analogy, the analogue need not be a real case. It can be entirely hypothetical and may, in fact, be positively fanciful. (...) The merits of such arguments don’t depend on the truth of empirical observations about the analogue case and the conclusion isn’t one which could someday be conclusively verified or falsified by empirical observation. Hence the term ‘a priori analogy’” (Govier, 1989, p. 143).

The specific role of arguments by analogy lies in their applicability to issues marked with uncertainty. When we have no well-grounded theory or transparent rules of conduct, when rules seem to contradict each other or we must decide intuitively, argumentation by analogy seems to offer a solution. Such arguments play a significant role in moral philosophy, shedding light on why we ought to do or refrain from doing certain things which it is in our power to do or refrain from doing (Szymanek, 2008, p. 117).

Theoretically, inductive analogy may be modelled as follows:

1. *A has features x,y,z.*
2. *B has features x,y,z.*
3. *A has feature f.*

4. *Thus, probably, B has feature f.*

Deductive analogy could be modelled as this chain of reasoning:

1. *We both agree with case A.*
2. *The most plausible reason for believing A is the acceptance of principle X.*
3. *B is a case that fits under principle X.*
4. *Therefore, consistency requires the acceptance of B.*

Figurative analogies do not argue for but rather illustrate and elucidate:

“Testimony is like an arrow shot from a long bow; the force of it depends on the strength of the hand that draws it. Argument is like an arrow from a cross-bow, which has equal force though shot by a child”
(Szymanek, 2008, p. 17).

If the audience is not independently convinced that testimony depends for its reliability on the person testifying, while argument must stand or fall on its own merits, this analogy offers nothing to persuade. It is just an illustration (Waller, 2001, p. 200).

As far as a priori analogies are concerned, they constitute a perfect method of argumentation for purposes of moral philosophy being based on fictitious examples and specially composed. They shed light on an analysed situation without explicitly stating the rule of conduct involved in the example. To discover that there are no relevant dissimilarities between the situation in question and a situation from a priori analogy enables us to implement a solution from the latter. This is much easier than revealing the universal rule that might be involved (Szymanek, 2008, pp. 184–193). However, bearing in mind those advantages of analogy argumentation, my view on moral philosophy is that it should always involve the search for fundamental reasons for action in terms of normative theory. It is methodologically indispensable as well: “evaluation of the normative force of an analogy cannot be made independently of moral principles or theories. Without these, one cannot select which elements in an analogy are morally relevant nor determine how they should be interpreted” (Mertes & Pennings, 2011, p. 127). Nevertheless, finding fundamentals is all philosophy is about.

Each type of analogy described above may be used as a counter-argument, which is a critical response to an argument by analogy that reveals a deficiency in that argument. C. Shelley has presented a taxonomy of four distinct counterarguments, namely false analogy, misanalogy, disanalogy and counteranalogy. His proposition dissects two dimensions of a counterargument: its orientation towards original argument (accepting or rejecting) and its effect (constructive or destructive). “Orientation refers to whether or not we believe that the analogy felicitously captures the facts that it purports to capture. We can either accept that it does so, or reject its representation of affairs. Effect refers to whether or not the counterargument leaves us with a conclusion in the final analysis. If the counterargument is destructive, then we are left in a kind of aporia, no closer to a conclusion

than we were before the analogical argument was introduced. If the counterargument is constructive, then the counterargument introduces a new conclusion for us to consider in place of the conclusion of the original argument” (Shelley, 2004, p. 228). Therefore, false analogy is defined as an analogy counterargument that rejects the original analogy and has a destructive effect. Misanalogy refers to an analogy counterargument that, like a false analogy, rejects the original analogy but has a constructive effect. Disanalogy accepts the original analogy, but also supports an additional, incompatible claim. That leads to disregarding both, in the same mechanism as a deduction based on inconsistent premises must be disregarded. Lastly, counteranalogy does not undermine an analogical argument but offers superior grounds for accepting an alternative conclusion, contending (the same as disanalogy does) that the original argument does not represent all of the information relevant to the conclusion.

3. Biological evidence concerning human conception

As Szymanek writes, “the role an analogy may play depends on audience knowledge. The same argument may be perceived as involving or not involving an analogy, depending on someone’s knowledge” (Szymanek, 2008, p. 149). I summarize below information of value for further logic inquiry on the human embryo’s moral status.

Anthony van Leeuwenhoek gained first empirical insight into the physiology of procreation around 1683. Thanks to microscopes he designed himself his apprentice Johann Ham accidentally observed human sperm cells, an observation that was later confirmed by his tutor. Regnier de Graff (1641–1673) described ovarian follicle development. Carl Ernst von Baer (1792–1876) made the discovery of ova and their role as gametes. This progress paved the way for explaining the exact mechanisms of fertilisation. Rudolf Albert Koelliker (1817–1905) offered the first hypothesis postulating that sex cells nuclear material was responsible for heredity. In 1933, Thomas Hunt Morgan received the Nobel Prize for the chromosomal theory of heredity (Brzeziński, 1988, p. 127; Miętkiewski, 1988, p. 284; Seyda, 1973, pp. 221–224). From that moment on there is no biological question about the beginnings of human life and the significance of the moment of fertilisation. Research pursued by embryologists for over one hundred years provides biochemical, immunological and genetic evidence that deepens our understanding of human conception – the moment when the human embryo comes into being. I will briefly recall some aspects of embryo science necessary for further logic inquiries. Ample detail may be found in contemporary embryology textbooks (Moore, Persaud & Torchia, 2013).

Chromosomes are spatial forms of genetic material organisation during cell divisions. Human somatic cells are *diploid* (2N) and possess 46

chromosomes. They occur in 23 pairs which – except the last one in males – are morphologically identical, that is homologous. One member of each homologous pair is of maternal origin. The other, its homologue, is of paternal origin. The last pair is called sex chromosomes. In males (46,XY), the maternal and paternal sex chromosomes (X and Y respectively) are morphologically distinct, non-homologous. In females (46,XX) both sex chromosomes are morphologically identical.

Genetic material is passed down from parents to children by the sperm cell of the father and the oocyte, or egg, of the mother. Those gametes develop in a different manner than every other – that is somatic – cell of the body. In most cell division, called mitosis, the DNA of 46 chromosomes duplicates before the cell divides, and the resulting two cells possess 23 pairs of chromosomes for a total of 46. In primordial germ cell division called meiosis, the genetic material is reduced by half, resulting in *haploid* (N) gametes. Meiosis involves two stages taking place at a different pace in males and females. In males, gametogenesis begins at puberty and continues into advanced age, the complete process taking approximately 64 days. In females, gametogenesis is more complex. It begins during late fetal life when all oogonia enter meiosis I and undergo their last replication of DNA. At birth, the ovary contains only primary oocytes (with partially duplicated chromosomes) arrested in early prophase of meiosis I. Meiosis I is completed many years later at the time of ovulation. The secondary oocyte completes meiosis II only at the time of fertilization.

Fertilisation normally occurs shortly after ovulation (12–24 hours) while the ovum is located in the upper part of the uterine tube (ampulla). Before fertilization can be effected the sperm must traverse the layer of adherent granulosa cells (corona radiata) and zona pellucida surrounding the ovum. Penetration is facilitated by enzymes (hyaluronidase and acrosin) present in the acrosomal vesicle of the sperm. These enzymes are released by exocytosis of the acrosomal vesicle (acrosome reaction). After the gametes are in contact, plasma membrane fusion incorporates the entire sperm (nucleus and organelles) into the cytoplasmic mass of the ovum; the second polar body is formed at this time.

Fertilization provides the third mechanism for ensuring genetic variation in the conceptus. Two earlier recombinations occurred in both parents during gametogenesis. The zygote is now genetically unique and its sex is established. The newly formed zygote is a new human individual genetically distinct from its parents.

4. Ethical reflection by analogy in “Embryo: A defense of human life”

As L. Gillam notes, “analogies need to be carefully considered rather than simply intuited” (Gillam, 1997, p. 410). “Analysing analogies applied with respect to emerging technologies can be of help in clarifying the normative debate” (Hofmann, Solbakk, & Holm, 2006, p. 398), which also refers to

embryo technology. I will now proceed with an analysis of particular arguments by analogy offered by Robert George and Christopher Tollefsen in their book “Embryo: A defense of human life”. These authors argue for recognising that the human embryo is a human being deserving full moral respect. To assess the credibility of that reasoning I apply the multi-constraint theory of analogy developed by Holyoak and Thagard (Holyoak & Thagard, 1995). This account of analogy is most easily explained by illustration, so it will be most useful to begin with an example.

4.1. Arguments by analogy

Human embryos produced for research or obtained as “spare” or “surplus” during in vitro fertilisation are used in Europe, the USA and other regions for derivation of embryonic stem cells (ESC). The actual therapeutic benefits of ESC remain dubious and philosophical attention is focused on the moral permissibility of this embryo-destructive practice. George and Tollefsen defend their view with an a priori analogy: “Suppose that a movement arose to obtain transplantable organs by killing mentally retarded infants. Would the controversy that would inevitably erupt over this be best characterised as a debate about organ transplantation? Would anyone accept as a legitimate description the phrase *therapeutic organ harvesting*? Surely not: the dispute would be best characterised — and in any decent society it would be characterised — as a debate about the ethics of killing retarded children in order to obtain their organs. (Indeed, in a truly decent society, the question would not arise at all!)” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 5).

The first stage of examining an analogy according to the multi-constraint theory of analogy requires matching analogues between the base domain (here the hypothetical situation) and the target domain (here the research in question). The conceptual structure and content of this analogy can be represented as in Table 1.

Table 1. A multi-constraint representation of the retarded children-human embryos analogy

Retarded children	Human embryos
transplantable organs	embryonic stem cells
transplant therapy	stem cells therapy
possess (retarded children, transplantable organs)	possess (human embryos, embryonic stem cells)
require (transplant therapy, transplantable organs)	require (stem cells therapy, embryonic stem cells)
killed for (retarded children, transplantable organs)	killed for (human embryos, embryonic stem cells)
because (killed for, require & possess)	because (killed for, require & possess)

Table 1. represents three kinds of mappings in the analogy: attribute mapping between the simple or ‘atomic’ elements of the analogy (analogues); relational mapping between relations of analogues; system mapping between relations of relations in the analogy. Besides providing a framework for representing analogies, the multi-constraint theory also provides three general criteria for evaluating their coherence: 1. Structural consistency: each mapping is a 1-to-1 correspondence; 2. Semantic similarity: corresponding concepts are similar in meaning (not crucial in attribute mapping); 3. Pragmatic effectiveness: the analogy provides information relevant to the issue in question. All three criteria of the multi-constrained theory of analogy are satisfied by the example above. People who believe it would be morally outrageous to kill retarded children for transplantable organs are forced to concede that it is morally unacceptable to destroy embryos and harvest ESC on pain of inconsistency:

1. *It is morally outrageous to kill retarded children for transplantable organs.*
2. *Our attitude to human embryos is relevantly similar to this case.*
3. *Therefore, consistency requires we do not destroy human embryos for ESC.*

It is necessary to make two points for clarification. This analogical line of reasoning (as every inductive reasoning) is epistemologically open and additional information may modify the conclusion. Furthermore, what information will be included as morally relevant depends on accepted moral principles or theories. Someone in favour of the functional criteria for recognising humanity may stress that embryos are not sentient as retarded children are and that omitting this fact is a flaw in the analogy.

The second example – a deductive analogy – is aimed at reinforcing a previous conclusion: “Human embryo ethics is, in this regard, no different from the ethics of our treatment of minorities or dependents. Human beings are capable of understanding, through reason, that this is morally wrong and unjust to discriminate against someone because he is of a different race or has a different ethnic heritage. And we are capable of understanding that it is wrong and unjust to discriminate against someone because of his or her age, size, stage of development, location, or condition of dependency” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 21).

Table 2. A multi-constraint representation of the dependents-human embryos analogy

Dependents	Human embryos
ethics of treatment of dependents	embryo ethics
characteristics (?)	characteristics (?)
Discrimination	discrimination
base (discrimination, characteristics)	base (discrimination, characteristics)

forbid (ethics of treatment of dependents, discrimination)
because (forbid, base)

forbid (embryo ethics, discrimination)
because (forbid, base)

In the multi-constraint theory of analogy structural consistency requires each mapping to be a 1-to-1 correspondence. Here this requirement is not met, because we face a plural-to-plural mapping in the analogy, rendering its structure questionable. If instead of “minorities or dependents”, the authors referred to “elderly workers”, then a worker’s single characteristic “age” would well correspond with human embryos’ “age”. The result could be as follows: “Human embryo ethics is, in this regard, no different from the ethics of our treatment of elderly workers. Human beings are capable of understanding, through reason, that this is morally wrong and unjust to discriminate against someone because of his age”. Thus, modified argument's structure is now:

1. *We agree that it is morally wrong to discriminate against elderly workers.*
2. *This is because we accept the principle that this is morally wrong and unjust to discriminate against someone because of his age.*
3. *Our attitude to human embryos fits under this principle.*
4. *Therefore, consistency requires we care for human embryos same as for elderly workers.*

The third example continues exploring the discrimination phenomenon with a deductive analogy: “A racist picks out shade of skin as a more important characteristic than common humanity in deciding the worth of human beings. Now, between human beings and all other nonhuman animals, there is a radical difference in kind: human beings, unlike every other animal species, have the basic natural capacity for reason and freedom. But between any two human beings, the difference in color will always be only a difference of degree, a difference that makes no difference to the sorts of beings that each is. The racist is thus behaving radically unfairly toward those he regards as inferior by picking out characteristics that should be irrelevant to moral respect. We hold that prejudice and discrimination against human beings at early developmental stages commits a form of the same error” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 120). We face here a curiously brief argument, which, apart from an anthropological thesis, involves explicitly only one pair of analogues: *racism — prejudice and discrimination against human beings at early developmental stages*. Notice there is no analogue for *a racist* given. Despite its compact form, reconstruction of this argument's structure poses no difficulties:

1. *We agree that this racism is morally wrong.*
2. *This is because we accept the principle that this is morally wrong to discriminate against someone by picking out characteristics that should be irrelevant to moral respect.*

3. *Prejudice and discrimination against human beings at early developmental stages commits a form of the same error.*

4. *Therefore, consistency requires we reject embryo discrimination same as we reject racism.*

The last deductive argument by analogy proves it is not indispensable for an animal to express instantly all characteristics of its biological kind to evidently be one of its members. Such evidence is a response to essays for establishing functional, discriminatory criteria of humanity (Biesaga, 2007, p. 9). “For example, a panther kitten has not yet developed the immediately exercisable capacity to digest meat (an ability that very much determinates the cat's whole manner of living); but clearly the panther kitten is a whole member of her species. The same point — but with respect to sensing and conceptual thought — is true of the very young human being” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 169).

4.2 Counterarguments by analogy

George and Tollefsen turn to arguments advanced by those who favour research involving destruction of human embryos and respond with counterarguments by analogy. The first claim proposes to infer from the high rate of embryo loss in early stages of pregnancy that embryos cannot really be persons. “Some people conclude that embryonic human beings are not worthy of full moral respect because a high percentage of embryos formed in natural pregnancies fail to implant or spontaneously abort” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 137). Proponents of such a stance base their argument on the expectation of a general moral endorsement of the naturalistic fallacy, that is, a conviction that what happens in nature without human intervention must be morally acceptable when deliberately caused by human action. To reveal the unsoundness of such reasoning, we are invited to consider a false analogy: “historically the infant mortality rate has been very high. (Sadly, there are some places where it is high even today.) If the reasoning under review here were sound, it would show that human infants in such circumstances could not be full human beings possessing the basic right not to be killed for the benefit of others. But that, of course, is certainly wrong. The argument is thus a failure” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 138).

The second argument, by Judith Jarvis Thomson, compares the right to life with the right to vote. The analogy is supposed to use knowledge of democracy to base a conclusion about the embryo's moral status: “To be sure, if a fertilized egg is allowed to develop normally the resulting child *will* have wants, hopes, and fears, and thus will have interests, and it will then have rights. But this does not show that fertilized eggs have rights. Things can lack rights at one time and acquire them later. If children are allowed to develop normally they will have the right to vote; that does not show that they now have the right to vote” (Thomson, 1995). In response, George and Tollefsen form a misanalogy: “Thomson fails to note the fact

that some rights vary with respect to place, circumstances, maturity, ability, and other factors, while the other rights do not. We recognise, for example, that one's right to life, or one's right not to be enslaved, does not vary from place to place, as does one's right to vote or to drive. One of the authors of this book, RPG, has the right to vote in New Jersey, but not in South Carolina. The other, CT, has that right in South Carolina, but not in New Jersey. And neither has the right to vote in Great Britain. But regardless of where or when they travel, both RPG and CT have the right to life – and they do not lose it when they visit each other or travel abroad” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 117).

4.3. Critical engagement

I have summarized above crucial biological evidence concerning gametogenesis and fertilization in humans. Despite the significance of this empirical knowledge, some ethicists applying a naturalistic approach suggest that there is no moral difference between sex cells and human embryos (Hołub, 2009, p. 33). However, “as we have shown, the sex cells are not whole or complete organisms; the early embryo is” (George & Tollefsen, 2008, p. 54). George and Tollefsen develop philosophical argumentation based on modern embryology, arguing by analogy that human embryos are complete human individuals — human beings in the embryonic stage of development.

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STEM education as a space for bioethics and moral education

Katarína Komenská

Abstract

The presented paper shows the possibility of joining the efforts of STEM education and bioethics education into one common goal. The paper will argue that there are at least two reasons for such junction: firstly, the complexity of the relationship between science and society cannot be understood only by scientific data and knowledge. Wider societal, cultural, and moral perspectives should be reflected, too. Secondly, STEM education opens topics which are rather disputable and attractive for students. This has a great potential to motivate students and engage them in self-education and development of their discursive, argumentative, and reasoning skills. The final part of the paper focuses on the introduction of DSI methodology, which is one of the models of education linking bioethical and STEM educational goals. This will be exemplified by a presentation of one of the topics of DSI, namely health and life-style related diseases.

Keywords: STEM education, bioethics education, moral education, debate.

Science, society, and ethics in education

Science and technology play an important role in the life of society and the whole of humankind. On the one hand, they have the potential to increase the living standards of people and the welfare of animals,¹ to reinforce inequities, to produce universal benefits, etc., but on the other hand, they can cause extensive harm both to people and to the environment. Therefore, two main arguments can be identified and should be considered while evaluating and reflecting on research and scientific activities: firstly, which benefits would particular research bring to people, animals, and the environment, and secondly, what are the risks and suffering which would be caused to the subjects of research and the environment in general. Recently, this has become even more difficult as these areas of man's productivity and creativity are under instant pressure from economic and political interests. This influences and makes the relationship between science and society very complex and complicated. Consideration of all factors demands a systematic approach which would be capable of evaluating the benefits and risks in various areas of social life (economic, societal, educational, political, etc.).²

Increasing complexity and risks, which research and new technologies might carry with them, demands a new understanding of the relationship

¹ It cannot be forgotten that the aim of science and its new developments are not only to increase the quality of life of human beings and society, but of animals and life in general, too (Komenská, 2014, p. 72).

² For example, scientific and technological advancements have wide economic benefits which help to increase the prosperity of society and the living standards of its members. Technological and scientific stagnation is a risk for the development of society and therefore these aspects are carefully evaluated and monitored, e.g. the European Commission, 2007; OECD, 2006. Of course, this is just one aspect of the importance of science for societal life and their benefits extend the economic level.

between science and society. This should be based on ethical responsibility in science. As Viera Bilasová claims, responsibility in science does not refer only to following the norms of scientists' codes of conduct, but to their characters, morality, and consciences, as well as to the phenomenon of collective responsibility. The latter is understood in two ways: as an institutionalized responsibility with the aim of controlling the consequences and the mechanism of research performance and, secondly, as a sort of general consent (Bilasová, 2013, pp. 111–112).

General consent deserves special attention in contemporary debates. It is a moral minimum of each member of society, which, as it enters active form in public discourse, becomes an important tool for science and performing its responsibility towards society. To empower public discourse on science and its responsibilities, it is important not only to depend on the scientists themselves but to raise the awareness and knowledge of current scientific issues among the general public and to develop citizens' skills at detecting ethical dilemmas arising from them. To be an informed citizen of the twenty-first century, each member of society (whether scientist, expert in IT, or labourer) needs to be educated in being a critical consumer of scientific knowledge. Improving society's ability to engage with scientific issues and their societal and cultural implications requires a basic understanding of the concepts of science, knowledge of scientific methods, and 'how science works'. Despite this being an essential strand in STEM education, it is often missing in science classrooms around the world.

There is also another purpose of bioethics education included in STEM education. This approach has the potential to raise the popularity and young people's motivation to be involved in these fields professionally in the future.³ Currently, there have been a number of initiatives undertaken in Europe to increase the interest of young people in issues of science and technology and to motivate them in pursuing their careers in STEM fields. But there is a need to come up with innovative and on-going educational initiatives which would be capable of referring to these questions in a wider, contextual way.⁴ Many studies show that science and technology classes have the potential to be a platform for such goals.⁵

³ There is a growing concern that Europe will fail to reap the social and economic benefits of scientific research, because of a widespread failure to attract students to the study of science, technology, and mathematics. Many studies have highlighted an alarming decline in young people's interest for key STEM studies and careers (European Commission, 2007).

⁴ In 2007, the European Commissioners responsible for Research and for Education and Culture examined a cross-section of such programs and tried to draw from them the basic features for the best practice of such bioethics education on STEM subjects. The main characteristic of such programs has been identified as the use of inquiry-based science education (IBSE) methodologies, continuing teacher training, community involvement and its networking, creating supporting resources and materials, and measuring attitudes and social impact (Reiss & Braund, 2006, p. 1371). These programs might reach the desired

Moral education and debating skills as a part of STEM

The scope of such education must be connected with ethical and philosophical questions rather than with purely scientific and technological knowledge and data. The study *Education for values and bioethics* (Nunes et al., 2015) supports such claim by showing that bioethics education (because of its multi-layered and interdisciplinary position) can be very helpful for the interpersonal and moral development of students in contemporary, pluralistic societies. Similar arguments are developed by Petr Jemelka in his paper *Bioethical inspiration in teacher training* (Jemelka, 2009, pp. 233–237) and by M. T. Russo, C. Szymanski Sunal and D. W. Sunal in their study *Teaching Bioethics*. In the latter, the authors present the methodology and the goal of this type of bioethics education. This should be primarily based on the moral development of individual members of society (Russo, Sunal & Sunal, 2004, pp. 5–12).

Based on this (and in the light of contemporary culture and its character),⁶ bioethics education has to reconsider and re-evaluate its goals and methods of how it approaches the young generation (together with ethics education in general). I agree with Gabriela Platková Olejárová, who claims that in ethics education it is not enough to emphasize and develop students' prosocial feelings as its principles as it often fails to work in such complex and global issues as the problem of terrorism or world hunger (Platková Olejárová, 2014, pp. 33–40). Prosocial ethics education might be a useful method when considering an individual's moral issues (micro-moral level), but in the global context, when it is difficult to see the answer on the black/white scale, it is insufficient (Platková Olejárová, 2014, pp. 33–40). Therefore, (bio)ethics education should also lead to the development of the creative thinking and individuality of young people who can act and think on their own, reconsider, evaluate and make decisions freely and autonomously, and act in a way that morality and the good of the society will play an important role in their decision making process.

This is supported by authors such as M. Blatt, R. T. Hall, J. Rest, or B. J. Zimmerman. For example, R. T. Hall formulates several main strategies for moral development of children and youths in ethics education. They are

impact and the main goal of such education – to increase the interest of young people in science.

⁵ The international study ROSE – the Relevance of Science Education (2003–2005) analysed the views and attitudes to science of secondary school students (age 15). This research study viewed positive attitudes towards science and technology as important learning objectives in and of themselves. Interests influence future career choices; moreover, the attitudes to science acquired in school contribute to a person's relationship to science and technology later in adult life (Jenkins & Pell, 2006).

⁶ There are diversity and pluralism, relativism, consumerism, pragmatism, non-linear way of thinking, individualism, nihilism, and the feeling of fear (psychological, social, moral), and others (Platková Olejárová, 2014, pp. 33–35).

directly linked to the (self)development of their cognitive skills, for example discourse strategy or rational strategy.⁷ Through these strategies, young people should learn how to make decisions on their own, how to create, evaluate and formulate their opinions, and how to present them as moral arguments in discussion with other individuals or in the public sphere.⁸

Despite these long-established discussions on the models and goals of ethics education, recent studies show that students (even at secondary schools) lack the experience of argumentation and, often, they are not engaged in open discussions and argumentations on relevant and novel topics. A study by J. Osborne concludes that collaborative discourse and critical dialogue with students can increase their abilities and skills to reason and understand issues conceptually. Such practice, therefore, should be, according to Osborne, promoted in STEM classes of secondary schools (Osborne, 2010, pp. 463–466). What also must be considered is, that such attempts in STEM classes should be well organized and structured, so they will offer students opportunities to develop arguments and discuss them with their co-students and teachers and will not resort to receiving classical, monotonous scientific information and data. As has been already stated as well as, scientific data and knowledge, they should explore other arguments, such as social, cultural, and moral, and they must learn how to consider the perspectives society, its members, and further, global principles and ideas.

Debating Science Issues – its goals and methodology⁹

A novel educational model has been developed to stimulate students to both take up the challenge of working toward creative, innovative solutions and to raise their awareness about the striking and often conflicting relationship between science, society and its values. This model of STEM education will be introduced as a part of bioethics and moral education. Despite the fact that it was primarily implied within the project of STEM education for secondary schools, (after relevant adaptation) it might become a useful tool

⁷ This concept of moral education is further explained in the works by Gabriela Platková Olejárová or Vasil Gluchman (Gluchman, 2008, pp. 143–151; Platková Olejárová, 2014, pp. 40–45).

⁸ A complex introduction to the issue of argumentation in ethical decision process is presented by Mária Derajová who, outside of the logical analysis of arguments, pays attention to the language and pragmatic analysis in the context of ethics, too. She concludes that this is the basis for one's creation of one's own attitudes, opinions, and values (Derajová, 2014, pp. 58–77).

⁹ This part of the study is a brief presentation of the outcomes of my previous work which I have published together with Danielle Nicholson from the National University of Ireland, Galway (Komenská & Nicholson, 2015, pp. 218–248). I do not consider it necessary to introduce the scheme and the methodology of the project in detail as it is not the main goal of the study. On the other hand, I find this approach to bioethics education inspirational and (with relevant changes) possible to be implemented at high schools even outside of large-scale projects.

for opening issues of bioethics to students of elementary schools as well as to the general public.

Debating Science Issues¹⁰ is a project, using new, innovative educational tools, developed by the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) in 2007. The main aim is to address the challenges of motivating young people to study science and to pursue careers related to science. Furthermore, the collected feedback from the involved schools, teachers, and students, has also detected a positive attitude shift in the relationship between science and society (Komenská & Nicholson, 2015, pp. 231–232). The project expects a number of schools to participate in a debating competition (as a part of the programme) thus, this will further increase the interest of the enrolled students and test their debating skills and argumentation with a wider audience.¹¹

The main target group is students of upper secondary schools (i.e., secondary schools in the Slovak educational system, age group 15–19 years old). With the help of the project,¹² high school students are allowed to observe current scientific development, what new inventions and research is being carried out at a national and international level, and what sort of issues science has to face (technological, scientific, legal, and mostly ethical). Ethical issues are considered to be those which can raise the most questions and interests among the youth. They are able to capture students' imagination and engage them in the debating competition and, maybe later, in a career in science. Moreover, the designed educational model develops the argumentation and discursive skills of students, as they are directly involved in workshops, carrying out their own research on the introduced topics, and debating competitions, where they practice their ability to build and present their own arguments.¹³

The scheme of the educational program (and the students' engagement in it) is as follow: each of the participating schools hosts a bioethical workshop at their premises. Workshop speakers, who, prior to the workshop, have undertaken training, are known to have sufficient expertise in the relevant fields. The topic is chosen from a list of major topics covered by the project team (e.g. life-style related diseases, GMO, transplantation, nanotechnology,

¹⁰ The official website of the project is: www.debatingscienceissues.com.

¹¹ At least four schools in a county, so there could be a competition among individual school debate clubs and the winning school which would attend the competition at national level.

¹² DSI is built upon four strands. Firstly, workshops organized, which take place at the involved secondary schools. Then, there is a debate competition, Topic Guides, and, lastly, an in-reach strand of the project (STEM role models). A more detailed description of the main attributes of the DSI project is introduced in a study by K. Komenská and D. Nicholson, who is one of the pioneers of the project (Komenská & Nicholson, 2015, pp. 232–233).

¹³ The project also involves working with the teachers of STEM subjects, so their skills to see the scientific issues from different points of view will be increased and they will be able to incorporate this approach in STEM classes on their own.

stem cell research, etc.). During the workshop, speakers use different methods to engage students in the discussions (conversation cards, short movies), while emphasizing the larger societal context of the introduced topics (e.g. life-style related diseases and the limited resources of public health, problem of prevention, or absence of responsibility for one's health).

At the end of the workshop, students are given additional material to study the topic further (educational, research materials) – mostly in the form of the Topic Guides prepared by the project team¹⁴ or reading lists and links to relevant webpages. At this stage, students are left to the supervision of their own teachers. In their free time, they prepare for the debate and poster competition with other schools. It is expected that they are already highly motivated and interested in the topic. This is a crucial advantage of the project because it shifts from traditional teaching on scientific issues and changes learning of facts and data towards direct involvement of students in the educational process.

Besides, such bioethical approaches also improve students' skills to reason, argue, present their opinions, and to actively engage themselves in ideas hidden in the scientific world. It rather pushes students to see the complexity of these issues which demands a larger and more complex perspective. It allows students to open their mind and re-evaluate their views. Students also encounter the relationship between society and the science from the front line of science and they are shown that, as society needs new technological advances, science needs stimuli from society to innovate and develop itself, too.

As has been said, students continue in their research on their own (with supervision from their teacher) or within a debating club established at their schools. Afterwards, the first round of the debate competition takes place and debating clubs from different schools meet to challenge their arguments and ability to lead productive discussions. The winning schools continue in preparation for another round of the competition with a new topic. For this purpose, they work with new Topic Guides, reading lists, websites, and they are also linked with experts on these topics who cooperate with the project team. The process continues until the national round of the debating competition (depending on the number of involved schools), when the Grand Finals takes place.

Debating on health and life-style related diseases

To introduce one of the topics of DSI, the topic of health and life-style related diseases will be presented. Despite it being, perhaps, an obvious

¹⁴ A series of innovative Topic Guides has been developed, piloted and adjusted according to feedback during the years of the Irish, nation-wide project, DSI. Through Scientix, there are several multi-lingual Topic Guides available (some of them even in Slovak). Upon the request, additional Topic Guides might be translated into any of the "scientix-languages". For more details, please, visit the website www.scientix.eu.

topic of health-care and medical praxis, it plays a role in more complex bioethical and scientific debates. In contemporary culture, which is known for the instrumentalisation and materialization of values (Kalajtzidis, 2015, pp. 147–148; Platková Olejárová, 2014, pp. 33–35), health and disease have lost their moral attributes and have become just another source of consumerism. This is closely connected with new scientific and technological improvements such as food-production, genetic modification, new methods of self-testing, prevention, etc. The aim of this topic is to introduce the complexity of the understanding of health and present it in its holistic way. Health (and disease, too) has a moral connotation which should not be forgotten. Health, in its moral sense, is something good and therefore one of the moral goals of man's life. Also, it is an instrument which allows us to reach our other vital goals (Gluchman et al., 2014, p. 1459). At the end of the workshop, students should understand that health is not only the responsibility of public health and the health care system, but it is one's own responsibility to promote and to protect it.

The topic guide prepared by DSI (available at the Scientix website) opens the topic further. The workshop speakers' task is to cover the key aspects of the topic (such as the main target groups, main definitions of health from the perspective of medicine, statistics, or law, and, last but not least, some of the moral dilemmas which arise from these facts). What is important, these facts and data must be presented on the basis of the speakers' own experiences and praxis. Whether the speaker is a surgeon, patient, employee of public health institutions, or sociologist: their presentations should not only be a summary of numbers and objective facts. They must offer a wider humane and socially relevant context – because these perspectives are the ones which their target groups can link and relate to.

After the workshop, students are encouraged to continue in their research. Speakers hand out the topic guides, a list of relevant scientific literature, and links to other useful online resources introducing new, striking issues of health prevention and research. Students, based on their own interests, discuss their acquired knowledge within their debating clubs and later, during the debate competition, challenge them with other schools.

Closure

To conclude, joining bioethical and STEM education is important for understanding medical, economic, ethical, and other striking issues of modern societies. Political, economic, and moral dilemmas which confront society are constantly posed by recent advancements in science and technology (e.g. stem cell research, genetically modified organisms and nanotechnology). Science needs to be understood by students and the general public as an important cultural, socially-beneficial, and humanitarian activity with all its positive and negative moral attributes.

The particular aim of the paper was to present how the goals of bioethical and STEM education can be linked together in one educational model. The model was implemented by a nation-wide project, DSI, in Ireland. It is rather a complex model which demands cooperation with other schools and professionals from the scientific world but, thanks to its interdisciplinary and out-reach background, it can guarantee increased concern among the youth in topics related to new scientific achievements. This model is not only capable of raising the interest of students for choosing a scientific path in their future career, but, in the wider perspective, it can prepare students for public discourse on scientific responsibility within society and develop their moral skills to reflect and analyze ethical issues.

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Dehumanization of refugees in media as a case of moral disengagement

Jan Motal

Abstract

Through an analysis of selected articles, the study demonstrates dehumanization as a discursive strategy which may lead to moral disengagement. The presented analysis shows how particular discursive strategies in analysed texts support the process of moral disengagement in society and potentially may lead to a justification of reprehensible conduct and mass aggression against refugees. Subsequently, this is ethically evaluated through perspectives of deontological and consequential theories and some recommendations are offered. The study follows the idea of media being a tool for the development of democratic values, such as the humanization of refugees and their personalization in individual stories which would present their lives and suffering to media percipients.

Keywords: news, media, refugees, migration, dehumanization, animalisation, moral disengagement, media ethics

Introduction

The summer of 2015 brought a new challenge for the European Union. Facing a humanitarian crisis influenced by hundreds of thousands of refugees arriving to Europe had also become a difficult and unexpected experience for post-communist countries. Despite the fact that countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, or Hungary had themselves gone through an enormous migration of people and had hosted a large number of asylum seekers in the past, the complexity and the completely novel character of the refugee crisis in 2015 has brought the Visegrad 4 countries to the brink of a crisis they have not had to deal with before.

This study presents a small contribution to the question on how this problem is faced by Czech society. The analysis of selected articles from Czech media from the summer of 2015 shows the active strategy of dehumanization as a strategy leading to moral disengagement and analytically explores the mechanisms of this disengagement based on discursive strategies of media representations of refugees. The analysis is interpreted and ethically evaluated from the perspectives of deontological and consequential moral theories and it offers several suggestions. With the help of concepts from social psychology, the study tries to expand discussions on media ethics and theoretical frameworks in it and it demonstrates their application to a concrete, empirical material.

Dehumanization

Dehumanization is a theoretical concept widely used in social psychology which refers to “[...] denying humanness to others, introducing an asymmetry between people who have human qualities and people who are perceived as lacking these qualities” (Volpato & Andrichetto, 2015, p. 31). Its most common form is described by the term “barbarians“, which is a

term used in the classical world and is used to differentiate groups which we are a part of (in-group) from strangers who are members of another community (out-group). A barbarian is a non-civilized, violent type dangerous to those who are civilized (cultured). This concept was used during the times of colonialism, too, when it depicted a savage who was an unsophisticated being inclined to violence, aggression, sex, and criminality (Haslam, 2006, p. 252).

Dehumanization spreads from the depersonalisation of the out-group members and is rooted in a uniform perception of the individuals of these groups (Volpato & Andrighetto, 2015, p. 31). They are not considered to be individual, authentic beings, but only as elements of the out-group. Intergroup relationships do not have to be necessarily driven by malignance but rather by indifference. Dehumanization is then understood as “[...] general indifference or apathy to others' mental states and experience based on an inference about diminished mental capacities [...] People may be willing to harm dehumanized others not simply because of emotional hatred, but also – perhaps primarily – because of a cognitive indifference to them” (Waytz & Epley, 2012, p. 75).

Nevertheless, dehumanization is often connected with an increase in violence¹ and harm-justifying attitudes towards members of the out-group. This leads to worsening intergroup relationships, reducing the willingness to help and support, and excusing violence (even in the form of mass murders). Genocide and the idea of eliminating allegedly dangerous out-groups is often the consequence of dehumanization which allows the members of the in-group to justify their actions.

For example, a weaker form of dehumanization (infra-humanization) may function as a strategy to restore the psychological balance after a violent act by in-group member towards the out-group. As illustrated by a series of experiments (Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006), in-group members infra-humanise victims of mass murder more if committed by another member of their in-group. This creates a feeling of shared responsibility within the in-group and psychological disengagement from it through the strategy of infra-humanization. News headlines about the first of these experiments had three possible forms: firstly, the death of the out-group was considered to be an accident, secondly, it was an accident for which someone from the in-group was responsible, and thirdly, the act was considered homicide. Attribution of human emotions to the out-group consistently and significantly decreased in the second and the third case. Further experiments varied this model and showed that the more the feeling of guilt was increased, the more it was accompanied by infra-humanization (Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006).

¹ It is not only real, physical violence but mediated violence, too. For example, the research team of Broch Bastian.

As shown in another study, dehumanization is a strategy more commonly used by people with power. Because of their status, they face situations in which they have to make decision causing the suffering of others. The strategy of dehumanization can reduce the psychological stress these leaders experience. As illustrated by Lammers and Stapel (2011), members of the in-group (who have the power) dehumanize the out-group more, especially after a tough decision has been made with negative consequences towards the out-group. But dehumanization does not have to cause only direct damage and suffering. An experiment led by Jason D. Gwinn and his research team shows that power itself creates sufficient conditions for the dehumanization of others. The relationship between power and the dehumanization is obvious - which is proven by other research, too. For example, the link between power and infidelity correlates positively (Lammers et al., 2011).

On the other hand, Ariely and Mann warn us about the vulgarization of the relationship between morality and social class (the ruling, powerful class). It is not sufficient to interpret it in its simplified way (one social class is less moral *en bloc*). Nevertheless, the above mentioned research shows that dehumanization is based on the *power* relationship (not only belonging to a particular social class). They show that the strategy is used when the in-group has significant power over the out-group. The strategy is used to reduce mental distress arising from unnecessary decisions, which is also relevant to the subject matter of the presented study.

The extent of dehumanization is affected by how low the out-group is perceived. Homeless people, drug addicts, immigrants: they all are potential objects of dehumanization. Harris and Fiske (2006), while using neural evidence, demonstrate that we tend to dehumanize low and extreme out-groups. As can be seen, dehumanization is not directed to each out-group but to specific out-groups perceived by the in-group as low-low. Most significantly, this goes beyond verbal reports. It supports an understanding of the physiological aspects of dehumanization. Their work explains that dehumanization is associated with disgust (*insula*) and fear (*amygdala*). It is not only indifference but also a type of emotional resistance. Different research shows that people are willing to sacrifice members of low-low out-groups (in the classic trolley dilemma) for the sake of others and justify it in almost 84 percent of cases. "We propose that participants are actively overriding their moral aversion to using another person as a means to an end when they have the opportunity to save in-group members by sacrificing extreme outgroup members" (Cikara et al., 2010, p. 412).

One of the key factors in the use of dehumanization strategy towards another group is also the extent to which a person is connected with other people from his/her social circle; how strong their social ties are. Social cohesion strengthens differentiation from other groups: "[...] the most tightly-knit groups – from military units to athletic teams – may also be the

most likely to treat their adversaries as subhuman animals” (Waytz & Epley, 2012, p. 75).

There are several models of dehumanization strategy (Volpato & Andrighetto, 2015). For the purpose of this article, the wide-spread distinction formulated by Nick Haslam (2006) will be used. He defines dehumanization as a denial of the full humanness of others. Humanness can have two meanings:

- *uniquely human* (UH) which refers to what distinguishes human being from animals (civility, refinement, moral sensibility, rationality/logic, maturity);
- *human nature* (HN) represents what is biologically given. This distinguishes human being from machines (emotional responsiveness, interpersonal warmth, cognitive openness, agency/individuality, depth) (Haslam, 2006, pp. 256–257).

Dehumanization then happens between these two distinctive features of humanness, UH and HN, creating a wide scale of possible combinations. They differ from each other in various ways of applying dehumanization. However, two main forms of dehumanization can be distinguished: animalistic dehumanization and mechanistic dehumanization. While the first one refers to a vertical comparison of people (others understood as sub-human, lower) and to a denial of their UH properties, the second form shows the horizontal comparison (non-humans) and the denial of HN: “[...] social groups [...] may be subtly dehumanized in two distinct ways, unrefined IMPLICITLY likened to animals or soulless machines” (Haslam, 2006, p. 258).

The dehumanization mechanism of refugees in media has an impact on how refugees are perceived by media recipients. Research (Esses et al., 2008) shows that informing people of the immorality of the out-group promotes dehumanization of this group, “[...] suggesting that such depictions in the media may also serve as legitimizing myths for those who are members of dominant groups in society” (Esses et al., 2008, p. 22). Dehumanization leads to contempt towards refugees and to a lack of concern and sympathy towards their life stories and future fate. Therefore, the study of discursive methods in media is important to understand the semiotic strategies used in public discourse as they may be misused to activate mechanisms of aggression and violence among the in-group. In this study, the focus will be put on both discursive strategies of dehumanization and on how they overlap with mechanisms of moral disengagement. This shows that, in the highly discursive structure of media, specific tools for moral justification of reprehensible conduct of members of the in-group are rooted. The media can thus expand the process of moral disengagement.

Refugees in Czech media

Research Method and Sample

For research purposes, articles from the Czech press published in the period of 1.6.2015 – 1.9.2015 have been selected. They are representative cases. The selection process was established using the database *Anopress*, through which individual entries corresponding with the key word “migrant” were pre-selected. The key word was chosen because of its more general meaning in comparison with the more adequate term “refugee”. It was later realized that these two terms were used in the selected articles as synonymous expressions.

The database query was limited to Czech national print media. After the initial evaluation of generated articles, ten articles were chosen for analysis from the following print media: MF DNES (4), Právo (4) and Blesk (2). For clarity, individual articles are quoted in the study as follows; M1-4, P1-4, and B1-2.²

In these articles, discursive techniques are detected and analysed. They are evaluated on how (with the help of language and visual methods) the identity of others was constructed in them. Implicit “us” is understood as the “in-group”, while refugees (in articles often called migrants) are members of the out-group. The study examines which strategies are used in these articles for the purpose of dehumanization.³ Individual segments of the Nick Haslam concept are used as a basic methodology.

Analysis

The articles depict refugees as agents (NH/agency). They are presented as beings that can “get angry”, “rebellious”, or “provoked”. Their actions are aggressive. They try “to vigorously get their freedom”, and “do not wait till the authorities, following legal standards, release them” (M1). Refugees, because of their impatience, stand opposite to the legal system, police, and orderly life. They are maladjusted people who often violate order and rules. One of the articles is even entitled “Bring us rather prisoners than refugees”, which refers to the public attitude of the citizens of Vyšní Lhota, where a refugee camp was planned to be built, towards refugees (M2). Refugees are thus considered to be even worse than prisoners, criminals. Their presence is a threat to the public (UH/amorality, lack of self-restraint) as they are linked to their chance to “move freely around the village” and their unknown and potentially dangerous activities (NH/agency). Locals have mobilized

² M1 (Janouš, 2015a), M2 (Janouš, 2015b), M3 (Palata, Bělka, 2015), M4 (Rambousková, 2015), P1 (ivi, ČTK, 2015), P2 (Plavecký, 2015), P3 (Adamíčková, Königová, 2015), P4 (Zpěváčková, 2015), B1 (Prokešová, 2015), B2 (Mihalik, 2015).

³ The concept of dehumanization of refugees was already used in the past, for example in an analysis of media artefacts (Bleiker et al., 2013) or an analysis of governmental politics (McDougall, Fletcher, 2002). But methodologically, the studies were different to this study as the concept is enriched with the theory of moral disengagement.

themselves against this and have drafted a petition. The conflict between the in-group and out-group is very sharply drawn here.

Article M3 starts with an initial sentence evoking the beginning of a dramatic story: “On the roadside, a man, wearing a blue hoodie, stands up and throws a large rock on the road. A truck driver, who is just passing by, manages to avoid it”. The refugee is depicted as a coarse (UH/coarseness), uncivilized (UH/lack of culture) person who throws rocks and sticks at drivers and who targets cars in the darkness without considering what action can cause (UH/amorality, UH/childlikeness). The victims of the situations are thus drivers. The article implicitly presents them as humans with their own values, representatives of humanity. The message also contains one strong, binary opposition: the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland refuse to accept mandatory quotas for the distribution of refugees between individual EU states, opposing the “childish” (i. e. reckless) EU policy, which is very similar to the childish morals of immigrants in its irresponsibility (UH/childlikeness).

The savageness of refugees is also presented in article P1: “about one hundred migrants (in the Hungarian town of Debrecen) threw stones at cars and battered them with sticks. A special unit (police) was finally able to push refugees back to the camp. “Refugees are described as an uncontrollable mass that needs to be carefully separated from the in-group. Reasons for this are again stated as coarseness (UH/coarseness), instinctive behaviour (UH/instinct), and lack of culture (UH/lack of culture). They are depicted as emotional (HN/emotional responsiveness) and agentic (HN/agency) who stick together (HN/interpersonal warmth). Because of these characteristics (as they are common for refugees as representatives of the out-group), the press emphasizes that it was only a question of time before the first conflict occurred.

Article B1 directly uses the term “hordes of invaders” which accentuates the barbarism and savagery of refugees as well as their uniformity and loss of individuality. On top of this, the title of the article, “They also molest Czechs!”, presents the out-group as something that is endowed with supernatural powers to intrude on the in-group. This might not be primarily considered as a dehumanization method (in Haslam’s understanding), but together with the animalization method they can be understood as standard dehumanization methods (Volpato & Andrighetto, 2015, pp. 31–32).

The refugees are not only dangerous because of their actions but also because they transmit diseases as shown in article P2. Personnel in the Bela pod Bezdězem refugee camp are, according to the report, confronted with threats such as “beheading”, “rape” or “all sorts of diseases”. The image of the barbarian rapist is a complex metaphor of a dangerous animal which, besides being violent, comes to defile us. Rape is an implicit expression of defiling the cultural superiority of the in-group. Only such a brutal act can challenge this superiority (UH/amorality; UH/coarseness; UH/instinct;

UH/lack of culture). Refugees being carriers of diseases, is another rhetoric figure. It is based on the biological strategy – a strategy which shows individual beings as viruses, germs, cancer, dirt, or contamination which need to be eliminated. The in-group must be disinfected against them (Volpato & Andrighetto, 2015, pp. 31–32). In the past, this strategy of “scientific racism” was, in different forms, part of Nazi propaganda or the post-Enlightenment notion of demons.

Article P2 emphasizes another issue: it claims that most members of the out-group in refugee camps are men. Man is a symbol of power and conquest. Contrary to female refugees (with children), the male refugee stands for a symbol of brutal power and a recharging, symbol of man, who takes what he wants – the women, wealth, and health of the in-group members.

P3 informs readers about the potential number of out-group members with which (because of EU obligations) they will have to deal with in the future. The EU is here presented as an accomplice and blamed for this situation (UH/childlikeness). Ten thousand refugees (and even more in the following years) are depicted as an uncontrollable, uniformed mass of people (similarly as in B2, refugees are believed to have large families that will follow them here – which will become unmanageable). Because of this strategy, the out-group is seen as radically uniformed with a lack of personal dimension, individuality.

In article P4, a report on a parliamentary debate about the anti-refugee petition is presented. The opposing arguments (of the supporters of refugees) are stated only at the end of the article. The title – “Thunder in the Deputy Chambers: We do not want immigrants. Islam is a threat”, together with first paragraphs support the idea that refugees are just a uniform mass which is *de facto* Islamic, violent, and follows terrorist ideologies. A similar strategy of criminalization of Islam as used in Great Britain during the war on terror period is used here. The media promotes moral panic in relation to the issue of asylum seekers, race, crime, drugs, and even paedophilia and child abuse. Similarly, as in the UK, Muslims are here depicted as members of the out-group of folk evils (Frost, 2008, pp. 564–578).

Article M4 describes the fear of the citizens of Kostelec nad Orlicí, where a facility for asylum seeker is placed. Refugees, according to the press, “hassle them during the night”, “play fruit machines”, and steal alcohol in supermarkets. It presents them as alcoholics, gamblers, and night owls. This strongly supports the idea of their amorality (UH) driving a parallel with common characteristics of other low-low groups (such as drug addicts or homeless people).

Conclusion

The selected articles have showed that media dehumanize refugees, which is performed mostly in relation to their UH. A horizontal comparison has not

been activated – conversely, some HN characteristics are empowered (agency, emotional responsiveness). All of the UH features defined by Haslam have been detected in the articles: lack of culture, coarseness, amorality, irrationality, childlikeness. It can be thus said that the selected articles animalize refugees (they are displayed as animals) and, in this way, it supports the strategy of dehumanization. The intrinsic value of humanity is decreased in the out-group (from the perspective of members of the in-group). On the other hand, the in-group is perceived as a fully humane community, characterized by civility, refinement, moral sensibility, rationality and maturity. Animalization “[...] reduces the target to subhuman levels, by denying the qualities that define human primacy over other living beings” (Volpato & Andrighetto, 2015, p. 31). This method is well known from the colonial context, too. But, as has been shown in the analysis, it has been enriched with elements of demonization (supernatural powers, monsters) and by characteristics connected primarily with low-low groups (drug addicts, homeless people).

In general, the analyzed media articles present refugees as dehumanized, animal beings which (despite their human nature) do not have the character of human uniqueness. The demonizing element allows an enhancing of the image of the situation and the relationship between the in-group and the out-group as a zero-sum game. This, as showed later in the study, is the main feature of the media representation, a picture based on the irrecoverable conflict relationship between the in-group and the out-group. The only resolution to it is a violent confrontation with the victory of only one of the groups. It is a clash between humanity and sub-humanity, when man needs to cultivate the sub-human (which, due to its demonic character, may not be possible) or to kill it off. From the nature of this relationship, the failure in this task would lead to the end of the in-group.

Limits of the research

It is important to note, that the research is not representative and it is rather a qualitative and interpretative analysis. In this sense, it is not possible to generalize its conclusions. They are the basis for formulating a hypothesis which could be possibly verified by wider content analysis. Similarly, the application of socio-psychological theoretical concepts to media texts has rather an experimental character and, thereafter, should be understood as an effort to explore the possibility of using such concepts to enrich the list of instruments for analysis of media discursivity. A deeper, critical evaluation of this method is not a goal of the study, as it is more focused on an ethical evaluation of the analysed text than on theoretical and methodological goals.

Moral disengagement

The theory of moral disengagement was developed by Albert Bandura (2002) and it is based on a socio-cognitive theory of the moral self (moral

agent). Bandura understands the moral agent as an interactive being. Moral action is determined by the moral agent's perception of the world in the context of mechanisms of self-sanctions. However, it is not entirely an intrapsychic process. In opposition to rationalistic theories, socio-cognitive theory emphasizes the interactionist perspective when moral actions are "[...] the product of reciprocal interplay of cognitive, affective and social influences" (Bandura, 2002, p. 102). Moral disengagement is then defined as a selective disengagement of self-sanctions which is carried out by several different mechanisms: moral justification, euphemistic labelling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility, disregard or distortion of consequence, and dehumanization (Bandura, 2002, pp. 103–108). For the purpose of this study, attention will be paid primarily to those mechanisms which can be identified in analysed text materials. The goal is to describe the discursive strategy which corresponds with such mental states and processes.

Outside the problem of dehumanization, which has been already introduced in the study, there is an implicit moral justification to be found in the analyzed texts. This is based on depicting refugees as dangerous and therefore dehumanized. Violence against them (from the perspective of in-group members) is morally justifiable because of the in-group's interests (its preservation and protection). Basically, it is the same mechanism which is used in political and religious ideology to justify the killing of their enemies.

Another visible tool of discursive strategy, used in the selected articles, is euphemistic labelling which is rather a more subtle instrument. In the analyzed texts, this refers to the use of technical language while presenting actions towards the refugee and immigration crisis: e.g. "protection of borders", "border closure" (M3), refugees needs to be "separated from the rest of society" (P3), "willingness to accept refugees" (P4). On the one hand, the decisions of public administration are presented with the help of administrative language. On the other, the actions of refugees are depicted using dramatic and fear-inducing language. Also, the articles do not reflect the consequences of public administration and political decisions on the lives of refugees. For example, closing borders was presented in a neutral way as a fact arising from legal standards. It is fully ignored that this may cause a wide group of refugees in need who are trapped at border crossings.

A very powerful mechanism, which has been tracked during the analysis of media texts, is advantageous comparison. All the articles used a dehumanized image of refugees as a dangerous mass of thugs. This implies a parallel with the demand/desire for immoral behavior towards refugees which (compared to moral actions towards them) would be able to stop immigration to our country. This is also related to a diffusion of responsibility. News sources often discuss the duty of the state, police, and public administration, and about their conflict with some other EU member states. The refugee crisis is presented as a problem for politicians (whose

decisions are justified by an alleged threat to the state) rather than a topic of humanity – a topic of each citizen. In this way, there is a possibility for citizens to escape from their moral responsibility and to justify their amoral activity (non-activity) as it is “not their business”. For the consequences of their indifference and passivity they do not feel any responsibility. This leads to a mechanism of disregard or distortion of consequences.

The mechanism of moral disengagement describes processes related to the behavior of individuals. With respect to this, their involvement and participation in the media articles need to be necessarily considered. One of the study’s goals is to describe discursive mechanisms in the analyzed media texts, which also follow the equivalent strategies of an individual’s moral depictions. The risk lies in the fact that these discursive mechanisms may be internalized by their recipients. Newspaper articles may, in this way, awaken and support activation of such mechanisms in an individual’s behavior.

Ethical considerations

From the ethical point of view, the image of refugees in the Czech media creates a risk of strengthening mechanisms of moral disengagement and justification of cruel and aggressive behaviour and actions against humanity. This supports a conflicting understanding of the situation in the sense of a zero-sum game. In the words of Roger Scruton, it is a mechanism of totalitarian ideology where two participants stand in confronting opposition: the in-group and the out-group. Only one of them can hold the status of winner (Scruton, 2010, pp. 80–97). For this purpose, one group must win – the other one has to give up. Similarly to the other mentioned strategies, it can be seen as another proof of discursive strategy which can be historically recognized in regimes committing genocide and mass violence (Nazism, Stalinism, etc.).

From the deontological perspective, media fails to fulfil their main role in society which is to promote of democratic values and the harmonization of conflict (to seek consensus in society) (Parliamentary Assembly, 1993). As was pointed out by Larry Siedentop in his book *Democracy in Europe* (2001), the deliberation of consensus based on shared democratic values is the key aspect to the functionality of the democratic environment in the EU. In a consequential understanding, the analyzed articles may support the rise in totalitarian thinking, the justification of reprehensible actions towards individuals and entire ethnic groups, and an increase in extremism in society.

What are the suggestions? Researchers agree that dismissing dehumanization from media is not enough as it is also necessary to promote humanization of those to whom the media refers. A neutral image itself cannot reduce the moral disengagement towards refugees nor does it help to decrease tension and the danger of violence and aggression among people

(Bandura, Underwood & Fromson, 1975). Research shows that if people encounter the suffering of others it may result in the reduction of moral disengagement. The more distant a person is from the personal suffering of others, the more there is a tendency for her/his aggression and disengagement (Bandura, 2002, p. 108).

There is also a demand for obeying the construction of their uniform image. Media needs to bring out personalized, human narrations and to allow their percipient to recognize an individual human's destiny. This has been proven by experiments and research in the field. Some of the experiments show that participants who were exposed a radio soap opera promoting tolerance were able to reflect on the stories of suffering in a more humane way (Paluck, 2009). The outcome of the experiment shows that distributing these types of information among members of the in-group helps them to link with the out-group (Sagu et al., 2015). Intergroup relations between Israeli-Jews and Palestinians improved by being more perceptive to both Palestinians and Israelis in a more humane and personalized way.

Another potential outcome of such media activities may be efforts to mediate contact with refugees who have already become a part of the in-group community. Gaining direct experience with people in ethnically diverse communities improves intergroup relations (Hewstone & Schmid, 2014). Another method, which implies success in reducing intergroup tension and moral disengagement, is support of critical thinking (Bustamante & Chaux, 2014). As Bustamante and Chaux point out, the role of media in this field may be limited. Therefore, media should rather put more emphasis on teaching and educational goals.

Conclusion

The goal of the study was to highlight the process of dehumanization as a discursive strategy in reflecting on refugees in selected articles published during the summer of 2015. The purpose was to link these strategies with mechanisms of moral disengagement and to show that these media texts contain features of justification of reprehensible and violent actions. The paper critically evaluated the ethical implication of such tendencies and focused attention on deontological aspects of violation of universal moral values (significant for media in European contexts). The analysis also formulates a consequential argument showing the danger of supporting aggression and totalitarian thoughts via media. Later, several suggestions were offered which can reduce these risks and can cultivate public discourse on refugees.

The study was an attempt to apply theoretical concepts of social psychology to media ethics while fully considering the paradigmatic problems which might arise from it. Therefore, it is necessary not to perceive it as a conclusion but rather as an experiment which seeks to

enhance the analytical and theoretical framework of media ethics with new concepts and tools. A broader debate on such evaluation is needed, but that is beyond the aim of this work. The study primarily drew attention to the problem of dehumanization of refugees in Czech media and its ethical reflections. Conclusions of the study should therefore be treated with caution, knowing the impossibility of their generalization.

(translated from Czech by Katarína Komenská)

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Consequentialism, humankind and dignity: From Renaissance moral philosophy to Gluchman's ethics of social consequences

Lucas E. Misseri

Abstract

Ethics of social consequences is a contemporary and versatile theory which offers tools to deal with the daily moral challenges from life and science. In this paper I claim that the versatility of Gluchman's theory has an antecedent in the way Renaissance philosophers thought about morals and humankind. Here I analyse two representative examples: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's discourse on human dignity and Machiavelli's State and glory-based principles. Despite the obvious temporal differences, I claim that the common ground for the three thinkers is not only the consequentialist view of morals but also their unfixed anthropological conception. Dignity is a condition of every human on Earth; however, its rating depends on the deeds we choose to perform.

Keywords: dignity, life, Renaissance, consequentialism, freedom

Introduction

The main goal of this paper is to show the relationship between the conception of moral guidelines in Vasil Gluchman's theory and other earlier consequentialist perspectives from the Renaissance period. In order to do this I have chosen two clear exponents of Italian Renaissance philosophy. On the one hand, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola who represents explicitly human-centred ethics based on the dignity of humankind. On the other hand, more controversially, Niccolò Machiavelli's proto-utilitarian morals grounded on the pursuit of glory by the prince and the result of the common well-fare of the principedom.

Both perspectives, the Renaissance one – Pico and Machiavelli, and the contemporary – Gluchman, share the characteristic of supporting consequentialist moral doctrines. These doctrines are sustained by moral values and guidelines aiming at increasing and respecting human dignity meanwhile they retrieve the complexity of human life *via* a less fixed anthropological conception.

The Slovak philosopher Vasil Gluchman has developed a consequentialist non-utilitarian ethical theory. In his research he considered his ethics of social consequences needed a complement of moral values. For this reason he carried out an in-depth analysis of the concept of dignity (Gluchman, 2006; 2007; 2014). On the basis of this concept he was able to adapt his ethical theory of the contemporary requirements of moral agency, but without losing the inheritance of the Modern Era. It is no accident that he started his paper on dignity by quoting *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources* a book written by one of the most remarkable specialists in Renaissance philosophy: Paul Oskar Kristeller (Gluchman, 2007, p. 159).

As it will be shown in the next sections, the concept of dignity – as grounded in human life – was a characteristic feature of the consequentialist point of view of Renaissance thinkers and it is the early modern legacy that Gluchman has kept.

Renaissance anthropological conception: Man as a second god

There is agreement among Renaissance scholars that their researched period was related to a gradual change from a theocentric perspective to an anthropocentric one. John Haldane asserted that the main figures in Italian Renaissance were “Marsilio Ficino (1433-99) and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola. Like Nicholas of Cusa, Ficino blends pre-Socratic and Augustinian ideas about the causal efficacy of love as a universal principle, but then manages to identify this with a generalized concept of man, thereby giving rise to the idea of humanity (*humanitas*) as the primary moral value” (Haldane, 2004, pp. 26–27).

This idea of *humanitas* was essential for the early modern time because it was the result of a new world-view. This was reflected in the liberal arts: in the same way as by teaching *jure* – law, right – one person became a *jurista*, by teaching *humanitas* – the characteristic of humankind – another became a *humanista*. A *humanista* taught topics linked with speaking and writing skills: rhetoric, logics, dialectics, history, grammars, poetry and moral philosophy. From these teachers, what we call Renaissance humanism evolved. As Kristeller pointed out, Renaissance humanism was an intellectual movement instead of a philosophical school (Kristeller, 1993, p. 40). Some milestones in universal history were fundamental for this movement: the fall of Constantinople, the development, by Gutenberg, of the printing press, the [re]discovery of America by Europeans and the Copernican Revolution.

The first fact forced some Byzantine scholars to live in exile and they took some precious books with them and started to teach Greek in Western Europe. The second milestone offered a simple way of spreading ideas, for instance: the book *Utopia* by Thomas More was printed eleven times – in five different countries – in fifty years; spreading utopianism quickly and making a new literary and philosophical genre. The third fact brought tons of gold to European courts and gave a solid base for counter-arguments against Augustine of Hippo and other patriarchs who considered life in the antipodes to be impossible. Lastly, along with the previous milestones, the ideas of Nicolaus Copernicus as interpreted by physicists and philosophers moved the centre of human life from God to human powers. In this context a new idea of the human was developed, a man who gives his own essence to himself (Garin, 1986, p. 67). There is something divine in human beings, and this feature is praised and advocated by Renaissance authors. As Francis Bacon quoted from Appius Claudius Caecus “*homo faber suae fortunae*” – a man is the forger of his own fortune. Or as Thomas Campanella wrote in his

poem *On Human Power*: “so vigorous, in this world man appears as a second God” (Garin, 1986, p. 72).

Dignity in Pico della Mirandola’s thought

As it was said before, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola was one of the most remarkable philosophers of the Renaissance. He tried to join the main traditions of his time –Christianity, Platonism, Aristotelianism and Hermetic Cabala – in a pluralistic theory in his *Nine Hundred Theses*. Paradoxically, the most famous part of his theses is the preface to the very work: *Oratio de dignitate hominis – Discourse on human dignity*. In this short text Pico provided a clear illustration of the Renaissance conception of humankind. He claimed that human beings have dignity because we are different from other creatures. Humans give ourselves our own essence due to we have every attribute other creatures have and, like the Greek god Proteus, we can choose our own form. As Pico quotes telling him to Adam: “In conformity with thy free judgment, in whose hands I have placed thee, thou art confined by no bounds; and thou wilt fix limits of nature for thyself. I have placed thee at the center of the world, that from there thou mayest more conveniently look around and see whatsoever is in the world. Neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal have We made thee. Thou, like a judge appointed for being honorable, art the molder and maker of thyself; thou mayest sculpt thyself into whatever shape thou dost prefer. Thou canst grow downward into the lower natures which are brutes. Thou canst again grow upward from thy soul’s reason into the higher natures which are divine” (Pico, 1998, p. 5). In other words, every person can become an angel – almost a god – or a beast; it depends on our own decisions, our free judgment. The idea of freedom is fundamental to understand Pico’s perspective. One is responsible not only for his/her deeds but also for his/her own essence.

In the Renaissance Christian context some philosophers believed one could be God-like, because humans were created in the image of God. But if one wants to come back to God, join His microcosm with the whole macrocosm – the Second God gathering with the Almighty God – he has to behave as a God. They are the deeds and their consequences that transform a man into an angel, a second God on Earth. This possibility becomes the basis for human dignity; it is what makes humans different from other species. In this sense it would be possible to relate this idea to the principle of humanity: one has to suppose that other people have the same possibility to be God-like, for this reason they have dignity.

In contrast, Gluchman went further than Pico when he wrote: “It seems that the only acceptable answer is that the basis of human dignity is that which they share with other beings and that is life” (Gluchman, 2006, p. 7). He maintains that any life is precious, that life by itself grants dignity. Both authors appeal to dignity, Pico from a mythic-theological point of view and

Gluchman from a secular and biological one. But both of them established human dignity as a basic ethical framework in which freedom plays a decisive role. All beings have dignity but what is most important is what one does with this dignity. For Pico the goal is more individual than social – to become a divine creature – and for Gluchman it is more social than individual – to lead to positive social consequences.

Machiavelli's ambiguous conception of humankind

For some, it may be controversial to include Machiavelli while speaking about ethics. But it is very important to understand how the same idea of the human being was shared from different points of view during the same period and how this idea influenced contemporary ethical theories.

Machiavelli's conception of humankind is ambiguous because it is a mix of pessimistic classical and medieval positions and the idea of people as forgers of their own virtue. The idea of *virtù* offers a hermeneutic key to interpret Machiavellian thought. *Virtù* is not equivalent to "virtue", or not to the common meaning of it. *Virtù* is equivalent to the Greek *areté* – excellence, the best. For instance, in this sense a *virtuoso* is somebody who can do something in the best way, even killing or stealing. For Machiavelli this "best way" was related to decision-making and other such manly attributes as bravery and strength – not only physical strength – because *virtù* is derived from the Latin *virtus* – etymologically related to men, *vires*.

The main problem for scholars who study Machiavelli is to explain how to combine the tyrannical ideas of *The Prince* with the republican ideas of his *Discourses on the First Decade of Titus Livy*. Another key is to think of these ideas in the special context of an Italian peninsula full of small States threatened by bigger powers such as Spain, France, the Germans and the Papacy. For Machiavelli the only way was for a tyrant to join every small State in a bigger and stronger one. The ideas of Machiavelli as they appeared in *The Prince* are proto-utilitarian because every wrong-doing of the prince is justified for the consequences. The prince does not like power for power's sake, he wants power for the glory, and glory comes only if he gets more positive social consequences than negative ones for his subordinates. In both works, *The Prince* and *Discourses*, Machiavelli maintained the same idea: the search for the benefit of the people.

Machiavelli never justified wrong-doings by anybody other than the prince or the lawgiver and this was if and only if those moral exceptions contribute to the well-fare of the people in the principedom or republic. But as a result of his pessimistic point of view he believed any lawgiver should "presuppose that all men are evil and that they are always going to act according to the wickedness of their spirits whenever they have free scope" (Machiavelli, 1989, p. 201). For this reason the prince – or the lawgiver – has to do it before any other person and for the benefit of his people. This leads to both the glory of the prince and the principedom. As he wrote in the

Discourses: “It is at any rate fitting that though the deed accuses him, the result should excuse him; and when it is good, like that of Romulus, it will always excuse him, because he who is violent to destroy, not he who is violent to restore, ought to be censured” (Machiavelli, 1989, p. 218).

In contrast to Pico, Machiavelli combined the social and the individual aspects in the goal of glory. This concept aimed to the “immortal” fame of the prince or the lawgiver, and it could be reached only by providing benefits to the principedom or the republic – and its members. Even the prince can act falsely by lying and breaking promises but his deeds cannot be false. There is no glory in false achievements. Paradoxically, lies were just means to the goal of glory.

Gluchman’s consequentialist non-utilitarian theory

After these two Renaissance examples it is necessary to elaborate on some characteristics of Vasil Gluchman’s theory: the ethics of social consequences. It is clear, after the above mentioned examples that Pico and Machiavelli are also of consequentialist perspectives. But it is difficult to ally Gluchman’s theory with Machiavellian ideas, because “in ethics of social consequences, it is appropriate justice with human rights and human dignity which embodies the principle of humanity” (Gluchman, 2003, p. 10). Machiavelli is close to a simple utilitarianism that Gluchman tries to overcome with his theory, by paying special attention to human rights and human dignity.

For Gluchman “...good is all that which fills one’s life with joy, happiness, comfort and peace, social stability, feelings of security and safety, and satisfaction” (Gluchman, 1997, p. 15). And an “action is right if, or only if its positive consequences prevail over negative ones and if the action is in keeping with the principle of humanity” (Gluchman, 2003, p. 16). So human dignity is a constraint for his consequentialism, it is the ethical limit for the theory.

Gluchman considers necessary a less rigorous theory for facing contemporary ethical challenges. This is a crucial point of difference with such Late Modern positions as Kantian or Utilitarian ethics. Gluchman accepts that mostly there is not enough time for measuring the results of every action – i.e. applying the categorical imperative or making a utility calculus – and sometimes something so simple as the traditional golden rule can help us. In his ethics of social consequences a moral agent is only responsible directly for the immediate consequences of his/her actions, not for the consequences in the long run (Gluchman, 1997, p. 12). This contributes to the decision-making process of the agent and still gives him/her a wide criterion: follow the actions that bring more positive social consequences than negative.

Another central notion for understanding Gluchman’s ethical thought is justice. “Justice is the determining element of good, the concrete evaluation

of humanity and the legality of decision-making and action of the moral agent. We can only perform good within justice. Any other way of performing good is impossible” (Gluchman, 1997, p. 14).

Conclusion

Gluchman’s theory and Pico’s and Machiavelli’s moral reflections share the confidence in the dignity of the human being as an alive being, as a being who could be as rational as a God. There are a lot of theoretical differences among these thinkers; however the concepts of humankind remain so close to each other. Namely on the one hand, a notorious coincidence is this confidence in human capacities for doing right –in a wide scope of the term not in a monist sense— and for contributing to the well-fare of their communities and societies. On the other hand, the value of the results of human actions that are necessity to see positive consequences and measure them –as Machiavelli measured the past facts of history— to sustain his propositions.

The capacity of humankind to be like an earthly God resounds in a quotation by Igor Kišš in Gluchman’s early work *Slovak Lutheran social ethics*: the men collaborate with God on Earth with their deeds (Gluchman, 1997, p. 124). The three thinkers recognized the greatness of human beings in the framework of all the possibilities we are able to realize. That feeling of greatness does not prevent them from recognizing too that our greater gift can also become our worst forfeit if we do not pay attention to the actual consequences of our free actions.

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Normative analysis of human dignity among professionals

Kumar Neeraj Sachdev

Abstract

An attempt is made in the paper to analyse the nature of human dignity in ethics of social consequences especially with reference to the conduct of professionals as responsible moral agents. Human dignity is a fundamental moral value of self-respect and respect for other human beings. It is argued that humans acknowledge human dignity as a fundamental moral value in the spirit of equality and respect for each other. The basis of this fundamental value can be found in the simple fact of just being human. Since we are humans, a highly evolved species, we may identify dignity among humans and may identify the presence of this value in other less-evolved species, too. It is argued further that the recognition of this value leads to socially positive consequences. These socially positive consequences include justice, responsibility, tolerance, obligation and rights. The moral domain of socially positive consequences are inter-subjective narratives of the lives of moral agents. It is further argued that since ethics is a study of values and a professional such as a teacher, a doctor, or an engineer who formally acquires specialized knowledge and skills to use for the benefit of mankind, it makes sense to emphasize the need for human dignity as a value in the conduct of professionals. It also attempts to appreciate how professionals ought to interpret human dignity in the practice of their professions.

Keywords: moral values, human dignity, social consequences, moral conduct of professionals

Introduction

In the paper, the author begins with an analysis of human dignity as an intrinsic value and goes on to include the dignity of living beings as such. It is argued that all living beings possess dignity in varying degrees depending upon their scale of evolutionary development. The argument goes on to further establish two claims: firstly, human beings as rational beings and living beings as such possess dignity; secondly, the possession of human dignity in particular leads to socially positive consequences. Finally, the author deduces from the above two claims the importance of human dignity for professionals in the practice of their professions.

Human dignity

Human Dignity is a fundamental moral value of assigning self-respect and respect for other human beings. Values are beliefs assigning importance to something material or non-material such as human dignity, equality, esteem, integrity, objectivity, care, and impartiality. Some values are inherent in human beings such as dignity and some values are acquired values such as equality, respect and esteem. Vasil Gluchman, who holds such a view, maintains, "...equality is not a quality or value that we can possess at our will; others must give it to us. This means that equality is not a value that living creatures are born with, but it is an acquired value that they get from other subjects that believe them to be equal" (Gluchman, 2006, p. 7). In a

similar vein he continues, “It is only others that can give us both respect and esteem since we are not born with them” (Gluchman, 2006, p. 7).

However, the source of acquired values remains in those values which are inherent. The reason, for instance, for ascribing equality to other human beings emerges from the fact that humans possess dignity. Some values are inherent in humans because human beings are living beings regardless that they are rational beings. That they are rational beings implies that they can give reasons for their actions and they can ascribe reasons for others’ actions; they can assess, calculate, plan and work for their ends. And the realization of such a rational stance in oneself and others leads to one’s experience of moral values especially dignity in oneself.

Immanuel Kant, one of the best philosophical minds engaged in the defence of human dignity, goes a step further and asserts that a rational being has dignity in living the life of a moral being. He argues, “in the kingdom of ends everything has either a price or a dignity. If it has a price, something else can be put in its place as an equivalent; if it is exalted above all other prices and so admits of no equivalent, then it has a dignity... morality is the only condition under which a rational being can be an end in himself; for only through this is it possible to be a law-making member in a kingdom of ends. Therefore, morality, and humanity so far as it is capable of morality, is the only thing which has dignity” (Kant, 2005, pp. 113–114).

Basis of human dignity

It is thus argued that humans acknowledge human dignity as a fundamental moral value in a spirit of equality and respect for each other. The basis of this fundamental value can be found in the fact of being human. Since we are humans, a highly evolved species, we may identify dignity among humans and may identify the presence of this value in other less-evolved species, too. Other living beings may not be fully aware of the presence of dignity in their existence but they do reflect self-respect and respect for other beings on a scale of evolutionary development. Gluchman contends, “If the very fact of the existence of human life is enough to assign human dignity to human beings, then also other forms of life deserve to be assigned dignity. We have to accept, then, that also animals and plants have their dignity because they are living organisms, and we could continue in an endless listing of all life forms that, if we follow the logic of this argument, should have their dignity” (Gluchman, 2006, p. 11).

And in different proportions they appear to reflect the value of dignity in protection of one’s existence and the existence of others. “The actual degree of dignity that belongs to individual life forms depends on the level of their development and on their position on the evolutionary scale. To express this (at least approximately) in mathematical terms, we can say that the degree of dignity in cases of individual life forms moves, for example, on a scale of between 0.0001 and 1. The number 0.0001 reflects the degree of dignity of

single cell organisms and 1 reflects the degree of dignity that belongs to human beings” (Gluchman, 2006, p. 12).

Here it may be noted that whether dignity is viewed through the fact that human beings are living beings or the claim that human beings are rational beings, there is compatibility in both views owing to the distinct emphasis on the evolutionary scale. If the top of the evolutionary scale exclusively is taken into account then the Kantian view of rational beings acting morally sounds meaningful and if the entire spectrum of the evolutionary scale is considered then the all living organisms may be counted in assigning degrees of dignity.

Human dignity and social consequences

It may be further argued that the recognition of dignity especially human dignity as a value leads to socially positive consequences. Socially positive consequences may be distinguished from utilitarian consequences because the latter involves calculation of lower pleasures or higher pleasures in judging the moral worthiness of human actions (Mill, 1993). Socially positive consequences include justice, responsibility, tolerance, obligation and rights, which are referred to in the recognition of human dignity as such irrespective of their connection with any such calculation.

These socially positive consequences are intimately connected to recognition of human dignity because recognition of human dignity demands moral equality. In this connection Gluchman, while echoing a Kantian tone, argues in a Kantian way, “I think that human dignity means above all to apprehend other persons as equivalent to oneself, regardless of gender, race, outlook or religious confession. The fundamental definition of human dignity follows the moral equality of all human beings that is deduced from the nature of human life. It means that respect for human dignity includes intrinsically positive social consequences following moral equality” (Gluchman, 2007, p. 161). In the same Kantian tone, Gluchman further asserts that “...moral equality has to be confirmed by the moral agent’s actions” (Gluchman, 2007, p. 161). This implies that actions of moral agents reflect the acceptance of the claim of fundamental respect for oneself and others.

The domain of socially positive consequences is the inter-subjective narratives of the lives of moral agents. The actions of moral agents are embedded in their lives and the lives of moral agents are entwined in such a manner that mutual recognition of human dignity appears to be an imperative for socially positive consequences. Justice, for example, is a result of mutual respect of human dignity in the performance of actions of moral agents.

Human dignity in the conduct of professionals

Since ethics is a study of values and a professional such as a teacher, a doctor, or an engineer who formally acquires specialized knowledge and skill to use for the benefit of mankind, it makes sense to emphasize the need for human dignity as a value in the conduct of professionals. In other words, it makes sense to appreciate how professionals ought to interpret human dignity in the practice of their professions.

The need to make sense of dignity as a value in the conduct of professionals is well-connected to the fact that a professional is assumed to possess intellectual ability through extensive training to give advice or service rather than material things in his field of expertise in a spirit of service to mankind in the world (Bayles, 2003, pp. 56–62). Correspondingly, the understanding and reflection of dignity in good human life makes sense in every sphere of life but it calls for a special sense of self-respect and respect for others that assumes a level of overriding character in the conduct of professionals. In a situation of conflict in the work life of an engineer, for example, between an obligation to earn profit for the company and an obligation to spend money to reduce air pollution obviously demands a preference for the latter. The preference is guided by the stance of dignity in the conduct of an engineer wherein he gives preference to all living beings over profit for the company.

It further implies that we humans happen to play many given or adopted roles but the role of a professional has to have an edge over other roles be that of a friend or a room-mate or a brother. The role of a professional entails a set of obligations to a society, the world, the whole of mankind or the planet Earth itself. In accord with this set of obligations professionals ought to acknowledge dignity as a value to protect the lives of all beings. And it is understandable that since he has the expertise and the duty to provide service to mankind in the world, he ought to cultivate this value in him to provide his expertise to other human beings in their effort to protect living beings.

He ought to be disposed to act like an exemplar in his area of expertise. For instance, an engineer is not expected to design unsafe bridges for the sake of earning profits for his employer and still on a higher plane we may contend that he is not supposed to design or participate in the design of a vehicle that is detrimental to the environment. He must keep in mind the whole spectrum of dignity of all living beings and act in a protective spirit of oneness.

Similarly, a scientist is not supposed to use chemicals that are harmful to living beings. Instead, he ought to be disposed to be sensitive to the lives of all beings on the planet and thus may do research on making chemicals that are least harmful to living beings on the planet.

On the whole, we may contend that since professionals are experts in their area of specialization, they are well expected to acknowledge dignity

in themselves and other living beings. That is to say, they ought not harm living beings by way of their personal or professional conduct. Instead they ought to develop their understanding of dignity to devise ways and means in their professional practices to protect the lives of all beings on the planet.

Concluding remarks

Human dignity is an important value in protecting living beings by way of according respect to oneself and other living beings. And the natural urge to live a good human life leads a professional to acknowledge the need to realize dignity as a value in his conduct. And since, the practice of a profession implies the acquisition and application of knowledge in a formal setup for the well-being of not only humans but the whole planet Earth itself, the cultivation of dignity as a value enables a professional to think in a morally responsible manner and act in a protective spirit of oneness with all living beings for the sake of the whole of mankind and the planet Earth itself.

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War, terrorism, justice and the ethics of social consequences

Lukáš Švaňa

Abstract

The paper deals with a possible application of the principles of just war theory and ethics of social consequences to the phenomenon of terrorism. Its primary goal is to present various implications that follow from my methodological approach i.e. ethics of social consequences as a form of non-utilitarian consequentialism. I will try to answer some of the burning questions of modern times which we have to face. It is in my interest to make a distinction between real acts of terrorism and terrorism mediated by mass media, as I perceive it as two incompatible notions. My aim is to present the issues objectively and from an ethical point of view operating with values and principles of humanity, human dignity, moral laws, justice, etc. Attaining a critical reflection and standpoint towards these issues is also one of the objectives of the proposed paper. Various modifications and reformulations of some of the principles of just war theory will be presented as I feel the need to revitalize the principles in order to guarantee their effectiveness, objectivity and plausibility in modern times.

Keywords: war, terrorism, just war theory, ethics of social consequences

Introduction

War and terrorism are global phenomena which exclusively demand our immediate attention and critical reflection. These post-modern times repeatedly bring us new and unanswered questions, problems and dilemmas that should be of our primary interest. And this situation requires our theoretical reflection on terrorism as it is not an entirely new phenomenon of human experience, but its gradual transformation to an indefinable and vague phenomenon is a clear and unmarginalizable signal for this specific need. As said above, terrorism itself is not anything new. New is just its current form, devious character, uncontrolled and unchecked usage of the term itself and the means it uses to attain its goals.¹ And as the number of terrorist attacks rapidly grows and civilians are more often becoming its target group, we need to condemn such crimes and express our definite and absolute standpoint towards them. Josef Fiala in his futurological and philosophical reflections writes: “There have been violence, killing, slaughtering, aggression and terrorism in every era of human history, but in the 20th century, these outrageous and inhumane actions are on their rise. People got used to and became to tolerate the cruelty, murdering and massacres mainly with the help from the purpose-built actions of the media”

¹ Whether these goals are of religious, political, economical, ideological and/or any other nature, seems to be an irrelevant fact as in my personal opinion, the kind of goal that is desired to be achieved does not have any noticeable effect on the means used to achieve it. Therefore, it is not possible to identify the particular goals of terrorism with particular means of terrorism. Vice versa, the violent means used do not directly imply the expected and desirable goals.

(Fiala, 2005, p. 98). The 21st century brings no difference in terms of the atrocious suffering of innocent people. New forms of terrorism are on their rise, not only with new ways of killing civilians, but with an entirely new scale of unknown problems, which have to be interpreted correctly.

This paper focuses on possible reactions to this global, floating phenomenon and their adequateness, efficiency, relevancy and (or) their justifiability. At the same time, it searches and examines these responses and reactions having respect to the values of humanity, human dignity, moral laws, etc. I will try to present the methodological background of ethics of social consequences² as it can be perceived as a possible resource of our thinking within ethical and moral boundaries. I will also try to present its connection to just war theory as it can be observed that the theory itself seems to be one of the most applicable methodologies in the case and that an effort to apply its rules, preconditions and regulations is the accurate method of desired and complex comprehension. The problem is situated around the evil side of man as well as of his failure to accurately respond following the basic (moral) criteria of the theory. It should be a task of our primary interest to minimize these destructive forces in any society, as the rapid growth of problems accompanying the current development in social, political and economic spheres brings us to the question of eliminating the causes. The contemporary situation (on a global scale) does not allow us to eliminate the causes,³ and therefore we must strive to minimize the negative consequences that are produced every day.

Among these questions, there is one which I perceive as a fundamental question, dealing with the appropriate, effective, just, as well as moral and right use of violence. The questions are: Are there any conditions in which a violent act is fully permitted as a response to evil (e.g. terrorism) and/or as an instrument for achieving moral good in terms of positive social consequences? These outcomes should, in its quality, prevail over this violent act and its explicit but permitted evil. These positive social consequences should also represent a qualitatively better situation than the state prevailing without the use of this explicit violent act (or acts if there is need for more).

² Ethics of social consequences is a theory developed by Vasil Gluchman in which he tries to deal with practical issues of our everyday life and to find relevant criteria for evaluating human actions, thinking and decision-making. It is a form of non-utilitarian consequentialism and it can be characterized as a dynamic an open system allowing further modifications and/or implications to almost any kind of problem, dilemma or situation in ethics as well as in applied ethics (bioethics, business ethics, etc.). Some of his followers try to apply this methodological basis to these various spheres and it is a part of my research to find out its applicability in questions of war, violence and terrorism. The theory has a wide range of sympathizers and they form an integrated and productive team at the Institute of Ethics and Bioethics of the University of Prešov (Slovak Republic).

³ This subjective assumption is based on many facts, but it is primarily oriented to our incapability of finding and adequate and objective definition of terrorism or any other kind of explanation.

The doctrine of double effect

Throughout the history of mankind, there have been many attempts to answer these questions and the issues of using necessary evil in order to achieve the desired and just goals. One of these attempts can be clearly visible in *the doctrine of double effect* presented by Thomas Aquinas. We should definitely bear in mind the historical circumstances⁴ that had an immense impact on creating these regulations of human behaviour and actions. The doctrine itself, in some ways, contributed to the development of just war theory as they both share some fundamental ideas. It clearly demonstrates the conditions that have to be met in order for an evil act to be allowed and is, at the same time, just in its nature. The principles stated in the doctrine approve the use of such kind of (evil) acts only if their good intentions and motives anticipate these acts and only if the eventual evil effect is necessary and indirect. There are also some more concrete conditions for such act: “1. The act itself must be morally good or at least indifferent. 2. The agent may not positively will the bad effect but may permit it. If he could attain the good effect without the bad effect he should do so. The bad effect is sometimes said to be indirectly voluntary. 3. The good effect must flow from the action at least as immediately (in the order of causality, though not necessarily in the order of time) as the bad effect. In other words the good effect must be produced directly by the action, not by the bad effect. Otherwise the agent would be using a bad means to a good end, which is never allowed. 4. The good effect must be sufficiently desirable to compensate for the allowing the bad effect” (Connell, 1967, p. 1021).

The most essential criteria for a correct evaluation of an act is, therefore, the intention of a moral subject, consent of the moral subject, and consequences following an act of the moral subject. I will primarily operate with these notions as they are crucial for the assessment of any act within the scope of ethics and morality. It is my intention to identify and reflect on these questionable spheres, partly with the use of ethics of social consequences serving as my methodological standpoint. Just war theory is a concept composed out of the two, *prima facie*, contradictory terms – justice and war. Can war be just? Can war be just in the 21st century? Isn't it obvious that the two terms used – war and justice – are incompatible and never to be used in a single notion? What is the role of justice in the violent conflicts of our era? Can ethics of social consequences provide at least a valid objection to the principles mentioned above that usually serve as a starting point in just war theory? These are just some of the questions that I am trying to face in this paper with the aim of finding at least some of the

⁴ It is not hard to understand that medieval times were dark times, indeed. It was an age of never-ending conflicts, explicit violence, human greed, arrogance and many other human vices that contributed to the general criticism of these harsh times.

answers, even if it is anticipated that they will be situational and moderately relativistic. Ethics of social consequences is based on a situational approach in evaluating the actions and behaviour of a moral subject, but I will refer to this condition later on.

In every war and in every terrorist attack, people are killed whether the reason of their killing is of religious, ideological or political nature. These deaths and suffering are not meant to be overlooked. I am now reconsidering the previous statements I made in one of my previous papers (Švaňa, 2012a; 2012b), when I stated that violence, wars and terror are a part of our everyday existence and experience so much that these horrible acts are being apparently overlooked and underestimated as they are not related to us - as human beings in any possible way. We should condemn these activities that are primarily responsible for the negative social consequences that follow. I now realize that there definitely is a direct responsibility to adopt an unshakable and undeterred attitude and that this attitude should be derived from our allegiance to mankind. The above statement should be supplemented with “directly related in any possible way”.⁵ To close our eyes and to idealize the world in which we live in is an option, but we will not eliminate the fact that alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, bombing in Oklahoma, London or Madrid, etc. are of no concern or bring no effect to our peaceful existence. Doing so is just another source of evidence that real terrorism has achieved its goals – putting the world of man into combat, disorder, fear and chaos. And this seemingly hopeless situation can occur only if we won’t strive for the truth and for answers explicitly related to these issues. Consecutive application of the attained answers into practice is then only a matter of appropriate timing and correct decision-making process.

My aim in the proposed paper is to encourage its potential reader to critically think about terrorism based on the fact that we are all witnesses to blood conflicts in some parts of the world and these horrible actions are often overlooked and ignored by the majority. Therefore any reflections of these issues by a “legitimate authority”, are accepted and taken for granted. The irony lies in my claims that these legitimate authorities ruling in any part of the world are usually the cause and blameworthy for these actions. This paper is not a defence of terrorism or any other similar actions, but it rather focuses on achieving critical, objective and emotion-free thinking, which is an uneasy task to do, as we are confronted daily with many manifestations of our aggressive and evil part primarily, but often very improperly, associated with terrorism.

Just war, as stated above, is not a new theory. “The tradition – having flourished in the Middle Ages and reached its zenith in the sixteenth and

⁵ In fact, this presupposition is valid only when we have never been directly or indirectly involved in any type of violent conflict, war or an act of terrorism. It is evident that people involved in such cases are definitely directly related to these terrible acts.

seventeenth century – had been largely lost until its rediscovery in the second half of the twentieth century” (Fisher, 2011, p. 1). Therefore it needs revision and modification in terms of its usefulness, effectiveness and applicability. There are two reasons for this: since its rediscovery, it has often been used to justify almost any use of violence approved by some legal authority and on the other hand, it hasn’t been used to justify some violent actions which should be an object of such justification. In essence, it is a doctrine of military ethics consisting of principles claiming and demanding that every war conflict must fulfil certain restraints in order to be just and therefore allowed and approved of. They define conditioned usage of violence and they strictly specify its quantity, methods used and goals. The principles fall under two categories. *Ius ad bellum* is a set of these principles/criteria that are to be consulted before waging a war and *ius in bello* is a set of criteria for waging a war.⁶ Most of these principles overlap the distinction between the two categories and the majority of them can be found in the works of contemporary authors⁷. In the following paragraphs, I will present my comprehension of the principles, its implications as well as some modifications to the theory so often misused and misinterpreted. And as the circumstances of war have been changing rapidly, so have the practical interpretations of the theory. With the use of the ethics of social consequences, it is my effort to reconsider some of the principles of just war theory and its (mis)use for achieving goals strictly limited to a particular nation, society or an individual.

Ethics of social consequences and the principles of just war theory

In this part of the article, I will try to analyse the principles of just war theory and their possible connection with and evaluation from the perspective of ethics of social consequences in order to determine their mutual relationship. The goal is to find certain connections as well as possible disputes between these two approaches.

1. The principle of last resort demands the use of violence, military intervention, declaring war, etc. only if these actions are performed as the last possible option and only after depleting all previously possible actions like negotiations, documents and resolutions, sending international observers, etc. Therefore we should evade using violent actions and possibly save them as the last resort. Should all previous actions fail, we are permitted as well as morally obliged to use force and violence. This obligation is sometimes considered to be our moral duty to step in and thus

⁶ Nowadays, many authors propose the idea of introducing a third category of these criteria, which should consult issues like judging war criminals, restoration of the post-war state, post-war settlement, etc. The Latin phrase used for this set of criteria is *ius post bellum*.

⁷ Among them the most influential figures for my research are: Thomas Kapitan, Michael Walzer, David Fisher, Charles Guthrie, Michael Quinlan and others (Fisher, 2011; Guthrie & Quinlan, 2007; Kapitan, 2007; Walzer, 1977).

eventually protect innocent lives, which are the most common, but on the other hand the most unwanted and unacceptable target in almost every blood conflict. Charles Guthrie and Michael Quinlan emphasize that the meaning of the word *last* should be interpreted as *the least preferred*. It should consist of acts that are about to bring more good and they are aware of the fact that time could be an enemy and timely military intervention might achieve that goal. Understanding the word *last* as final and aftermost carries the danger of a late action that is usually more expensive, more difficult and might not be able to minimize negative social consequences in time. The Balkan war serves as an example of non-action of the international community with many lost lives of innocent people (Guthrie & Quinlan, 2007, p. 33). It seems obvious that the acts of terrorism do not fulfil this first condition as they use force and violence as their weapon in the first place and without any other previous attempts to solve things in a peaceful, unforced way. The important question that has to be asked in the first place is: Are there always such possibilities of solving things in a peaceful and non-violent way? Usually, an act of terrorism is an act of the last and the only resort. Very often, there are no other alternatives than to use force and violence as a means of calling attention to, e.g., existing social injustices, crimes committed by the government, etc. The situational relativism approach is very important here. This approach is an integral part of the ethics of social consequences and its post-evaluation of the actions, behaviour and decision-making of a moral subject. This position serves as a precondition for enabling us to recognize and distinguish between a real act of terrorism during which many innocent people die in vain and an act that is the last resort to draw attention to a dictatorial and totalitarian regime not respecting and adhering to human rights, human dignity and/or other values of human life. Different cases are to be treated differently.

2. The principle of legitimate authority states that war is just only if it has been declared and waged by some kind of legal authority. Even if there are just causes, they cannot be an object of a reaction from individuals or groups that do not represent any legitimate and approved authority. The question is: Who can be considered to be a legitimate authority and under which circumstances? Noel J.J. Farley in his paper *Can war be morally justified?* asks some fundamental questions relating to this concept: “Can there be exceptions to this doctrine of legitimate authority? What happens when legitimate authority fails to meet its obligations to its citizenry, both in the domestic and foreign realms? What happens when one state instigates incursions into the territories of others to pursue the conquest of their space and the conquest of others? What happens when a corrupt government protects rather than prosecutes its friends who in the pursuit of self interest behave as rogues, confiscate or injure the property of other fellow citizens?” (Farley, 2004, ¶9).

Primarily it is the identification of the legitimate authority in a particular society that represents the problem of our primary concern. My proposition lies in a replacement of the term legitimate authority with the term moral authority. I am aware of the fact that this can create many other problems, as it is, e.g., with and identification of moral authority within a particular society, but it is also based on one fundamental assumption i.e. that moral authority (whether more easily identified or not) stands as a guarantee that it disposes of some essential moral values included in moral principles that it accepts and acknowledges. The promising vision is in, my expectation, that rational people in any particular society can come to an agreement of whom is to be assigned the status of moral authority. This is based on the fact that it will be an individual or a group of individuals that do not act out in accordance with principles of humanity, human dignity, moral laws, justice, tolerance, etc. This is also based on the “distinction” we make in ethics of social consequences when we generally divide moral subject into two groups. The first group consists of grouped moral subjects acting primarily in accordance with habits, traditions and mores and his reasoning model can be characterized as a passive practical comparative model of moral thinking. The second (smaller) group is built by reflexive moral subjects who do not act spontaneously, are capable of reflection as well as of creation and selection of own moral principles and his reasoning model can be characterized as active analytical model of moral thinking. The groups represent an option of how to behave and act, not a clear-cut distinction between people (Gluchman, 2005, pp. 40–50).

It is therefore possible to accept that a society or an organization consisting of reflexive moral subjects (exclusively or as a majority), who represent a majority in this particular society, can be possibly perceived as moral authority and therefore the evil actions that they commit are not to be considered as acts of terrorism, but as acts of just war. On the other hand, crimes committed by a legitimate authority might be properly and without any hesitation considered to be terrorism. Unfortunately, I have to admit that a society in which the dominating type is the reflexive moral subject is a utopian idea. Even in the modern times of the 21st century in which individualism and personal liberties are on the rise on a global scale, it remains a fact that despite these positives, there is a global tendency for a moral subject to be fully subordinated to the principles of others i.e. the principles of their religion, cultural tradition, nation, or society in which they spend most of their lives. Mostly, these principles are not bad, but in a permanently changing society and world, they may rapidly lose their effectiveness and appropriateness. The moral subject should be capable of rational analysis of the situation and if this situation requires his active participation in principles and values, he has a moral obligation to do that. The above example of a hypothetical society is therefore an unreachable but

theoretically possible concept in which it would be possible to identify some moral authority within its limits and boundaries.

3. The principle of right intention forces us to wage war only if its goals are a rectification and amendment of the *status quo*. The intention is usually an elimination of harm. My criticism of this principle is based on its finality which can be easily adopted and interpreted as the principle of utility. We are all aware of the possible inhumane, cold, calculating and self-interested actions that might follow from the principle of utility as its justification in terms of achieving the maximum happiness for a maximum amount of people. This utilitarian perspective is never to be adopted in issues of war, terrorism and even counter-terrorism, as it might lead to many atrocities. Terrorists are often convinced that the intentions of their activities are right and that they have to be achieved by any means. Another fact we have to face is the tendency of human beings to judge others momentarily and without any progressive or rational discussion. One of the most noticeable arguments is the inability to evaluate the actions of human beings properly, objectively and with one voice. We condemn actions that had the right intention indeed (establishing justice, fairness, equality, abidance of human rights, etc.). On the other hand, we do not feel any need to perceive our military interventions to other countries as actions of real and hidden terrorism that deserve punishment. With colonial times gone for good, we needed another means of power, economic and political exploitation, and destabilization of other countries. The most sophisticated way to attain these goals was to declare a war on terror – by implementing terror in our own terms.

Noam Chomsky writes that many criteria of just war theory cannot be used to justify war on terror because “an aggressor can declare war and offer any cause for doing that; the worst criminals always have the best causes” (Chomsky, 2006, p. 252). Many of the criteria, according to Chomsky, are ineffective, do not make any sense and are inapplicable in the present situation. It is inevitable to operate with concrete manifestations of violence and terror, examine them, and expose them to any possible kind of criticism and historical analysis and then make judgments, evaluations, justifications and/or execration.

Intentions play quite a considerable role in ethics of social consequences as they serve as a secondary criterion for the evaluation of certain actions. The action itself is important and positive social consequences remain the primary criterion for this evaluation, but we some unpredictable circumstances or chance might occur and the outcome/consequences of and action might not correspond to the motives of a moral subject that he had before the whole process of acting. It is therefore inevitable to analyse his motives and thus possibly evaluate his action not as immoral, but as wrong (in a case where negative social consequences prevail to a great extent over positive social consequences) or consider his action as right or wrong

instead of being moral based on the occurrence of his bad motives in the decision-making process (Gluchman, 2008, pp. 28–29).

4. The principle of reasonable hope of success serves as a limit to our actions, which might be – and in fact very often are – influenced by our rash, irrational and unconsidered efforts to change a situation, and that might paradoxically (sometimes intentionally) lead to much greater evil, suffering, loss of civilian lives, property damage or any other negative social consequences. War can be just only if there is a reasonable hope for success. Killing, suffering and injuries as a consequence of our vain efforts should never be justified. In ethics of social consequences it might be identified as a wrong or immoral act – based on the intentions of the moral subject. It is in the competences of the moral subject to consider ways and means, as well as a chance for positive social consequences of our actions and their probability of occurrence. Terrorism is a highly complex phenomenon and it is an uneasy task to differentiate between terrorists and freedom fighters, as it is analogically very hard to differentiate between a moral subject with good intentions and a moral subject with bad intentions. A subject now referred to as terrorist may be possibly referred to as revolutionary and liberator in the future. Therefore he is obliged to anticipate, to a certain thinkable extent, the consequences of his actions – both the actual and expected ones. He should also be committed to the idea of reasonable hope that his actions will bring positive social consequences that might compensate for some minor negative social consequences that are inevitably present in every violent action e.g. death, suffering, fear, hopelessness, destruction, etc.

If we accept the presupposition that not all acts of terrorism are acts of real terrorism, then, consequently it is not hard to agree that some of the actions are just misstated, misinterpreted and wrongly condemned. This is due to the everyday explosion of lies, half-truths, and disillusion purposely presented by the mass media. The enormous complexity of terrorism and its ever-changing character, forms, and means adapted to our era, are crucial reasons for the inability of the human race to strive for some kind of correction in these issues. The problem of defining terrorism is a never-ending story; nevertheless it is not an obstacle in reaching at least some of the answers to issues directly or indirectly connected to this global phenomenon

5. The principle of due proportion deals with the benefits sought and the damage which the war will bring. The restriction to use force that is not necessary to achieve a decrease in suffering is a practical restriction that is unattainable in acts of terrorism. Real terrorism always violates this restriction as it always causes more harm, damage, suffering and deaths. The casualties are always disproportionate to a state which might possibly persist for decades. But this statement is not true when talking about “acts of terrorism” that do not carry such negative connotations as acts of real

terrorism. The world needs freedom fighters, revolutionaries, liberators or any other subjects engaged in ameliorating the state of not respecting human rights, values of humanity, human dignity, moral laws, etc. In ethics of social consequences we differentiate between moral, immoral, right and wrong acts. Moral, right and wrong acts are founded on the good intentions of a moral subject (secondary evaluating criteria) and on a production of positive social consequences and their prevalence over negative social consequences (consequences in general as primary evaluating criteria). Immoral, right and wrong acts are founded on the bad intentions of a moral subject and on a production of positive or negative social consequences.⁸ An act of “terrorism”⁹ can be right when it is based on good intentions and when it produces a prevalence of positive social consequences. Moreover, it must not break the other principles in order to be evaluated as right. The actual distinction usually dwells in a complex evaluation of how an act obeys or breaks the principle of non-combatant immunity i.e. the principle of discrimination.

6. The principle of discrimination as an assurance of non-combatant immunity is focused on discrimination between civilians and military personnel. One of the typical characteristics of terrorism is that it does not make any difference between the two due to its accidental and unrestrained nature. Civilians are generally referred to as non-combatants, not being primarily involved in war or any other type of conflict. Military personnel are combatants and that makes them a legitimate target of terrorist attacks. Why? Aren't we, civilian inhabitants, to blame for the situation that escalated into enormous parameters and caused war in the first place? Civilians are guilty and have to bear responsibility for actions that are committed by a regime that is tolerated and has been legitimately elected. Tolerance should stand as an active principle considering various diversities that occur, but it usually stands for merely a passive indifference and lethargy of not being interested in any diversity that might occur in terms of actions of the “tolerated” regime. I do not intend to say that the principle of non-combatant immunity should be refused and rejected. My aim is to

⁸ It is evident that an action can be right (or wrong) if it is based on good intentions as well as if it is based on bad intentions of the moral subject. And as mentioned above the intentions of the moral subject serve as a secondary criterion for moral evaluation of a particular act. The primary criteria are the consequences and the difference between these examples lies in the prevalence of positive or negative social consequences. While in the case of good intentions, an action is right when it produces a prevalence of positive social consequences over negative social consequences, in the case of bad intentions, for an action to be right, it must produce a maximum prevalence of positive social consequences (which is theoretically possible). While in the case of good intentions, an action is wrong when it brings a maximum prevalence of negative social consequences, and in the case of bad intentions, an action is wrong when it brings a prevalence of negative social consequences (not maximum) (Gluchman, 2008).

⁹ I propose a distinction between “terrorism” and real terrorism and I will use inverted commas to highlight and call attention to this distinction

propose an idea of responsibility and guilt arising from the lethargy, apathy and non-alignment and neutrality in burning issues of the majority of societies all over the world. This passiveness is a result of the previously mentioned claim that the majority of moral subjects in any society prefer no participation in their community and citizen involvement.

Using measured and forethoughtful violence to protect against harm should definitely be allowed, but it should serve as the last resort and a way-out of an otherwise unmanageable situation. If it is not possible to verify the functionality of other measures, it is allowed to do it as well. What seems to be a more important issue is the condition of rectification and restoration of previous times of peace. We have to bear in mind that violence used has to be adequately determined by the goals we are trying to achieve or preserve. An overuse of violence will label our actions as acts of terrorism and we should definitely avoid this frequent mistake often practiced on a global international sphere. Actions that do not respect the limits of the allowed violence are immoral as they bring a maximum prevalence of negative social consequences and positive social consequences are not produced. Such acts are beside the possibility of their moral righteousness and rightness.

Terrorism, as viewed and perceived by the majority, is not capable of fulfilling the above criteria of just war theory. But terrorism viewed and perceived by the majority, might not be real terrorism itself. Sometimes it is – as in the bomb attack in Oklahoma 1995, the bombing in London 2005, etc. But in most cases, terrorism is genocide, purges, military interventions and other types of state terrorism purposely hiding their real nature. I am not trying to justify immoral, inhuman action or actions not respecting the principle of human dignity. Ethics of social consequences is built upon the principles of humanity, human dignity and moral laws. But it is my aim to apprehend them and possibly – replace them with principles that are of secondary influence in ethics of social consequences – among them justice as the most important principle. I believe that the principle of justice can and should be at the same level as its three primary principles. I think that achieving justice can be more of or as much of an essential cause for our moral behaviour than e.g. acting in accordance with the principle of human dignity. This statement is based on the fact that the extent of the value of human dignity is different and variable and can possibly rise and fall following some previous actions of a moral subject. Therefore it can be replaced by the principle of justice, as we won't assign a high level of human dignity to a person (terrorist) that was behaving and acting like a moral beast.

If we take the attacks of 9/11 as an example, they fulfil three criteria connected to terrorist attacks in general. Violence played a considerable part in those attacks. Those attacks evoked feelings of fear, terror, panic in the majority of people involved (inhabitants) as well as in the majority of

people around the world. The evident targets of the attacks were civilians, despite the objection that civilians are not usually a primary but secondary target, and are often considered as responsible and even guilty for living in a society producing evil. What reasons do we have to qualify these actions as morally wrong? Do these actions fulfil the conditions for actions to be considered as acts of terrorism? I can mention the bombing of Dresden during World War II or the more recent military intervention in Iraq¹⁰ or Afghanistan as an inherent part of the declared war on terror. People should realize that the evil they committed is the same or even worse than any other. The Slovak security analyst Ivo Samson realized this when he wrote: “Directly after the events of 9/11, there were opinions partly justifying these acts of terrorism by claiming that the foreign policy of the USA was their main cause” (Samson, 2002, p. 20).

Hugo Slim in his *Killing civilians* uses the term as *civilian* or *civilian identity*, but no matter what term we use, we must agree on the idea that holds that there is a category of people who must somehow be set apart from the fury of battle because of who they are, what they do and what they cannot do. Often these people are described as innocent and their blood should not be shed. They should be given a safe passage and help and they are to be shown mercy (Slim, 2007, pp. 1–2). He considers the idea of calling a whole enemy population “civilians” to be a massive generalization because it includes a wide spectrum of different interests, roles and views of the war. It is a fallacy to suggest that all these people are equally harmless. But it is a necessary fallacy if we are to try and limit the killing in war and show some compassion for people who become our enemies (Slim, 2007, pp. 187–188).

We also need to be aware of the fact that foreseeing the deaths of non-combatants and its intending are diametrically different standpoints towards the brutalities of war. Deaths of non-combatants (if any) must be a side-effect, collateral damage and we must not kill non-combatants even if our enemy does, as we are still bound by the principles of basic moral conduct, to abide by the concepts of discrimination and proportionality: “two wrongs do not make a right”. Non-combatants on the other side do not cease to be innocents if our own are unjustly attacked (Guthrie & Quinlan, 2007, p. 39).

The similarity of just war theory and ethics of social consequences can again be found in the nature of their principles as, according to the ethics of social consequences, we would agree on the fact that every war means losses on the side of non-combatants, but we can justify only war in which their killing, suffering and pain was not intended. Igor Primoratz writes about foreseeing deaths of non-combatants and if such casualties occur and were not intended, and if the principle ruled out unintentional harming of

¹⁰ For more detailed information about civilian losses since the US intervention in Iraq, visit www.iraqbodycount.org. The web site reports approximately 150 000 civilian deaths at the time of writing this article.

civilians too, given the conditions of modern warfare, the theory would enjoin renunciation of all war. It would no longer deserve the name of just war theory, since it would turn out to be, for all practical purposes, indistinguishable from pacifism (Primoratz, 2002, p. 20).

Gordon Graham presents the criterion of intentionality as the basic criterion for distinguishing combatants and non-combatants despite seeming that the principle is worthless because if interpreted narrowly to mean only military personnel on active duty it is impracticable; interpreted more broadly to include the suppliers of weapons, it seems extendable to the point where it excludes no one, and hence protects no one. He therefore distinguishes people with only causal contribution to the hellishness of war and people who, with their intentional actions, contribute directly. Combatants are those people, the purpose of whose activity is to contribute to the threat; non-combatants are those people who do not actively contribute in this sense, though they may constitute part of a relevant causal chain (newborn infants, the mentally handicapped, the senile, for example) (Graham, 2008, pp. 70-72). The criterion of intentionality together with the criterion of "being a threat" and their mutual co-function are the most relevant factors helping to distinguish combatants from non-combatants, and eventually just war from terrorism despite the fact that where the line is to be drawn is in many cases obscure (farmers who grow the food an army eats, etc.). ethics of social consequences might agree on the these criteria as crucial for the distinction, but it also points out that they are only secondary criteria and out actions must follow the primary criterion first: assuring that our action will bring positive social consequences that will overcome negative social consequences and thus the whole theory of just war and its principles must be interpreted as a complex system of not violating any of its principles as they are mutually interconnected.

Conclusion

Terrorism, as the most dangerous form of human violence, deserves our attention. Just war theory and ethics of social consequences seem to be very helpful tools in revealing its character and implications in moral spheres. Some aspects of the theory should be revitalized enabling us to understand and reflect on the problem itself as it is a basic precondition for changing the direction of our race for which the notion of violence has become so typical and distinctive. Nevertheless, it seems inevitable to have certain rules and principles of behaviour in times of war. Ethics of social consequences and just war theory are similar in many ways as they both concentrate around specific values and preconditions for their successful abundance. The above article proposes the idea of promoting the principle of justice in ethics of social consequences based on its prevalence in just war theory which (with certain modifications) seems to be an adequate methodological tool of distinguishing war from terrorism, allowed

behaviour in war from forbidden acts and consequently good from evil. The main contribution of the paper then lies in the possible alliance between two distinctive methodological approaches, which might enable us to better understand and evaluate acts of war and terrorism. I believe that the proof of their mutual compatibility is evident.

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Vasil Gluchman, ed. (2014): *Ethical Thinking on Past & Present (ETPP 2013)*. Prešov: University of Prešov Press.

Ethical Thinking: Past & Present is the conference proceedings edited by Vasil Gluchman, Professor of Philosophy and Ethics at the Institute of Ethics and Bioethics, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov (Slovakia). He is also the author of numerous scholar publications as well as the author of his own ethical theory, named ethics of social consequences.

The volume is published in English and contains a number of post-conference articles presented at the 13th international conference *Ethical Thinking – Past & Present*, which took place between 17th and 19th of September in Červený Kláštor, Slovakia. The articles deal with the problems of ethical theories, current ethical issues, bioethics, business ethics and professional ethics.

The book is made up of two parts (sections): “*Ethical theories and current ethical issues*” and “*Applied and professional ethics*”. The first part consists of seven articles. The first one, entitled *Charles Taylor’s Ethics of Authenticity in the perspective of postmodern culture* was written by Beata Guzowska and focuses on the problems concerning the categories of good life, self-fulfilment, self-creation, identity, morality and aestheticization. The author emphasizes that current all-embracing pluralism offers, on the one hand, a whole spectrum of solutions to many existential problems and ways of realizing oneself but, on the other hand, it contributes to even greater feeling of being lost in the contemporary social and cultural reality. By referring to Taylor’s Authenticity Ethics, Beata Guzowska presents an issue that is of the highest importance for current, post-modernist culture.

The article *The ethical aspects of natural law as depicted by John Paul II* written by Ryszard Wójtowicz aims at presenting constitutive theoretical moments of ‘moral natural law’ and its meaning in social and cultural life. The idea of returning to the Christian idea that natural law should constitute a dialogue surface and common ground of agreement between cultures and religions (Christian and non-Christian). This article attempts to answer the question: is it really possible to create common ground of agreement and dialogue in pluralist societies that are different in terms of multiethnic and multi-religious worldview.

Alexandra Smatanová in her paper *Selected ethical aspects in the philosophy of Juraj Ciger (personhood and normal – type personhood)* focuses on the concepts of personhood and normality in the philosophy of Ciger. To begin with, the author introduces Juraj Ciger to the readers. Then she moves on to the third area of his interest, namely the understanding of a person, personhood and the normality of personhood, which leads her to ethics. By referring to this Slovak philosopher, Alexandra Smatanová

emphasizes the fact that omnipresent and uncritical egoism, hedonism and individualism should be balanced with values of solidarity, reciprocity and responsibility not only for one's own life but for the lives of others and for life as such. To do so, normality, a normal-type of personhood of a human being in current society shall be reconsidered, in which the philosophy of Juraj Ciger can be of great help.

The author of the article *Ethics of social consequences and the principle of maximization* is Ján Kalajtšidis. The main aim of this paper is to contribute to the development and reputation of ethics of social consequences, which can be achieved through a critique of this modern ethical theory. Ethics of social consequences as a form of non-utilitarian consequentialism and, at the same time, as a contemporary ethical theory, faces many problems. In the author's opinion, the most interesting and important problem is the issue of the principle of maximization. The purpose of the paper is to provide possible suggestions how it may be resolved in the future.

Viera Bilasová is the author of the paper *Ethos in Slovakia in the second half of the 20th century (the confrontation of values and pseudo-values)*. She focuses on critical reflection of the European ethos tradition throughout history and in the present day Slovakia. Ethos is considered to be a universal basis of morality, which is accompanied by the conviction of its validity in the search for forms of coexistence. According to Bilasová, a critical analysis associated with a reassessment of the past is an essential prerequisite for the progressive development of Slovak society. In the publication, the author refers to historical events in the course of the development of Slovak society. The article aims to find conformity with the direction of European democratic ethos and its fundamental values - freedom, democracy, humanism, peaceful coexistence, justice and so forth.

Vasil Gluchman in the paper *Ethical and moral issues in Slovak public debates of the 2000s* pays special attention to issues concerning conscience and conscientious objection as well as national and universal moral values, which recently, to a greater or lesser extent, have stirred Slovak public opinion and attracted the significant attention of the media. Examples from the environment of the Slovak political scene demonstrate how those in power try to use their influence on ethics, or rather morality, by means of pressure on the modification of the moral code, or the moral consciousness of society.

The last article in this section of the book entitled *Reflecting on problems of animal ethics in Slovak ethics* was written by Katarína Komenská. The aim of this paper is to analyse the current state of Animal Ethics in Slovakia. Komenská's inquiries are based on the assumption that some of the topics of ethics are given more attention than others. The author shows that animal ethics has been relatively underdeveloped in Slovak ethical thinking.

Therefore, in her opinion, it is necessary to challenge as well as promote ethical reflections on the problems of animal ethics in Slovakia.

The second part of the publication deals with applied and professional ethics and consists of twelve articles. The first one was written by Veronika Hulová, who, in the paper, *Human rights – foundation of bioethics* explains the subject matter of bioethics. The author emphasizes that bioethics can be viewed neither as an intersection of ethics and life science, an academic discipline nor a political force in medicine and biology. Instead, it can be seen as an area of possible consensus in certain questions of ethics. The need to define the foundations of bioethics, which represents a transformation of the older and more traditional domain of medical ethics, has arisen. What is also significant in the article is the issue of human rights, which are discussed using the examples of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Bioethics.

Júlia Klembarová's article *Nursing Ethics in Slovakia (after 1989)* focuses on the changing status of the nursing profession and the need for nursing ethics. The article offers a development of this type of professional ethics, among others, through information about the publication of significant works on nursing ethics and organization of various academic events focused on the subject.

The next article also deals with professional ethics. *Competences of nurses in professional and ethical values* was written by Dagmar Mastiliaková, Jirina Hosáková, Jana Kačorová and Roman Adamczyk. It is part of a handbook that came into being as a result of a three-year project *Innovation of the Nursing Study Programme at the Silesian University in Opava*. The competences of nurses were divided into four areas, one of which was the ethical and professional values that are the topic of the article. The authors presented a table of nine competences together with criteria for their assessment. Such information is important for students, mentors and preceptors supporting students in their clinical placements.

The topic of business ethics is introduced by Emilia Steciová in the article *Ethical issues of globalization in business*. The author emphasizes the fact that globalization is a notable phenomenon which is now constantly discussed across all disciplines. In the paper, she considers selected issues of globalization which are a part of business. The author puts emphasis on providing a definition of globalization, its current issues, positive and negative aspects as well as consequences. She also tries to find answers to questions related to the implementation of ethics in business.

Tomasz Czakon in the article *Employee rights in companies' codes of ethics* analyses 49 codes with regard to their attitudes towards employees as special stakeholders. The author, taking into account the analysis of business ethics specialists, distinguishes the following types of codes: 1.

authoritative; 2. restrictive; 3. paternalistic; 4. partnership; 5. authoritative-restrictive. The article presents the results of the author's own research.

Martin Černek is the author of the article *The perception of business ethics in the Czech Republic*. The research reported in the paper presents the current position of ethics in business and managerial work. The main objective is to contribute to the understanding of the perception of ethics and morality in business and social spheres, based on theoretical analysis, resources and the author's own empirical research.

The next article of the volume is Martina Gogová's paper entitled *Perception of responsibility in business in Slovakia after 1948*. The aim of the paper is to determine when the issue of responsible business in Slovak literature was first dealt with. Nowadays, the application of ethics in business in the form of responsible business is becoming a more and more frequent topic in literature. The author presents the historical background of the country in the second half of the 20th century. She describes the literature of this period as well as presenting her own conclusions.

Moral issues in the professional ethics of teachers in Slovakia is an article by Marta Gluchmanová. The aim of this paper is to study ethical and moral aspects of issues in the teaching profession in Slovakia. The author states that moral issues in teaching are a reflection of problems in society, which is responsible for education. In the author's opinion, attention is paid to phenomena such as aggression and violence among children and the young, be it inside or outside school. Moral problems in society are not left at the school gates; they are a part of students' and teachers' daily lives.

Urszula Gruca-Miąsik wrote the article *Mediation at school – ethical threats to the role of the mediator*. The author emphasizes the role of school mediators, who must handle internal conflicts with even more attention and care. This function is highly complicated since the mediator is often faced with difficulties in remaining neutral when he/she also works as a teacher at the school where a conflict has arisen between a student and one of the teachers. Urszula Gruca-Miąsik describes the reasons for conflicts at schools and ways of solving them. She focuses on mediation as a method for solving conflicts at school, and on the ethical threats that mediators face at schools.

Zuzana Staňáková in the paper *Professional ethics of universities and corporate social responsibility* aims at contributing to the discussion on the fundamental importance of professional ethics in the context of the current state of higher education in Slovakia. The main purpose is an analysis of selected aspects of professional ethics. This work attempts to confirm the relationship of professional ethics and the social responsibility of the organization.

Threats to the family in time of crisis of values is a paper by Anna Śniegulska. The author, considering the Polish environment, draws attention to the basic social, cultural and ethical issues connected with the functioning

of this elementary aspect of human life and education. The family struggles with a lot of problems in the current climate of axiological chaos, which influence the moral development of future generations.

The last article of the volume was written by Lukáš Švaňa. *Comparison of codes of conduct for professional soldiers* deals with particular types of codes of conduct for professional soldiers as inevitable parts of soldiering ethics, which is a part of military ethics. The general idea is to propose some modifications of these codes considering their strong points and try to generate ideas, thoughts and criticism serving as rudiments for the creation of a situational code that would preserve the principles of humanity, human dignity, moral laws and tolerance.

Ethical thinking can always contain an element of moralizing. Ethics is also often confused with morality, especially among educationalists. The majority of the texts in the monograph is ethical in nature, although some of them seem to be rather moralizing, especially the ones devoted to educational issues. It does not, however, diminish the scientific value of the articles, which serves as proof of a more diverse approach to ethics in general.

To conclude, *Ethical Thinking on Past & Present* is a publication worthy of recommendation. It deals with a number of interesting and diverse ethical issues. Business, professional or animal ethics are just some examples of the topics discussed by the authors.

The Proceedings of the 13th international conference *Ethical Thinking – Past & Present* has been included to the Web of Science database.

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Report

Bioethical activities of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics

The main aim of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics at the University of Prešov is to create a platform for sharing and exchanging ideas and experience on bioethics, science, and education in Slovakia and the Central Europe region. The goals of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics also follow the priorities of UNESCO and its sixth strategic aim: to support the principles, practices, and ethical norms essential for scientific and technical development. Following this bioethics education program, the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics at the University of Prešov has announced a set of activities on bioethics education and its implementation into the educational programs (formal, informal) focused on bioethics values and principles.

The main target groups of these activities are children and youths (age group 6-19 years). The purpose is to stimulate students' interest in bioethical issues and to create a platform for discussions on how these issues can be solved and reflected on. It is based on the assumption that young people have great potential to contribute to such public discourse. These activities were announced in August 2015 and they will be carried out until the end of the December 2015.

One of the main bioethics education activities is an essay and poster competition entitled *(In)Humanity and the contemporary world*. On the 1st October 2015, an open call for posters and essays was announced among students of high schools in the Prešov and Košice counties. The aim of the competition is to involve students in an open debate on current and acute social issues, especially on the problems connected with values of humanity, life, human dignity, solidarity, etc. The competition can increase the interest and creative approach of young people to access and evaluate these difficult and essential questions of human life. Contributors can submit either an essay or poster. Essays can be in the form of a free, literary piece of work or the form of a developed theoretical, scientific argument. Scientific posters can be the outcome of individual or collective work and should introduce the issue, hypothesis and result of research performed by the author(s). Moreover, all contributors should express their views, approach them in their own, original way, and offer a possible solution to the selected issue. The best essays and posters will be published or presented at the department and awarded with a prize.

The second type of activities implemented by the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics is a series of *Science Cafes* which opens topics on the relationship between science, ethics, morality, education, and responsibility. Students of high schools and the general public can meet with experts in the field in an informal environment at one of Prešov's many Cafes (*Za siedmimi oknami*). The series was kicked off on the 14th October 2015 by the first meeting. The

topic of the first *Science Cafe* was “*Morality and Ethics – where they come from and what is their role?*” The discussion was led by speakers Viera Bilasová, David Černý, and Adam Doležel.

On the 18th November 2015, the second meeting in the series took place. The issue of *ethical consumption and consumerism* was introduced to the audience via a discussion featuring Ján Kalajtšidis, Adela Lešková Blahová, and Katarína Komenská. The speakers emphasized the issue of “substituting” moral values with economical ones, and new forms of consumerism which have begun to be spread widely through the media and our culture.

Both of these meetings were met with positive feedback from the audience and their active involvement in the discussion. The last of this year’s series of Science Cafes will be held on the 9th December 2015, when the discussion will focus on *the problem of lifestyle, health and its prevention* as responsibility of young people and patients.

During November and December 2015, the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics at the University of Prešov will also visit selected partner-schools as part of their out-reach activities. Experts from the Institute of Ethics and Bioethics, who closely cooperate with the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, will host discussions on some of the current issues and problems in bioethics (consume vs. consumerism, tolerance of violence, activeness and tolerance as forms of humanism, ecological ethics). Students will be invited to discuss the issues and challenges facing ethics and morality in today’s (global) world, the origin of morality and its various forms, but also the specific moral dilemma which they encounter every day. Debates with experts are thought to be able to stimulate students’ critical thinking and their engagement in current problematic issues related to bioethics.

Last but not least, activities for the younger target group have been prepared and organized, too. Small workshops for young ones are organized in cooperation with leisure time centres in Prešov County. The aim of these workshops is to introduce topics and global issues of bioethics to young children (age group 6–10 years) in a playful and accessible way. Workshops reflect on topics of healthy lifestyle, ethical consumption, and maintaining health. All of these workshops use creative and original activities and are implemented with the help of students of Ethics from the Institute of Ethics and Bioethics, Faculty of Arts at the University of Prešov.

With the help of all of these activities, the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics wants to contribute to an increase in the interest of students and the general public in bioethical issues and ethics as such. It is important that the youth gets involved in debates on these complicated and global issues of bioethics because, despite the importance of these questions, discussion on them is lacking in current (public) debates. Only then can a healthy and growing perspective for our society be ensured.

Ivana Doričová is a PhD. student at the Institute of Ethics and Bioethics, University of Prešov (Slovakia). The title of her thesis is *Ethics of Interpersonal Relationships and Moral Taboos in Society*. Her intention is to contribute to an investigation into social morality of individuals, analyse relations between humans at various levels and define notional moral taboos in society. Ethics of social consequences is the paradigm and the starting point for searching for solutions in the area of interpersonal relationships.

Martin Pazdera is a PhD. student at the Institute of Ethics and Bioethics, University of Prešov (Slovakia). His main research interest is environmental ethics. The title of his thesis is *Moral responsibility in relation to natural being* and his methodological basis is the ethics of social consequences.

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