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Between Consequentialism and Non-Consequentialism

Vasil Gluchman (ed.): *Ethics of Social Consequences: Philosophical, Applied and Professional Challenges*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to present the reader both the dissimilarities and a partial convergence of the views of two duty-based ethics theories: first, a consequential one – the “ethics of social consequences” by Vasil Gluchman and the other, a non-consequential one – critical ethics by Immanuel Kant with reference to a newly published book constituting a contribution of a wide range of scholars to the development of the “ethics of social consequences”.

Commencing with a general outline of both theories the author shows in an analytical and synthetic form the similarities and differences between V. Gluchman’s and I. Kant’s ethics. Finally, a closer look is taken at the particular chapters of the book “Ethics of Social Consequences: Philosophical, Applied and Professional Challenges”.

The general outline of Immanuel Kant’s ethics

Immanuel Kant is the creator of moral theory which is an example of the highest discipline and principle of human action assessment. I. Kant places a high bar for a human: he shows how much one can demand of oneself as a rational being, he commands one to have the courage to use one’s own reason.¹ A human is a rational and autonomous, but not a spiritual being. He supports and leads himself to his own cognitive and moral actions allowing for a life in a community and religion. In so doing he becomes a craftsman of cognition and morality.²

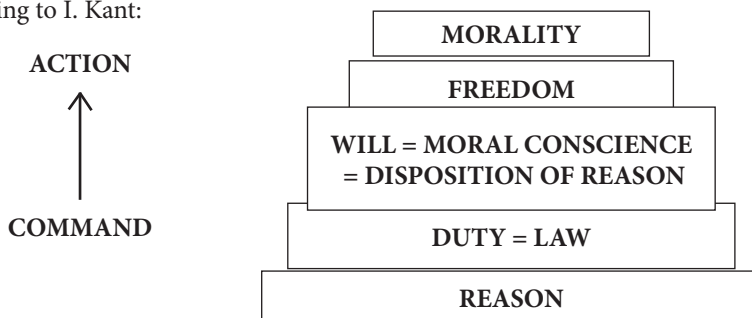
I. Kant reinforces the interest in determinism – he maintains that a human

¹ Sole, J.: *Kant*. Translated by: Paleta, A., Sosnowska, B. Warsaw: Hachette, 2018, p. 131.

² *Ibid.*, p. 132.

is simultaneously a part of the phenomenal world and has an opportunity to make moral choices since he owns both phenomenal and noumenal existence. The phenomenon is something that is perceived by a human whereas the noumenon or the thing-in-itself is the same perceived thing but outside the perception and independent of it. "The noumenon is what is not experienced with sensual intuition nor in any other way [...] The noumenon is connected with the phenomenon, it is something whose existence is assumed by the phenomenon through the very fact of existence in sensuality. [...] the occurrence of phenomenon which is what we can perceive means logical existence of noumenon"³. A human, as a phenomenal entity - a part of the world of nature - is an empirical self, influenced by inclinations which "naturally" lead to action. On the other hand, as a noumenal being - rational, transcendental, imaginative - is a rational self, able to resist the influence of inclinations, to adjust one's behaviour to one's own law - the law formed by reason for itself - the moral law.⁴ Thus a human goes beyond the empirical sphere, locates himself beyond time - in the area of freedom and moral conscience.⁵

The diagram below shows the properties of human - rational functioning according to I. Kant:



Source: Own elaboration PD-Z on the basis of Solé, J. (2018): Kant. Translated by: Paleta, A., Sosnowska, B. Warsaw: Hachette, pp. 100-113.

"Ethics of social consequences" – the outline

V. Gluchman proposes ethics concentrated on the virtue theory. By formulating the theory of rightful action this ethics gains a new dimension in the context of

³ Ibid., p. 72.

⁴ Cf.: Solomon R. C., Higgins K. M.: *Krótką Historią Filozofii*. [A Short History Of Philosophy]. Translated By: Szczucka-Kubisz, N. Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka, 1997, P. 248; Cf.: Sole, J.: Kant, Ibid., Pp. 61, 105-106.

⁵ Sole, J.: Kant, ibid., p. 106.

the consequential ethics concepts since it simultaneously recognises an important position of rightful action within the theory of ethics and assigns a primal role of the theory of good.⁶ A significant position in V. Gluchman's ethics is taken by the criterion of positive social consequences since it formulates the fundamental requirements preserving the compatibility of the theory of good and the theory of rightful action, that is the evaluative orientation of this concept and the criterion of what is rightful and what is wrong, what one should do and what one should avoid, what is honourable and what is dishonourable, what is useful and what is useless. The theory of duty according to V. Gluchman becomes a comprehensive ethical concept of a consequential nature in which the emphasis is mainly placed on the virtue theory.⁷ Moreover, the author gives in a non-utilitarian dimension by:

- a pluralistic structure of moral virtues (in other words, the author does not limit himself to only utilitarian virtues, that is he hedonistic and eudemonistic do not dominate anymore, or he takes into consideration all the virtues which are able to coexist with consequences);⁸ source virtues are the following: humanity, human dignity, moral law (right to life), whereas the remaining ones are: justice, responsibility, duty, tolerance;⁹

- a combination of fundamental, universal moral virtues and an aspiration to achieve positive (social) consequences without requiring their necessary maximisation;¹⁰

- an assessment of conduct, especially on the basis of the consequences of actions, appropriately taking into account the consequences related to motives, senses and the attitude of an acting agent;¹¹

- rejection of the principle of impartiality;¹²

- emphasis of the significant role of the moral agent.¹³

Moral law is biologically, socially and culturally determined, it serves basic

⁶ Gluchman, V.: Ethics of Social Consequences – Methodology of Bioethics Education. In: *Ethics & Bioethics (in Central Europe)*, No 2(1-2), 2012, pp. 16-27; Gluchman, V.: Disaster Issues in Non-Utilitarian Consequentialism (Ethics of Social Consequences). In: *Human Affairs*, No 26(1), 2017, pp. 52-62; Gluchman, V.: G. E. Moore and theory of moral/right action in ethics of social consequences. In: *Ethics & Bioethics (in Central Europe)*, No 7(1-2), 2017, pp. 57-65.

⁷ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [*Ethics of Social Consequences*]. Translated by: Kroczyk, P. Warsaw, 2012, pp. 55-56.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁹ Gluchman, V.: Disaster Issues in Non-Utilitarian Consequentialism, *ibid.*, p. 54.

¹⁰ Cf.: Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [*Ethics of Social Consequences*], *ibid.*, pp. 8, 22; Gluchman, V.: Disaster Issues in Non-Utilitarian Consequentialism, *ibid.*, p. 55.

¹¹ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [*Ethics of Social Consequences*], *ibid.*, pp. 7, 9-10.

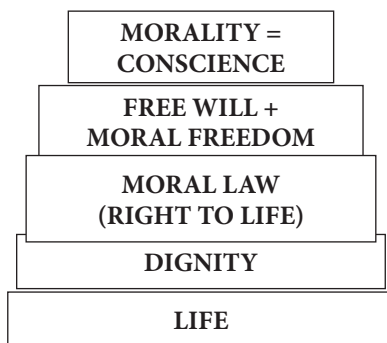
¹² Ibid., p. 9.

¹³ Ibid.; Gluchman, V.: Disaster Issues in Non-Utilitarian Consequentialism, *ibid.*, p. 57.

virtues.¹⁴ Morality is an inborn consequence of human development and it is directed at protection and support of human life.¹⁵ However, an independent existence of mankind has been strengthened by social and cultural factors which have become a more dynamic source of morality than biological determinants.¹⁶ Every human being possesses free will. It is manifested in “that he is able to more or less freely decide about the manner of action in reference to what is required from him due to the moral norms and what are the possible means of achieving a given moral objective”¹⁷. A human gains moral freedom in the process of his development – moral maturation. The essence of moral freedom is in action – forming new moral virtues, standards and realising them; it consists in “a possibility of free choice of moral objectives and the means of their realisation”¹⁸. Free will and moral freedom are manifested in the (social) consequences resulting from reasoning, decision making and acting.¹⁹

The figure below presents the properties of human functioning according to V. Gluchman:

DEVELOPMENT + ACTION



Source: Own elaboration PD-Z on the basis of Gluchman, V. (2012): Ethics of Social Consequences. Translated by: Kroczek, P. Warsaw: ISM and E “HUMANUM” Publishing.

¹⁴ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., pp. 22, 201-216.

¹⁵ Cf.: ibid., p. 201.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Gluchman, V.: *Človek a morálka*. [Man and Morality]. Brno: Doplněk, 1997, pp. 58-59; Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., pp. 72-73.

¹⁸ Gluchman, V.: *Človek a morálka*. [Man and Morality], ibid., pp. 58-59; Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., p. 73.

¹⁹ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., p. 88.

“Ethics of social consequences” versus Immanuel Kant’s critical ethics – comparison

Similarities

1. The rootedness in Lutheran religion

2. The agent philosophy (emphasising an ethical aspect of a human).

3. An universal character (independent from any ideology or religion). Promoting the principles which remain valid at any time and place.

4. The existence of the moral law.

Differences

2. I. Kant’s ethics includes the theory of cognition and the theory of rightful action. V. Gluchman’s ethics includes the virtue theory and the theory of rightful action.

3. I. Kant’s ethics of duty additionally is of an unconditional nature – it deprives an agent willing to act of an ethical possibility of considering his own desires, inclinations and pleasure. V. Gluchman’s ethics, on the other hand, abolishes the principle of impartiality²⁰ – it firstly commands that the good of the loved ones is strived for.²¹

4. I. Kant calls moral law “the categorical imperative”. The source of moral law is a human reason.²² I. Kant sharply separates the domain of moral law and social law. Social law is imposed on a human and it strikes fear. Whereas moral law stems from his noumenal interior: “a command must come into being before all the conditions of personal, social, historical nature [...]”²³. Nevertheless, both domains may be connected by means of one imperative: so that there is no war, neither between individuals nor between societies. Thus the law may be defined as all the conditions in which the freedom of an individual may be reconciled with the freedom of others.²⁴ For V. Gluchman moral law comprises an axiological basis of the “ethics of social consequences”. Moral law specifies human dignity, it is an informal expression

²⁰ Gluchmanová, M.: *Učiteľská etika a etika sociálnych dôsledkov*. [Teaching Ethics and Ethics of Social Consequences]. In: Gluchmanová, M., Gluchman, V.: *Učiteľská etika*. Prešov: FFPU, 2008, p. 133.

²¹ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], *ibid.*, p. 121.

²² Solomon R. C., Higgins K. M.: *Krótką historia filozofii*. [A Short History of Philosophy], *ibid.*, p. 248.

²³ Sole, J.: *Kant*, *ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁴ Bocheński, J.: *Zarys historii filozofii*. [Outline of the History of Philosophy]. Kraków: „Philed”, 1993, pp. 188-189.

of moral virtues.²⁵ There is one moral law but it has numerous forms depending on the society and culture. Moral laws are genetically, biologically, socially and culturally determined. They function beyond civil law or replace civil law or they are its basis.²⁶

5. Acting out a duty.

5. According to I. Kant a duty is what drives a human to abandon his subjectivity and assumes effort – a necessity of acting in accordance with moral principles.²⁷ “You should” in the categorical imperative means “you can”²⁸. I. Kant discriminates between duties to oneself and to others. A duty to oneself is self-respect as a rational being and not letting others treat one like an object. A duty to others is love, active kindness, respect for others. “Therefore while wishing all the other people well (*benevolentiam*) I should also show them kindness”²⁹. A duty of doing good to others is a golden rule. Everyone must love and respect one another – one should also try to love his neighbour even if he did not deserve respect or – for a change – respect him although a number of people seem not to deserve love.³⁰ There are three duties that come from love: a duty of beneficence, gratitude, compassion.³¹ “All people have a duty to, whenever possible, be of help to others who are in need, expecting nothing in return”³².

In accordance with V. Gluchman, our duty is conducting in such a way so that through our action we achieve as many positive consequences as possible. A dutiful action is an action which allows for achieving more positive than negative consequences. Such conduct is moral and rightful.³³

6. The necessity of assuming responsibility for one's own actions.

6. For I. Kant a human is a noumenon - an active and free being, an agent responsible for his thoughts and

²⁵ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [*Ethics of Social Consequences*], *ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 198, 200-201, 206.

²⁷ Sole, J.: *Kant*, *ibid.*, p. 104.

²⁸ Andersen, S.: *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. [*Introduction to Ethics*]. Translated by: Żylicz, L., Piotrowski, R. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademickie DIALOG, 2003, p. 140; cf.: Solomon R. C., Higgins K. M.: *Krótką historia filozofii*. [*A Short History of Philosophy*], *ibid.*, p. 248.

²⁹ Kant, I.: *Metafizyka moralności*. [*Metaphysics of Morals*]. Translated by: Nowak, E. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PWN, 2005, p. 332.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 334.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 335.

³³ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [*Ethics of Social Consequences*], *ibid.*, pp. 24, 25.

choices.³⁴ He also takes responsibility for the future of mankind and the planet.³⁵

For V. Gluchman the notion of responsibility somehow regulates the issues of duty. Since responsibility may imply the outcome of the infringement of one's duties in a negative sense, whereas in a positive sense – possessing the requisite competencies and conduct in accordance with current standards.

7. The virtue of freedom and a determining role of reason in its manifestations.

7. For I. Kant a human is free in terms of his conduct when he acts referring to his reason or he acts according to the principle – the imperative which he imposed on himself³⁶: “a human, considering his personality or being gifted with inner freedom, is able to assume duty to himself (or also mankind which is embodied in him)”³⁷. Fulfilling one's duty means satisfying a request. Duty is therefore by the nature of imperative (command). On the basis of imperatives we can act in a different way.³⁸

V. Gluchman separates free will and moral (customary) will which manifest in the consequences of actions resulting from reasoning and decision making.³⁹ Free will is, according to V. Gluchman, a metaphysical genome, it is reflected by the fact that a human is more or less able to freely decide the manner of conduct within what is required from him and what are the possible means of achieving an objective. Moral freedom is gained in the process of one's own moral development, maturation. Moral freedom of an adult agent is based on the fact that he himself is active in terms of creating virtues and standards and their realisation. Moreover, he freely chooses moral objectives and the means of their realisation.⁴⁰

8. The source of freedom, and therefore morality, is will.

8. According to I. Kant goodness of will does not consist in its outcomes but in action out of duty since what counts are not the outcomes but only will.⁴¹ “Goodwill is good neither because of its deeds and

³⁴ Sole, J.: *Kant*, ibid., p. 106.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 21.

³⁶ Andersen, S.: *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. [Introduction to Ethics], ibid., p. 140.

³⁷ Kant, I.: *Metafizyka moralności*. [Metaphysics of Morals], ibid., p. 289.

³⁸ Andersen, S.: *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. [Introduction to Ethics], ibid., p. 138.

³⁹ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., p. 88.

⁴⁰ Gluchman, V.: *Človek a morálka*. [Man and Morality], ibid., pp. 57-58.

⁴¹ Andersen, S.: *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. [Introduction to Ethics], ibid., p. 137.

outcomes nor because of its usefulness in achieving an intended objective, but merely by wanting, i.e. by itself [...]. In fact, we are being convinced that the more civilised reason devotes itself to a pursuit of enjoyable life and happiness, the more a human recedes from the state of true contentment.⁴² Developing goodwill is the highest objective of a human, it is based on a belief that people are free. I. Kant interiorises the essence of ethics placing it not in action itself, even less so in its consequences but in intentions which drive a human to action since what counts are not visible actions but invisible inner principles.⁴³

For V. Gluchman intentions of actions constitute a secondary action assessment criterion – what is really important are the consequences; intentions or anticipated consequences are a primary complex action assessment criterion in terms of their duty or need for their avoidance.⁴⁴

9. The virtue of mankind (humanism)

9. In I. Kant's theory humanism means respect for others, their objectives and love.⁴⁵

V. Gluchman challenges this view by making an attempt to distinguish typically human features,⁴⁶ simultaneously inquiring about the sources and criteria for making decisions on admissibility or inadmissibility of objectives, as well as about the type of love. His humanism means "all the forms of behaviour and conduct aiming at protection and support, i.e. development of human life"⁴⁷. Humanism takes an active and passive form.⁴⁸ The active one may have a positive (direct help) or a negative dimension (preventing someone from fulfilling harmful objectives); the passive one (which is the basis of the active one) is compassion, forgiveness, nonmaleficence.

⁴² Kant, I.: *Uzasadnienie metafizyki moralności*. [Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals], Translated by: Wartenberg, M. Warszawa: PWN, 1953, p. 12.

⁴³ Sole, J.: *Kant*, ibid., p. 101.

⁴⁴ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., p. 26.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 107.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 95-122.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 121.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 117-118, 123-124.

10. The virtue of human dignity

10. For I. Kant a person has no price but dignity, he is also unique. There is dignity in a moral or ethical dimension referring to moral or ethical actions since “practical” means “ethical”⁴⁹ and practical reason determines human dignity, it constitutes a solid basis of his moral⁵⁰ actions.⁵¹ Moreover, I. Kant attributes the virtue of dignity only to a human being due to his morality and capacity for morality.⁵² A human has dignity and is an objective in himself since he is a rational being capable of self-determination. “Morality is a condition which determines only the fact that a rational being may be an objective for himself [...] Therefore only morality and mankind capable of morality are what possess dignity”⁵³. Recognising a human as an objective in himself is in harmony with the categorical imperative.⁵⁴ Human dignity is beyond the remaining part of nature. Whereas moral law “infinitely increases my virtue as mentality due to my personality in which moral law shows me life which is independent of animal nature and even from all the sensual world”⁵⁵.

V. Gluchman includes human dignity⁵⁶ in superior virtues of his theory, besides humanism.⁵⁷ The basis of assigning dignity is life. Accordingly, all forms of life have their dignity,⁵⁸ however human life has the highest measure of dignity.⁵⁹ There are three phases of forming human dignity.⁶⁰ Thus every human acquires dignity through existence, development of his own rationality therefore a human should always be an objective in himself and not a means to achieve it.⁶¹ V. Gluchman shows here his inspiration by I. Kant's ethics.

⁴⁹ Sole, J.: *Kant*, ibid., pp. 124.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 93.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 94.

⁵² Kant, I.: *Uzasadnienie metafizyki moralności*. [Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals], ibid., p. 51.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

⁵⁵ Kant, I.: *Krytyka praktycznego rozumu*. [Critique of Practical Reason], Translated by: Gałęcki, J. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PWN, 1984, p. 257.

⁵⁶ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], ibid., p. 139ff.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 123ff.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 154, 158.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 165.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 173.

⁶¹ Gluchman, V.: *Úvod do etiky*. [Introduction to Ethics], Prešov: LIM, 2000, pp. 153-154.

11. The reflections on respect. Universality of respect to others.
11. For I. Kant respect relates to a feeling, not to virtue; a feeling of respect refers to oneself and to others – a human has a duty to enable the other to maintain self-respect⁶² by showing respect for his individual dignity (in accordance with the principle of the categorical imperative);⁶³ this feeling has an intellectual nature, it comes to existence as a result of moral law being voiced, it expresses an attitude a human has towards what is intelligible in him.⁶⁴ For V. Gluchman respect is a virtue related to dignity,⁶⁵ that is to existence as a sign of life appreciation.⁶⁶
12. Emphasising significance of a morally right action.
12. For I. Kant a morally right action consists in applying in the world of senses the maxims and principles created by freedom and rationalism of the world of reason.⁶⁷
For V. Gluchman a morally right action is one that has the maximum prevalence of positive rather than negative consequences including positive intentions. A morally right action is one of the kinds of actions differentiated by V. Gluchman.⁶⁸
13. A human is an author of morality
13. According to I. Kant a source of morality is reason and human freedom;⁶⁹ morality demands respect for the rationality of others, the essence of their mankind which is also called dignity.⁷⁰ According to V. Gluchman formation of morality is an innate consequence of human development, it is a social phenomenon functioning as a result of an interaction between biological, social and mental determinants. Free will and moral freedom are a mental source.⁷¹

⁶² Andersen, S.: *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. [Introduction to Ethics], *ibid.*, p. 144.

⁶³ Solomon R. C., Higgins K. M.: *Krótką historia filozofii*. [A Short History of Philosophy], *ibid.*, p. 249.

⁶⁴ Andersen, S.: *Wprowadzenie do etyki*. [Introduction to Ethics], *ibid.*, p.145.

⁶⁵ Cf.: Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], *ibid.*, p. 165.

⁶⁶ Cf.: *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁶⁷ Sole, J.: *Kant*, *ibid.*, p. 93.

⁶⁸ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], *ibid.*, pp. 24-30, 39.

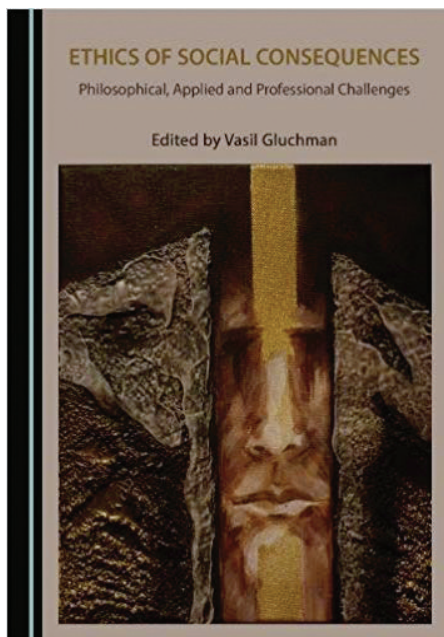
⁶⁹ Sole, J.: *Kant*, *ibid.*, pp. 94; cf.: *ibid.*, p. 110.

⁷⁰ Solomon R. C., Higgins K. M.: *Krótką historia filozofii*. [A Short History of Philosophy], *ibid.*, p. 249.

⁷¹ Gluchman, V.: *Etyka społecznych konsekwencji*. [Ethics of Social Consequences], *ibid.*, pp. 59-61.

Reflections on the Book *“Ethics of Social Consequences: Philosophical, Applied and Professional Challenges”*

The book consists of sixteen chapters divided into three parts including an introduction written by the editor, a creator of the title “ethics of social consequences”, V. Gluchman. The respective authors in the first part focus on the philosophical and ethical problems of this theory. The following five chapters address the issue of rationality in the contemporary scientific world (three chapters – the first, the second and the fourth written by respectively Ján Kalajtšidis, Oresta Losyk and Stefan Konstańczak), business world (the fifth chapter written by Martin Lačný) and in everyday life (the second chapter written by O. Losyk and the third chapter written by Joanna Mysona Byrska) in reference to the “ethics of social consequences”.



J. Kalajtšidis concentrates on the analysis of the notion of responsibility and justice in a historical framework recognising both virtues as a key to morality and ethics since a morally right action – according to the author – requires moral responsibility and moral responsibility requires a morally right action, determining it. Justice in consequential terms – as opposed to deontological terms – has a broader, that is remedial impact. Therefore, without the virtue of responsibility and justice contemporary ethics theories have no *raison d'être*.

O. Losyk shows the face of contemporary times in the context of emancipatory, freedom, liberation movements (also in the field of science and moral virtues), and subsequently compares a postmodern vision of reality with the basic foundations of the “ethics of social consequences”, enumerating similarities and differences. The author emphasises, similarly to J. Kalajtšidis, the virtue of justice in the “ethics of social consequences” which, however, according to the author clearly comes into resonance with postmodern understanding of this virtue.

J. M. Byrska, similarly to O. Losyk, draws attention to postmodern

transformations, however more in terms of a market, consumption increase in the contemporary world considering possession, money, wealth to be an indicator of a person's value. What counts is progress, constant increase, individualism. In opposition to that there is the "ethics of social consequences" defining good as the guiding principle which commands that one act not for his own good but for the good of others – that is realising positive social consequences. This belief is shared by M. Lačný who writes that progress should lead to prosperity but in its broadest sense, protecting people from abuse.

While O. Losyk emphasises the rational selfishness of the "ethics of social consequences" (rejecting the principle of impartiality), J. M. Byrska positively evaluates the healthy selfishness of the "ethics of social consequences" (allowing for protection of the contemporary world from the spread of consumer attitude). M. Lačný's conclusions are in line with that. Here, similarly to J. Kalajtzidis' work, what is emphasised is the virtue of responsibility, this time however it is varied, namely: responsibility to oneself, to the world and to the institutions which allow a human to live on credit.

The ethics of rationality respective authors refer to in their analyses of the "ethics of social consequences" is also typical for I. Kant's stand. Rationality according to J. Kalajtzidis seems to be compatible and interdependent with the virtue of responsibility, one of the seven virtues distinguished by V. Gluchman. J. Kalajtzidis shows the significance of responsibility in V. Gluchman's ethics in reference to the types of a moral agent included in the "ethics of social consequences". In three stages of forming a moral agent M. Lačný sees the opportunity for realising that concern for happiness and personal convenience does not eventually lead to good since achieving it requires being oriented to good of other people, adopting the principle of lawfulness and humanism. O. Losyk in her work precisely describes the contemporary phenomenon of emancipation of reason towards relativism of thinking, judgements, beliefs leading to the situation where in everyday life rationality is more and more often replaced by liberalism. However, in the scientific world pursuit for rationality as an ability to arrange the world according to universal criteria is still valid.

Rationality of the "ethics of social consequences" is closely connected to freedom – as noticed by O. Losyk. Human freedom becomes preserved by rejecting the principle of impartiality and maximisation which allows to avoid being threatened.

Content and adequacy of contemporary ethical theories are considered by J. Kalajtzidis and S. Konstańczak. The former refers to the necessity of including in them the virtues described by the scholar, while the latter – to the need of constant adjustment of ethics (including its tools) to the present reality.

The second part of the book discusses the application nature of the "ethics

of social consequences” in reference to, among others, bioethics, medical ethics. An introductory chapter is written by Josef Kuré. The scholar anthropologically compares the “ethics of social consequences” and traditional bioethics (to be more specific the Ethics of Principlism by Tom Beauchamp and James F. Childress including its four principles: autonomy, beneficence, justice and nonmaleficence). The author concludes that the “ethics of social consequences” has more to offer in anthropological and methodological terms as a bioethical concept (and not only!) since it corresponds to a basic understanding of bioethical theory, methodology and the bases of bioethics; it possesses a clear moral anthropology (the basic anthropological constituents include: the notion of moral agent, humanism, dignity, virtue of life); solid anthropological bases (due to simultaneously considering the virtue of mankind, human dignity and moral rights); it presents the plurality of principles (focused on positive social consequences); emphasises the virtue of life. Due to these features the “ethics of social consequences” demonstrates great deal of flexibility and applicability in every domain of applied ethics.

Martin Gluchman also refers to bioethics and medical ethics, however in his work he focuses on applying the principle of humanism of the “ethics of social consequences” within bioethics and in an attempt at reconciling it with the four biomedical principles. In realisation of the idea of humanism oriented to increasing positive social consequences he recognises a compatibility with beneficence autonomy, justice and nonmaleficence. Both ethical trends have the opportunity to complement each other by avoiding suffering in action by a human and causing positive social consequences.

Direct reference to I. Kant is made by S. Konstańczak and M. Gluchman. The former does so by quoting Antoni Kępiński who asks, following I. Kant: due to what a human overcame his animality, what is a typical human feature? According to the author it is accurately addressed by V. Gluchman who introduces a notion of selfless assistance. M. Gluchman mentions I. Kant recalling the philosopher’s views on actions and considering them moral or not, a manifestation of humanism or lack of it. Opinions of V. Gluchman and I. Kant are divided. V. Gluchman claims that humanism refers to defence and protection of one’s own life, life of relatives and life of strangers. I. Kant, in turn, considers saving life of a stranger as a morally right action while he does not do that in case of protection of the life of relatives. V. Gluchman justifies his opinion stating that it is our duty to help others regardless of the bonds between us and them, however a stronger bond with relatives obliges us to provide them assistance in the first place. Morality cannot be reduced to a sheer obligations fulfilment disregarding relatives, acquaintances.

In the eight chapter Julia Polomska analyses the virtue of human dignity in the “Ethics of positive consequences” since this virtue concretes a basis of this theory

which has a consequential tone. According to the author a dynamic aspect of the virtue of human dignity and its connection with social consequences, as opposed to being obligatorily granted, is an appropriate way of understanding it. The scholar concludes that a multidimensional perception of human dignity within the “ethics of social consequences” based on three pillars: life (existence of beings possessing their dignity), criteria of a moral agent; consequences of actions (necessary for human dignity development) is the right solution. Making human dignity independent of external criteria which cannot be influenced by an active agent and basing it on the criterion of the consequences of the agent’s actions instead adds a particular applicable credential to the theory.

The three last chapters of the book refer to bioethics and environmental ethics concentrating on the virtue of life. Adela Lešková Blahová analyses the notion of life as, on one hand, a phenomenon, a process, an objective quality and, on the other hand, as a moral virtue in the “ethics of social consequences”, willing to create a wider space for influence and application of this theory. The author later discusses specific bioethical issues in reference to the “ethics of social consequences” in order to verify its application possibilities. She begins with a retrospective showing development of the concept of life in the “ethics of social consequences”. According to the author the “ethics of social consequences” perceives life in a narrower, naturalistic sense. Life is an objective quality, a basis for the existence of a virtue. Its moral significance depends on competences and predispositions possessed by a given form of existence which has an influence on the assessment of its actions (or lack of such an assessment) in terms of morality. A. Lešková Blahová shifts an axiological – naturalistic – orientation of the “ethics of social consequences” towards moral biocentrism. This is to allow for a wider application of this theory.

Another author – Katarína Komenská – also discusses the subject of moral biocentrism of the “ethics of positive consequences”, however in terms of moral community. according to the author it is necessary to extend the boundaries of a moral community within the “ethics of positive consequences” including all the living creatures that deserve respect and appreciation. A notion of dignity concerning respective forms of life in the “ethics of positive consequences” and determining the respect they deserve is insufficient since in reality it leads to abuse. Human duties concern all spheres of life, including the biosphere. Therefore, the “ethics of positive consequences” must accept as a reference of the boundaries of a moral community not only the reciprocal, but also unreciprocated relationships. What raises questions, according to K. Komenská, is the negation in the “ethics of positive consequences” the principle of impartiality. The scholar justifies that by writing that morality came into existence due to a rational awareness of the world and the relationships within it. Without this rational there would not be

any moral norms virtues, principles. Reflective and rational moral agents have an opportunity to see the complexity of the world and therefore they are obliged to take responsibility for relationships created by them with beings remaining beyond their moral circle.

The last article of the second part of the book written by Peter Jemelka discusses the ethics of environmental protection. The scholar recommends that in the further development of the “ethics of social consequences” the need for exploration of its axiological roots (e.g. the virtue of life) is taken into consideration, moreover, that contemporary philosophical theories, for example evolutionary ontology, are referred to, if the aim is the pragmatism of V. Gluchman original concept. Justifying his opinion, the author emphasises that ontology without ethics has no *raison d'être* and vice versa – ethics without ontology does not exist since in principle it is concerned with reality. He refers to the results of Josef Šmajs' work who distinguished two indispensable ontological components of the temporal reality: the order in nature and the order in culture. Culture is not at all a continuation of culture but a manifestation of a fundamental transformation of a primary natural environment caused by a human productive activity. These transformations are not undergone in accordance with the system logic of natural societies but in accordance with motivation and human interest. It is disturbing that the biosphere loses suppressed by the technosphere. Thus there is a strong likelihood of an irreversible catastrophe. It is therefore necessary for the environmental ethics to be of greatest interest.

The reasoning of K. Komenská and P. Jemelka is identical to I. Kant's approach. The philosopher, emphasising the rationality of the human species, imposes on it the duty of caring for the future of not only mankind but also the whole planet.⁷² The human reason is a source of moral law. In accordance with V. Gluchman's ethics one could continue by saying that if so, the moral law (right to life) imposes on a human some grounds of admissibility of undertakings over the disadvantaged, since unaware and incapable of reflection, forms of life. These, by serving human existence in some way, have the moral right to defence and protection from rational beings so that in result they can contribute to the development of mankind and not to potential doom.

The third part of the book consists of five chapters focusing on the professional ethics which challenge the “ethics of positive consequences”. It is inaugurated by the creator of the theory being the matter of our interest – V. Gluchman who cites the entire model of professional ethics which is in accordance with the “ethics of social consequences”. At first, however, he stresses that professional ethics, usually taking the form of codes, is included in deontological ethics. Consequentialism, in turn, is

⁷² Sole, J.: *Kant*, *ibid.*, p. 21.

sometimes poorly assessed as a possible basis of ethical codes since, according to some opponents (e.g. Leonard J. Brooks, Paul Dunn, Eileen Morrison, Peter Lucas) entails the risk of omitting the rights of an individual, autonomy, beneficence, disregarding justice and honesty in the name of positive social consequences (so that the end justifies the means), a raw cost/benefit analysis which is often inhumane. Moreover, without providing clear guidance it leads the agent to constant dilemmas. The advocates of consequentialism in professional ethics (e.g. of economists, of media) are George DeMartino and Elspeth Tilley who claim that this trend in ethics allows people to take into consideration the long-term, often postponed effects. Kenneth A. Strike and Jonas F. Soltis distinguished advantages and disadvantages of consequentialism in the professional ethics of a teacher. In reference to the former ones they emphasised that non-consequential views may be taken into account only on the condition that the consequences are considered. Referring to the drawbacks of consequentialism they stressed the risk of justifying immoral forms of behaviour by the positive effects. An apt approach, in their opinion, is emphasising the consequences together with respecting the students' dignity and treating them as free, worthy, rational moral agents.

Professional ethics which is in line with the assumptions of the "ethics of social consequences" should guide an employee on the path of seven principles modelled on the core virtues (of humanism, of human dignity, of moral law, of responsibility, of justice of tolerance, of duty) reflecting in realising positive consequences.

The nonutilitarian form of consequentialism presented in the "ethics of social consequences" can be applied in professional ethics, however it is more demanding in reference to the moral agent than the deontological ethics and the ethics of virtue due to the need for systematic reflection of the moral agent on the choice being made.

Next article is written by Grzegorz Grzybek and Jacek Domagała who desired to show the possibilities of applying the "ethics of social consequences" in creating the social ethos. In order to accomplish this, the authors examine the respective criteria of the rightfulness of action in V. Gluchman's concept and subsequently they examine its fundamental virtues and monitor the application of this theory in forming the professional ethics. The essence of the theory seems to lay in causing positive social consequences by means of its actions and therefore predicting the effects of one's own intentions. What makes the case more difficult is the fact that negative consequences are sometimes an unexpected side-effect of actions directed at completely different results. The point here is that one should in any case try to predict what may happen – analyse all the possibilities. In conclusion G. Grzybek and J. Domagała recognise the arrangement of the meanings within the "ethics of social consequences". clear and legible principles and virtues which prove

the effectiveness of the theory in the professional ethics confirm the application possibilities of the theory in reference to creating the social ethos. The authors define the social ethos as models of behaviour and judgement, as a typical style of being which are indubitably influenced by morality and ethics. Since ethics is the art of life allowing for becoming independent of the morality of constraint, it is worth basing the social ethos on the requirements regarding the consequences of human actions. Their dimension will probably depend on rational decisions.

Subsequent work belongs to Marta Gluchmanová. The scholar focuses on the moral law and justice within the professional ethics of a teacher. She states that deontological ethics, as opposed to nonutilitarian consequential ethics, while assessing the costs primarily focuses on the consequences of the conduct of the moral agents. In the professional ethics of a teacher the virtues and the principles of moral law and justice have the potential of contributing to its development, development of theoretical research as well as of allowing for finding the solutions to practical (moral) problems. The aim of the “ethics of positive consequences”, as well as the professional ethics of a teacher is promoting the increasing positive social effects resulting from the agent’s conduct. The abovementioned effects must in turn be in line with the virtues and principles of the moral law and justice, as well as with other important ones (the virtue and principle of: humanity, human dignity, responsibility, tolerance, duty).

The penultimate, fifteenth chapter of the book is written by Gabriela Platková Olejárová who provides the readers with potential connections between the “ethics of social consequences” and ethical codes and application. The author describes the meaning of the notion and the purpose of the ethical codes which, in her opinion, serve merely as a starting point, creating space for moral reasoning, but they do not guarantee ready-made answers while facing dilemmas. The scholar compares and indicates the differences between a traditional – deontological approach to ethical codes and a modern – non-utilitarian and consequential one of the “ethics of social consequences”. G. Platková Olejárová emphasises the importance of taking into consideration the consequences of actions taken by employees in accordance with an ethical code. A deontological approach to the code results in clinging rigidly to the rules, disregarding autonomy and freedom to work and therefore – disregarding the consequences. Moreover, there are some formal limitations – a code cannot provide a ready-made recipe for purely practical dilemmas and doubts due to plurality and diversity of situations to be settled which, as a rule, differ from textbook examples. What is debatable is punishment for disobeying the rules of the code since every case is different and requires an individual approach. Additionally, the code is sometimes considered as a tool destroying freedom and creativity – a human used to making use of it does not try to think independently.

The code also raises concerns in reference to the scale of impacts since it very often enforces certain forms of behaviour with which an acting person does not necessary internally agree but maintains his private stance and view on a given thing without a sense of responsibility for a given decision. So are the ethical codes necessary? Do the employees have time for thinking the situation over and reacting in accordance with the code or is it often an intuitive action? It turns out that indeed, but in case of emergencies, what is expected is a specific objective answer which is often provided by the code. Then, nevertheless, a deeper consideration of the predicted choice and its consequences is required. Knowledge of the rules is important, however over-reliance on them causes passivity and routinism. As a result, the author recommends a consequential approach to the ethical codes based on the “ethics of social consequences”. According to her the deontological rigid virtues and principles are not effective. Thus one should focus on a situational, relational approach recommending an open, active interpretation of events and analysis of the results of the taken decisions directed at causing the positive ones, which is proposed by nonutilitarian consequentialism of V. Gluchman’s ethics. Such an approach is recommended in terms of professions which are dominated by a reflective type of a moral agent, i.e. among managers, doctors, lawyers, teachers. The consequential model of professional ethics based on the assumptions of the “ethics of positive consequences” weakens the deontological model and becomes a reasonable alternative.

The book closes with the sixteenth chapter written by Lucas E. Misseri. The scholar emphasises a growing importance of the V. Gluchman’s theory not only in the field of science but also in everyday life. For when V. Gluchman was creating his theory, technological advancement was on a completely different level. Today one may make an attempt to apply his “ethics of social consequences” to cyberspace, to be more specific, in the principles regulating communication. V. Gluchman’s imperative, according to L. E. Misseri, is a call for trying to realise in one’s conduct positive social consequences, maintain respect to one’s own rights and the rights of others. It is especially necessary for the users of cyberspace. If the predictions of futurologists stating that the boundaries between the reality and the virtual reality will be blurred are to be fulfilled, even more a certain ethical orientation should be adopted in order to avoid the fear of what the future brings.

While referring to I. Kant’s ethics the dissimilarity and the convergence of his beliefs with the views of V. Gluchman in terms of the imperative should be noted. In I. Kant’s view a duty which a human should feel and realise is identical to an inner desire to submit to reason. This imperative is categorical – absolute (it regards everyone in every place and time), it requires tremendous discipline. Despite taking different forms, in its general meaning it consists in acting in the way we would

like others to act and applying the rules whose universal existence we would wish for. For I. Kant desires do not matter. For V. Gluchman, in turn, these individual preferences referring to the need of a pursuit for the common good, but firstly for the good of one's own and of relatives are essential in terms of fulfilling the idea of humanism which is the heart of morality. V. Gluchman distinguishes between a few principles which, as a reflection of leading virtues, have a common basis - a fundamental rule of realising positive social consequences in undertaken actions. The formula of V. Gluchman's imperative given by L. E. Misseri which stresses the consequences and self-respect and respect to others partially (in terms of respect to rights) resembles the categorical imperative. I. Kant, however, omits the issue of consequences which are emphasised by V. Gluchman. Both philosophers require observing the rules, either in an absolute (I. Kant) or relative way, depending on the situation (V. Gluchman).

Conclusion

It should be noted that the book devoted to V. Gluchman's concept entitled "Ethics of Social Consequences: Philosophical, Applied and Professional Challenges" includes reflections on the structure and the function of the Slovak ethicist's theory. The work constitutes a contribution in a broadly understood development of ethics which is the subject of interest. This development consists in specification of a number of anthropological and methodological issues in order to increase the applicability of the ethics and its universal nature in the changing reality and requirements it entails.

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