

NOT THE BODY IS PRIMARILY ENDANGERED BY CONTEMPORANEITY OR, CONCERNING MANY A SHORTAGE OF PSYCHICAL HYGIENE FIRST OF ALL

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Abstract: *We are mostly endangered by the lack of morality (K. Lorenz). We have been moving in a duality of life values. At the same time a contradiction between the ethics of shame (finality) and sin (causality) is projected here. We cannot rely on a natural equipment of man. Honour is not qualified by oneself, but by one's social neighbourhood. Biosociology clips the wings of "spirituality". The risk of disintegration of values, including personal integrity (by clearing out of oneself), is rising. Apart from the expected changes of the climate neither the contemporary constellation of economic and political forces of our world can persist. Along with it life of each man, by its unrepeatable, is an innumerable value. Man cannot remain without a "natural" moral thirst. The role of a teacher has not been given only by his/her teaching. S/he is constantly one of the immediate and mightily influencing examples. It seems that school is to blame for infesting the culture of communication. It is highest time to also contribute to improving the climate in the public life, especially by a more urging education to "citizenship". Instead of a dogmatic transfer of the curriculum it is necessary to steadily point out to the difficulties of a gradual penetration into more adequate knowledge. We should not lead our wards to a dogmatic picture of the world, life and values in it.*

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The Nobel Prize holder and one of the founders of modern ethology Konrad Lorenz sometime said that we as humans are mostly endangered by the **lack of morality**. It does not seem that the threat of the decline of our civilization, caused by these somewhat indirect and intangible reasons, has been adequately reflected both by the political "elites" and the "public". I intend to concisely illustrate it by showing some recent

examples. In summer 2009, the Czech legislators bothered their heads again with how to optimally settle the penal responsibility of youth when, simultaneously, it may be meddled with thus blessing their untimely sexual activity. There is a similarly delusive problem with smoking. As if to prohibit anybody to smoke in restaurants were a problematic incursion into the free rights of operating them (to say nothing of the secondary inhaling of such smoke by non-smokers). Already in spring 2009 fruitless debates were held about casinos and gambling as if, in such a case, the first priority were not the psychological health of the population and the risk of disintegration of thus affected families, regularly combined with criminal activities. At the same time we should not overlook the fact that riches and power create an unusually strange opportunity to unbinding extravagance. In Europe's political scenery, it is Italy's PM Berlusconi who is very famous in the field. — In the following text I intend to show a broader “mycelium” of the problems indicated in the title of this contribution. I will come back to some maladies which both connected vessels are exposed to, i.e., teachers and their pupils and students.

I would like to evade any academic “professionalism”.¹⁾ If we say “ethics” we immediately take an idea of something universal in the mind, be it a theory or, more often, some and somehow glorified life-sustaining practice, coupled with some community's norms of life and defining it also outside.

In our rather complicated contemporaneity **we do not dispose of both one generally recognized “ethics”** and one socially upheld practical “morality”, to say nothing of any provided guarantees over the common denominator of personal moral practice. To immediately evade any useless terminological and factual confusion, it might be good to define some basic terms. I will proceed from the contemporary usage.²⁾

Ethics = “theory of morals and morality”.³⁾

Morals = “socially imposed and outwardly evinced practice of interpersonal contact in declared attitudes and in dominant behaviour of community members”.

Morality = “attitudes and behaviour exposed into the community through individual ethical principles”.

Metaethics = “theory of ethics (if not a comparative metatheory of various ethics)”.⁴⁾

Science = “rational (analytic and systematic) elaboration of intersubjectively relevant problems (which as such need not be rational)”.⁵⁾

1. A starting hiccup at the “dualism” of life values

The way of how we act, or have the feeling that we should act, starts and ends with the inherited habits of the community which we were born into. The biological prerequisites to a reliable behaviour got started to be scientifically investigated only recently. We cannot limit ourselves to state that a certain, mostly minority type of behaviour has been genetically predisposed. It is one thing to find a different sexual orientation somehow “normal” though differing from the majority population (which is the case practically only in our contemporaneity), but one of the questions here can be the fact that homosexuals – not only themselves, of course! – do not biologically contribute to the conservation of life in the human society. I take it risky to legally define partnerships of the same sex as “families”.⁶⁾ At the same time we should not be blind to the criminal

persecution of homosexuality in many a contemporary state in our world. It appears that **morals and morality are not automatically established by any “public education” based on scientific knowledge, but by might structures in our contemporary states and their “driving forces” used to conserve popularity and positions.**

At the first glance, morals/morality seems to be a “specifically human” phenomenon, but we can find similar features in animals, too.⁷⁾ However, considering some (and often from a religious viewpoint codified) principles, the crucial moral canons have been held as **historically and socially unconditional.** — In accord with some, not immediately to be expected, reactions of people to some inputs we even can assume that possibly several tens of thousands years ago – and in connection with the notion of a “soul” as a peculiar company of the bodily affected life – a rather strange, epistemologically formulated dualism led to an **articulated dualism of ethically perceivable and antagonistically given values.**⁸⁾ Similarly, we could be confronted with a rather surprising conception of a “right-sighted” and “left-sighted” soul,⁹⁾ or even with the antagonistic “heavens” and “hell”, and their corresponding, among people acting forces (“angel”, “devil”).

We should not take it easy that there exists a “sub-conscious” shyness towards anything which might be impregnated by some “evil” transmitting contagion. Professor Bruce Hood prepared an interesting experiment: He asked his public in a lecture hall who would wear a presented woolen cardigan if given 20 pounds (then equal nearly to contemporary \$50). A countless number of hands could be seen. Then the lecturer remarked that this cardigan had been worn by an infamous murderer. Afterwards he repeated his question. Now only a few hands turned up as if that cardigan were somehow physically infected. **As if some evil could be mediated in distance;** a material mediator will do... We need not immediately conclude that many contemporary people are shy when confronted with not well defined “negative energies”; there are many a human in their lives counting with equally vague “positive energies” through which they believe they can upgrade life and make it “more spiritual” (without any necessary indication of what it means).¹⁰⁾ There remains here a, not much optimism stimulating, **question if anything coming from the realm of science is sufficiently relevant for practical behaviour of humans, both individually and collectively (and interpersonally).**

We must feel disconcerted over the fact that criminality grows so much, especially in form of internationally organized crime, and sometimes disguised as if by principles based in religion, if not “transcendentally”. (Many a time, we may be puzzled by the fact that it is not so important what has been done, how and by whom, but how it has been mediated.) Various ideologies have been presented as a confrontation, be them called only “contest”, or more directly “war” (possibly “war of civilizations” as famously written by S. Huntington).

Although we universally talk about “man”, we as humans living in different cultural backgrounds have not got the same “common denominator” for our attitudes and behaviour, and especially not for their motivation. Therefore **we must necessarily (“in between of the time”?) do without “global” ethics** which could regulate our relationships both individually and locally, and between the states and globally. If there were not such hindrances, we would both better combat poverty and diseases, and find more respect towards “fair play” in interpersonal relations and the sizeable responsibility for life (at least one’s own).

2. Contradictory guidepost of “shame” and “sin”

Not every time we understand that, from an initial state of affairs (that something “IS”), nothing binding follows for any future state (that, e.g., something “IS TO BE”). The less can we assert that something “has to be UNCONDITIONALLY”, which means that the reflected *desideratum* “MUST BE” notwithstanding the circumstances of the given or future, or somehow longed-for or desirable, situation. In a classic way, this has already been formulated by David Hume.

When confronting such ethically (morally) fixed *desiderata* with a given state of affairs, we must simultaneously include both the free will and moral responsibility. We are not yet forced to consider a **future situation as an open exhortation full of alternatives**; it may also seem that we dispose of a linear chain of possible acts. In such a case we have at our disposal both **causality behind and finality in front of us**. — The old “Homeric” model comes out of finality. It is a moral model of a **possible “shame”** when a deed was somehow thwarted and was not, owing to various unforeseen circumstances, positively evaluated. A much later Christian (but also partly appended Muslim!) model is based on causality. It uncompromisingly counts with the **phenomenon of “guilt”**, as an effect of “sin” (n a sizeable measure “inherited”!). In such a case even if we could count with a peaceful outcome of an activity burdened by “sin”, human acts, subjectively and dogmatically, remain “morally not reconciled”, at least when we cannot immediately count with “God’s compassion” in eternity.

Once more: A Greek (or a Roman) from the Antiquity was not interested so much in “cleanliness” of the means used as in the necessity to **guard the effects**. A Christian or Muslim access to a deed, **from the beginning and in a privileged way, takes care of the incentives** leading to a secondarily evaluated act, without measuring so much the quality and resonance of the goals reached by it. — Let us illustrate the “finality” conception first. Even when a Homeric hero succeeded to reach an end by ploy or fraud, he remained *agathos* (“good”, “valiant”, “generous”, not to say “virtuous”), as he could stake such a claim not only among equals of his community, but as it was common in the society of that time, in the general public, too. In the *Illiad* we can read that Agamemnon intended to steal a slave woman called Briseis from Achilles. Even if such a behaviour was not in any way contrary to the quality of “being *agathos*” Nestor, in spite of it, wanted to ward him off it. He urged the king not to take the girl from Achilles even if he remains *agathos* both ways.¹¹⁾

The opposite paradigm, can have, and does have in our contemporaneity, several times a much cruel sequel. A Muslim girl can evade the dictates of her own family and get enamoured in a man who, in no way whatever, can enter the relationship of the family. The family then tips somebody of its circle as the “avenger” of its “virtue”, sometimes even her brother to kill her, evidently to do it to wash away her “proven guilt”, her “sin”. In such a way “morals” has been treated even at the beginning of the 21st century (not exceptionally between Muslim immigrants in Europe)! — At the same time, I cannot omit one very rough pattern taken from the Old Testament showing the same morally “causal signpost”. In editions of the Bible the text has been headed by the title “Dinah and the Shechemites” (Gn 34). Jacob’s daughter Dinah was raped by Shechem, son of prince Hamor. Shechem immediately afterwards wanted to marry Dinah. Some

talks started between the two parties. Shechem's father and he himself are ready to offer "anything", including blood-related association, to reach a marriage. Jacob's sons set an incredible precondition – circumcision. All the men of the town, including the prince's family should be circumcised. Even this unusual condition was fulfilled. But the third day when they were still in pain, two of Dinah's brothers (Simeon and Levi) killed all men in the city, including Hamor and Shechem (Gn 34:25-26). They also looted the city taking as plunder everything in the houses, including women and children, and flocks and herds. Jacob does not reprove his sons for their perfidiousness, but only for the trouble caused by the bad reputation which can induce his family's doom (Gn 34:30)! The sons defend themselves hinting at Shechem's treating their sister Dinah like a prostitute (Gn 34:31)!! For the retaliating brothers of the honour of their sister the following Shechem's honest desire to marry Dinah represented nothing. In the patriarchally organized Hebrew society nothing can be expected to be written about Dinah's feelings preceding the wedding. (Unmarried girls were taken as father's "propriety"; we can only leaf through Deuteronomium, the 5th book of Moses.)¹²⁾ In similar cases at that time, in such a treacherous way could act nearly all the world. We are now reminded of it because we should conspicuously see that: a) the Muslim shari'a rules have their roots in another (if not lower) level of cultural development; b) a "causal morality model" is being very visibly applied, in a religious transformation, even in the 21st century, and that in the form of a "sin" expiable only by blood.¹³⁾

We, of course, can ask the question where from and where to, the moral signpost leads if we may be allowed to set a goal to a senseful and reliable manner of behaviour (be it a "paradigm"?). **We cannot rely on a "natural" – as if "inborn" – human moral equipment.** Any declaration of some "universal" norms of behaviour cannot be of efficient help without the corresponding sanctions. The fixing and enumeration of what "is to be", is based on the experiences of what somehow "is" and what is to go on in a similar way, or "is to change". It seems optimum if a community can unite some politically set *desiderata* ("telos") with religious "boards". Guarantors in a given society can easily fix both a respect towards the fixed norms and a penalty in case of non-fulfilment. In both alternatives, it is well shielded by a reliable causal pattern ("if — then"). Men easily listen to a possible (possibly not immediate) reward and punishment (many a time drastically immediate!).¹⁴⁾

When we intend to reflect on ethical boards, we often take it for granted that there is "something" inside us, already "in a natural way" set, and in a "specifically irresistible human" form settled. In the middle of 1960s, Stanley Milgram started to realize refined experiments on macaques. The ape was trained to connect the release of a handle with a day's food. Then, another macaque was placed in a neighbouring cage which, after the release of the handle by a trained macaque got a painful electrical shock. An unexpected surprise followed. The trained ape preferred to be hungry, as it thus eliminated the pain of the other animal!¹⁵⁾ — There is a problem here, of course. What exactly the trained macaque feels when it wavers to use the handle being hungry, cannot be objectively verified. It is evident that it evaluates its own situation confronting it with its "instinct" needs. It weighs preferences of the particular "payments". For us, it need not be automatically decisive whether the macaque in question, by being "sparing", wants to prevent the pain of the other macaque, or "only" its shriek, as it irritates itself. These

experiments by Milgram were, 20 years afterwards, described in his book *Obedience to Authority* (1983). If, in a similar experiment, a trial person got an authoritative instruction to pull down the handle (similarly as it was the case in macaques), such a person did not waver to mediate a shock to another individual beside him (even when he did not know that such a shock was feigned); and he was ready to repeat the pulling without any wavering. And then there is an obtrusive question here: Humans are often – probably not every time?! – indifferent when their possible “neighbours” are painful. I think we need not rack our brains over the question of whether the bigger role here has been played by a sometimes rather “crusty” relation towards other people (“yours is not mine”, me being out of risk), or if we are to perceive such experiments as an illustration of human respect to authority (“cost what it may?”). On the other hand we all know many cases of altruism which may serve as a polemical antipole of Milgram’s results. We also know situations when a soldier covered the loophole of the enemy to enable his comrades to occupy an elevation point without further losses; or when a priest in a concentration camp chose to die in place of some other prisoner who was father of a family. Not only once a mother in a disaster covered her child to save it, although she herself did not survive a fire or collapse of the ceiling. In such a case we must moreover calculate with additional prerequisites of ideology or blood (or “genetics”?), as if the primary role here was not played by self-preservation instinct, but by “unwritten” principles of “virtue” or “love” (of children, neighbours, “fatherland”).

3. A perplexed intermezzo about “virtue”, or: Are we well “deep-rooted”?

By way of introduction it may be useful to remind us of an experience by Zimbardo. It has been a classic and shocking experiment. Professor Zimbardo prepared it as a game with his students, simulating prison conditions. “Jailers” put themselves in their new shoes in such a way that they actively began to degrade, humiliate and physically torment their colleagues, now classed as “prisoners”. In the interest of the participants, the scheme had to be untimely cancelled. (It was abundantly commented.¹⁶) — It seems that if an acting human personally misses the motivation connecting the deed with its possible “sin”, it will then act without any feeling of “guilt”. And if a person feels to be “only” a vehicle of a prescribed part, s/he seems as if automatically taken out of a coordinate system of written and unwritten principles and habits till now shared and bound by. And then s/he will feel to be personally without any “guilt” and, moreover, a similar notion of “guilt” in front of the public has to be missing, too. Under such circumstances, questions concerning evaluation of anything as “lawless” or “immoral”, cannot come to the acting subject’s mind. **“Honour” is not fixed by the individual; his or her own personal feelings of “guilt” may be ignored. Their potential degree has been fixed by the social environment.** It is not necessarily a regional or generally established authority which determines it. **Any group serves the purpose**, be it a crowd, gang, mob (also a class, or a social ghetto). It suffices here when there is a – not necessarily large – vehicle which somehow “naturally” absolves from “guilt” and makes the actors “innocent”, if not – over and above – useful and beneficial, and within such groups,

praised as “heroes”. So, paradoxically, when there is a certain script here with **roles connected with a possible coming forward** (as a “star”), their fulfillment is a coveted goal and a source of acclaim. And it has also been the case both in the academically directed Zimbardo’s “prison game“ and the old sinister and murderous Hitler’s “game of cleansing the German race (from Jews and “inferior beings”)”. Similar situations came to exist, and originate continuously, in wars or armed fightings of separate groups within a society. As if it were only a convenient metaphor: somebody “cleans” the terrain from the enemy or “sinners” (or however “undesirable” men). We can meet such behaviour in the army where the older guard torments and maltreats conscripts, or in schools by bullying the younger ones or physically somehow disabled classmates. It is an expression of force and, subsequently, a manifestation of respect towards such a force both among the accomplices and the sufferers. **It substitutes other forms of excellence, especially when positive values are not sufficiently cultivated in communities, beginning in families and ending in state institutions.**

Although we, all of us in our lives, can get – commencing in our early youth – many binding rules, instructions, orders and prohibitions having to do with our collectively (if not socially) sanctioned behaviour, we may, notwithstanding (and owing to a certain outward background), be landed in a moral “vacuum” where **no inherited or “stabilized” and personally binding moral values exist**. In such situations it can be shown how misleading it is to rely on “sanctity” of any declared or felt “norms for life”. At the same time and not rarely, we may be confronted by some “morally” conceived rules, valid for all, but reserving “dignity” (and pride) for the proper “elite” which then is situated as an **“embodiment of the law outside any law”**. As if such a member of a given “elite” (Zimbardo’s „gaoler“, member of the SS-forces in a Nazi concentration camp, „body“ of the NKVD or GPU in a Stalinist gulag), but also men at arms in various “guerrillas” and extreme movements (from Neonazists to Al Qaeda), all of them were an instrument of a “higher will”; but simultaneously, fed – and impregnated – by an intoxicating self-consciousness exhibiting the strength of one’s own unrestrainedness which, as an **instrument of a higher might, does not know any responsibility or apology, and the less so any feeling of a possible guilt**. In this form, we can somehow be presented with an – arguable, nihilist and degraded – analogy of the “honour” (or “virtue”) from the Antiquity...

In Europe of old, life could be outwardly measured by the level at which it was taken as “honourable”. In this way it was as if thus the powerful ones deserved recognized merit also after death, remaining in the memory not only of their own contemporaries. In Old Greece, the well known alternative of “with the shield, or on the shield” had the meaning of being commemorated with no end also after a heroic death for one’s proper *polis*. The grateful city knew that such an unselfish self-sacrifice in the name of one’s proper community had been a maximal (in an extreme case also “optimal”) evidence of what it to be understood as “virtue”. Romans called it “virtū”; as if it derived its meaning directly from a, not nearer defined, “virility” (from Latin “vir”, i.e., “man”). Historically taken, it could also mean not only personal bravery, but also reliability in words (“truthfulness” as against the city), generosity (“sponsoring” of public distraction), responsible access towards subordinates (surely “legionnaires”); but necessarily not a caring (if not anxious) and affectionate relationship towards one’s proper progeny

and other common people. In our own contemporaneity, it seems that the **expression “virtue” (or “honour”)** has **totally lost its meaning**; with an interesting exception when a politician feels to be dishonested by some – mostly verbal – presentation in media (and for a law court evaluated in millions of Czech crowns).

Currently, **it is not the case among men and women to judge “virtue” equally**. Exceptionally, virtue can be **compensated by the cult of celebrity**, also in the form of pragmatic shyness, or also by the need to preserve illusions concerning the meaning of some deeds or importance of their actors; or, potentially, by the displayed piety when confronted with the death of a renown individual. — When we remember the memory of the tragically diseased Lady Diana, originally Miss Spencer, then after the dissolution of the marriage with Prince Charles, when she led – owing to her position as mother of two royal princes – a rather problematic private life, it could not be simultaneously overlooked how informally and non-pompously she treated people in pain or threatened by death (including the sick and terminally ill people with AIDS, or living in areas with landmines). It cannot be overlooked how the whole world reacted when confronted with the news of her tragic death. Not ignoring Lady Diana’s problematic private life both during her marriage and after that time, “Lady Di” remains a renown person and glorified nearly as a saint. Not only once was she compared with Mother Teresa, Nobel Prize winner and already beatified nun by the Church. — In such cases, it would not be easy to try and put such lives under a simple and unifying, and “morally” qualifying, attribute. There are always things which do not fit an ideal picture. So, shall we be content with what somehow prevails? Or, with what can be valid from a later perspective? Or also, with what predominates from the viewpoint of a broader community? — Should we not be surprised that a famous general (and later an important politician) Powell did not count with “virtue” when he evaluated their qualities? And he had a list of such positive qualities numbering almost twenty of them.¹⁷⁾

Montesquieu once said that three items can never be in accord, laws, virtue, religion. (In Islam, in a strange way, we can find the opposite; actions have been many a time performed as if in the interest of honour of the family, nation, and faith. Within such a scheme of values we are also to include – as if “naturally” – the law of shari’a.)

4. In the globalization period, are we not presented with “impersonality” as an unwanted gift?

Biosociology has already clipped the wings of our “spirituality”¹⁸⁾ when it referred to **social insects** as an example of how to “unselfishly” work in the interest of the whole. In another aspect and till the middle of 20th century (and in areas of Marxist influence, nearly till the end of that century), a notion characterizing animals as reflex automata prevailed. Such an idea was strengthened among believers by the imagination that, **to realize “spiritual” experiences, we absolutely need to have a “soul”**. By means of a miraculous act of creation, only humans dispose of a soul, so to speak. To have a hard boundary between man and other creation (animals), Marxists used a dogma that it was work (and instruments) which created humans, as animals, after all, do not work!¹⁹⁾

I will start these reflections with a rather fresh experience from anthills. Young ants mostly stay in the anthill, for the performing of less risky tasks. The older ones, on the contrary, have already a shorter lifespan and do not represent such a loss when they die during some risky operation outside the anthill. An anthill as a macrounit has its means of how to functionally assure this division of labour.²⁰⁾

As far as a human community is concerned, from the time of the first states, a specific – though, with the time, changeable and variable – structure could be created to assure the survival of that political organism. Slaves and serfs were not considered to be more than a certain type of “zeroes” which of themselves did not signify anything.²¹⁾ The lower layers of town population participated in such an “evaluation” with the countryside till the end of 19th century (though a larger measure of individual “liberty” for some mass protests was to be registered, especially in towns, sooner than that). From the beginning of 20th century – and more so after WWI – a certain “democratization” took place in many states, even when something so “natural” in 21st century as **equality of the sexes** was not considered to be urgently needed and fully legalized, e.g., in culturally and economically developed Switzerland; Swiss men as the only authorized voters were not sure women should be authorized to have voting rights.²²⁾

In a world disposing of only limited communications and a relatively dispersed and mostly illiterate population, it was rather easy to conserve certain traditions of both how to exercise control over the population and preserve primitive notions about the status of the world and its possible “norms”. If we admit that grinding and an unimaginably low level of living conditions do not allow such enslaved people (moreover struck by diseases or high risk of losing life) to **concentrate their minds and comprehensively think**, then we can figure out what the situation was like in medieval Europe with the consoling imagination that life on this Earth only serves as a temporary transfer station to reach eternal bliss. From the middle of 19th century, Marxism offered the working class a revolutionary road to overcome the subhuman enslavement under the “bourgeois” establishment.²³⁾ In 20th century, different totalitarian projects appeared promising a “change of order in the society”, and that under the guidance of an “ingenious leader” (in communism, fascism, nazism).

In that continuous life degradation of broad masses it has been dramatically shown that, again, common man – even in the so-called culturally developed countries – becomes **only a “small wheel” in an impersonal machinery, as he had already been during several thousands of years when settled on the ground**; which began to slowly change for something better between both the world wars (at least in the happier lands) and took this course for some years after 1945. At the end of 20th century, various illusions concerning a “post-modern truth” about subjective notions of the functioning of this world, and the possibility of controlling it in a directive manner, in accord with similarly subjective “resolutions” of some party leaderships, have been among us again. Among plain people came back **existential insecurity which cannot be reliably cured**. Neither the “free hand of the market” is without any stain; **in a free and open system for the future we cannot create models which could anticipate reality with such a measure of exactness as we would - for any scientifically relevant analysis – wish**. From a contemporary perspective it is hardly possible to see all the requirements which the new, and already global, organization of the world must fulfill, if it comes to it, not

only economically and politically, but also culturally, and... “morally”. And let us cultivate a “conscious personality of a citizen” when s/he – not of one’s own fault – loses her or his work! Or, what to do if s/he lives from the early childhood, with no perspectives at all, on a rubbish dump.

5. The contemporary „Alice“ in a strange ethical and moral wonderland

There is a question here if, and to what a degree, humans may be, in their life values, influenced by culture which need not serve only for pastime, but as, at least partially, a secondarily transposed message about personal and group morality. It is no wonder responsible public servants – in the state, town or village, church, or an interest community – often express their insecurity over what is, or already is not, situated within the presupposed limits of what might yet be tolerated or benevolently overlooked.

The scale of problematic features is rather broad and, owing to the intensity of influences and “social harmfulness”, very differentiated. It can be probably seen that I try to hint at the negative sides of life. Thereby, and with no larger commentary being necessary, we can clearly understand that when reflecting about morality there is **no big problem with what has been “generally“ conceived as positive**. And then declaring morality is similar to declaring law: **behaviour reflecting conserved moral habits (and customs) of a given neighbourhood and time is, as if it were something obvious and normal**. Journalism lives from anomalies in a similar way as laws must be declared for such people who are supposed not to observe them. Once upon a time, a law had to be prepared for some “three percent” of those who had to be averted from crime. Today’s commercial activities where the “game” runs in billions of dollars, make possible to patiently calculate millions and tens of millions as “expenses”, to bribe those responsible, as “the end justifies the means”, and a heightened calculation including some bribes may be easily calculated in the budget (such means will not be covered from one’s proper hand, all the same). I am hinting not only at the so-called “business ethics” and a not corresponding morality in its practice.²⁴⁾ Profits in millions or even billions of dollars are being brought yearly by faking trade-marked goods, trafficking and selling drugs, and also a shocking manipulation of people, either when organizing illegal passages of immigrants or on the market with girls sent to brothels (not to speak about marketing body organs for transplantations).²⁵⁾ At the end of the first half of 20th century (not to count some “Maffian” exceptions), criminality in general was an individual activity. **At the beginning of 21st century, we probably cannot find such a country where there would not operate any international gangs**, moreover mutually competing and liquidating rivals by murders. Internationally organized nets of illegal business get exceptional financial means and, till now, have access to laundering “dirty money” through various channels nearly everywhere. Their profits may be greater than a budget of an average state. We cannot wonder that sometimes official representatives (ministers of interior, if not premiers) speak about the prospects of recourse of such gangs very cautiously. It has already been said that some big gangs – owing to their financial background – technically are, at least, one step in front of the repressive organs

of the state. We can add to this as a fact that in certain suitable geographical regions (with tricky access and easily defensible highland) gangs, with the use of their military force, control parts of the state where they “economically” operate. In such a situation, no morality can serve as a “medicine”, be it anyhow insistent, but – I am afraid – only a hard and repressive security and military force of the state (or international units). **Risks grow that financially big gangs could, at last, possess atomic weapons and thus hold the remaining world in check, not respecting the interests of the majority of mankind and its “eventual”, and not uniform, morality...**

Only when we do not bother our heads with the greatest risks, we can probably reflect on not so globally imperative themes as, e.g., when a Christian promises “eternal” faithfulness and divorces, or when a priest promising celibacy thinks that a homosexual relation (sometimes verifiably to boys protected by law against such an abuse!) has nothing to do with “fornication” (and therefore with “sin”!). In such correlations we should otherwise measure to a common man and differently to a potential model for a greater community (i.e., a central dignitary of the state or corporation), considering a possible “bad example”; **especially when the formerly intensely perceived “bonds” (“shackles”?) of traditional and personally binding “moral” values have been – not for the first time - uncontrollably loosened, particularly in relationship to a growing proportion of population living more and more in the anonymity of steadily growing towns** which can be distinctively shown in states not yet fully economically developed but already drawn in such a process.

Without regard to the growing “secularization” of economically rather stable societies, even there **we cannot mishear the call of duty demanding “spirituality”** and gaining strength and “articulation” (even when it is not always clear enough what is meant thereby).²⁶⁾ There is an excellent probability that, evidently, some clever people introduced here a “game of the human soul (if there is one)” and, simultaneously, this feature enunciates the need to reflect moral viewpoints in life where, for many people, it becomes commonplace characterized mostly in form of a biological struggle for existence.

When reflecting on values we should not forget that there is a **certain relativity in all evaluative judgments**. Many a factor influences them, mostly unwittingly and vicariously. In this respect, we cannot omit personal experiences of life and the way of how we collectively spend time which makes the so-called “big history”. In our modern and more and more “**information” society** internet, television, broadcast and print, continuously present – though in a special, and sometimes biased and distortional, “selection” – various news from anywhere in such a way that anybody can automatically be nearly their witness, if not addressee, as we all can participate in their knowledge without reference to the position in society, or possible risks for the place. Too many people on our planet know almost “everything”, though it be not structured and ordered in priorities. It is a **cocktail in which we easily lose the material and evaluating (if not “central”) thread**, or connection. And the head is crammed with a mental confusion instead of a definite feeling and profiled emotion.

We spoke above (in the 4. part) about the return to a **consumerist (if not also driftless) life** in which – again, from Antiquity to, at least, Enlightenment – an individual need not possess any name, and s/he would not have to be neither a number if not having

somewhere near her or his back a “cell” (mobile phone). As if the only “specific difference” of contemporaneity as against the past were a relative abundance of all manner of goods. **This indirection is more of a catastrophe where, in our “so vertiginously modern age”, it is the personal existence which is endangered, as a necessary basis for any important human values.**

This “moral” devaluation of human life may sometimes be outbalanced by visits of mass celebrations, or also demonstrations of extreme movements where, as if of a sudden, this felt inferiority and despondency may end because now “we are a highly visible force” (to be feared by the police!). In form of a substitution of partnership feeling, serves public supporting of some sport or club, or a popular singer or musical band. Photographs of stars on the covers of journals make them better marketable, including demand for T-shirts with their portraits. “Fan clubs” of popular singers induce a cultic relationship towards a popular personality and are another illustration of the same type of **emptying oneself** as if members of such clubs wanted to exist only as an accompanying shadow of their deified idol, without any proper “authenticity”.²⁷⁾

At the beginning of the 4th part of this contribution we mentioned biosociology. For some decennia we are sure that, apart from some popular animals, it is cetaceans or dolphins who dispose of a special “intelligence”. The way of how the Japanese kill dolphins – for putative “scientific research” – is hardly justifiable. There are filmed spots where you can see live dolphins in a heap on a ship and men cutting their bodies in such a way that the sea around is red of blood, as if it were “only” a nest of field mice which must be liquidated. — The public is more and more interested in the manners of how butchery is being carried out and whether there are cases of mistreating horses, dogs or cats during their breeding. **An objectionable relationship towards an animal reveals some anomaly in a relationship towards humans, too.** Animals have been recently perceived as “things” only, which should not be treated in an unhuman manner. We should not fail to notice that critical voices may be heard more often disapproving experiments with animals not only in cosmetics, but also in human medicine, as if man, in this way, mistreated his arguable power over nature.²⁸⁾

6. Looking at our social reality, are we allowed to declare anything “ethically” in an efficient way?

Evidently, we have to find some “new ethics” to treat the problem areas directly connected both with the Earth (as a planet which is to be taken care of by us humans in the struggle of existence) and, **specifically, with its biosphere** (including, newly, the necessity to perceive the value of animal life as a morally and legally similar to our own), and thirdly – as if in a “mystical triad” – we must include here **the whole (and much non-homogenous!) sphere of culture and civilization**, from the general and abstract theoretical-informational cornerstones, via prerequisites for a **continuous and patient “humanisation” of man by science and education, until the contribution of technical means for such a “hominisation”**.

Looking at what we already can anticipate (in the middle of 2009), or what we may reasonably expect for the time near in front of us, **the world of tomorrow (consid-**

ering the escalating technical and social evolution, at least in some 25 years) may await many a, mostly dramatic, shock. If in between of the time, China is not confronted with hardly now estimable social unrest, it should, **in about 2030s, reach such an economical and military potential for a viable pressure diplomacy as to strive to achieve hegemony over the world.** Till now this position was enforced by USA and, after WWII and till the 1980s, challenged by the USSR and, from the beginning of 21st century by Russia again. It is not easy to judge the extent of possible power of India in the same economical and military boundaries, when compared with USA and China.²⁹⁾

In every respect, the existing predominance of the so-called “white race” and its culture is to be soon over. Until now both OUN and its much politically “archaic” Security Council does not count with it. If the struggle for sources of energy (or water, or quotas in fishery) is to intensify – which is to be expected – it will be, within the range of our globe, a **hardly knightly fight not only for the markets or the so-called “sustainable” life on this planet, but also an uneven competition in a combat to introduce the rationally most acceptable and humanly tolerable solutions and decisions about how to globally live and let live** (not only humans, but animals and plants, too, to say nothing about national resources).

Supranational political, financial, economic and cultural organizations have constantly given us **a shade of the twenty years after 1940s.** The braking influence of the existing atomic bombs during the years of the so-called cold war (as if a “3rd WW”) **cannot serve as an automatic and reliable deterrent forever** (especially when a “human error” can cause a nuclear catastrophe by some bad luck or nerve failure). Supranational gangs may enter the scene, too. To narrow it down to a “war on terror”, and **count only with military means for their liquidation, would not be adequate.**

At this time, **climate change – already proclaimed – may happen to be an incalculable problem.** It is not “only” a “somewhat” technical problem and really “somehow” outside of limited human qualification. The human civilization in the last few centuries contaminates the air more than ever (not to be compared with the time 50 years ago) and produces incomparably more rubbish (also partly liquidated by burning it!). The so-called “Protocol of Kyoto” should have been a starting point in the endeavour to more systematically solve the negative influences on the human environment by, at least, limiting them within possible measures. There is a problem. First, the greatest polluter – USA with fully 25 % share in the pollution – did not participate in the agreement and, secondly, since 2007 China has balanced its score with US (both these states together “contribute” with one half of the total, and so horrible, pollution in the world).³⁰⁾

Some influences (e.g., astrophysical) are outside human intervention which, of course, is no automatic excuse for leading politicians of the big powers to hesitate with, or delay, their contribution to a viable solution by showing to the autonomy of the climate. Do we not hear, moreover, their indications that there are also the traditional “national interests” to be observed (e.g., in US)? And as far as China is concerned, it may with partial right only refer to the exhalations of the West in the past two centuries (which, of course, is responsible for them!). In a similar way argue the representatives of such states where they get financial means by devastations of tropical forests; as if such present and local income were not a source for **much bigger problems for the whole world tomorrow.** It does not fall, primarily, into the semantics of economy to reflect

today of the risks for the population and homes of those whose perspectives and life may be inevitably endangered if the level of world seas is to go up a foot or so. In this context, **only a small group of people has got moral responsibility** to find a – possibly “partial” – solution which it cannot avoid by some excuse or burying the head in the sand, under the pretext that nature is capricious which we cannot unteach it...

It would be humanly desirable to perceive the problems of our contemporary world as a complex. In such a case we would dispose of globally conceived measures to confront poverty, child mortality, malaria, shortage of water, etc., **including – on a larger scale – a morally binding plan to culturally uplift the whole population.**³¹⁾

7. Driving force of morality in a given state of danger for the Earth, life and culture

The proportion of population living in the anonymity of towns is growing; most conspicuously in countries not yet economically developed, but drawn into such a process, with further risks of pauperization and criminality, together with the erosion of traditional moral values, be they respected much or less. On the one hand, many developing countries are dictatorial states. On the other hand, crowds of unarmed people can sometimes exert not a small pressure to change government. There is a problem here: to create functional and credible, and democratically shielded state organs, as there is always somebody “craving for unlimited power” there. The role of media, including internet, is growing, too. We can see much more of elaborately arrayed picture information, accompanied by pseudo-realist and cleverly styled verbal clichés, to create a **mental lullaby without reflecting about any of the more exacting life values.** In such a climate, populist moods can be propagated rather easily. A perspective of a more decent civic life may be endangered by authoritative and vain politicians. When there are not legal guarantees available everywhere, property and moral affairs lower public interest in the proper country (if the situation has not reached the proverbial last “drop”). In Europe, the age structure of the population changes quickly, in such a way, that the proportion of the younger generation is insufficient when compared with the pensioners. The number of illegally immigrants is growing, too. Possibilities to employ unqualified people decrease steadily.

Morally devalued institutions and ideas, as well as morally worn down citizen, can sometimes find a temporary solution in **new forms of religiosity, in not exacting music, as spectators and TV-watchers, if not also as participants in demonstrations of extreme groups,** for it may present some good occasion for an “evaluation“ of oneself through someone else, sometimes even through a crowd of similarly thinking people, thus endorsing one’s own self-conscience. The possibility to kill time by watching TV or playing computer games, contributes to the **atomization of life and its “averaging” into an alleged and “typical” net of inter-human relationships.** We can transpose ourselves, by means of a TV-series, somewhere on a town square or a village square, or also, and in a similar manner, on the outskirts of some town, in a small house, in hospital or school or office, or some other work, and with many a cliché, surely showing naked skin, variously shuffling partners into changing triangles, if it is not an

effective thriller with a pool of blood and much bold violence, and totally being outside all possible patterns of “life” or inspiration towards it.

This is the case, e.g., in the Czech Republic.³²⁾ We cannot immediately show anything commensurate from the countries with rapid economic development where also the population grows and the “scissors” between the rich and the poor open more and more up, which does not foreshadow anything about a further harmonious development (China, India).³³⁾ Outwardly Muslim states can partly rely on their oil, without having to raise literacy and principles of legality, as religion is not a private affair of each citizen there. From the north in contemporary Africa, we can detect a growing pressure of self-confident Islam; whereas from the south to the north, the same holds of Christian evangelization, often in territories economically, politically and socially not very stabilized. It is unimaginable today how, in a couple of years, not only the contest for markets, but especially for raw materials and energy would look. The competitiveness of China – shown in many ways already – will be in the 2030s in some important parameters comparable with US and the outwardly economically united European Union (with a strong euro!)³⁴⁾ would not like to play the role of the “third behind” (moreover with millions of immigrant Muslims within its borders)...

I do not want to meditate on the possibility of democracy at that time being worn out, though it is not an ideal system. Supranational structures are financially very exacting, but they might be a functional inter-link in between of particular regions (and traditional “states”) and a global world. **The adopted economic and political (and morally only little perceived) heritage from the time after WWII needs, for a long time already, an efficient – though painful, but mostly necessitated – revision.**

Let us now interrupt to speak about these economic and political – and sometimes rather gloomy or, at least, risky – contemporary conditions for a calm and not complicated life to find some ideas for an outlook for morality in the future.

8. An intermezzo before closing down

Morally profiled problems, if present, or predictable in the future, cannot be solved by any “ethical theory”. If believing in a dispassionate reflection of values, we cannot shut our eyes before reality where we can very often see triumphs of a greedy craving to get rich or the will to govern (“will of power”), and that without any remorse that it takes place at the expense of other people, or directly, at the price of their personal destruction... as if life of each human being were not, **through its unrepeatedness, a non-quantifiable value.**

It seems that we do not live in a **miraculous world**. But, indubitably, the greatest marvel in our Universe started with the so-called Big Bang. And, last not least, shortly afterwards this process went on with the “era of matter”.³⁵⁾

Much later originated our Solar system. In its structure was created the Earth, moreover with a Moon as its satellite. On the Earth, and very early, were created conditions for the emergence of life when, in combination with metabolism, also the conditions for life’s reproduction were created. Also many-cellular organisms sprang up. Afterwards (and after a catastrophe 65 million years ago) and in a freed niche after various saurs, an unprecedented development of mammals followed. And after some

other millions of years and in a geologically rather recent time, evolved the necessary conditions for different animal lines of creatures which started to regularly move on the hind (and now “lower”) extremities. And then – from the perspective of the preceding time surely unexpectedly – appeared here, on the Earth, a human, anatomically and with his mind similar to us, *Homo sapiens*. The genome of his organism – although there is a manifold and rich reserve of elements – is mostly composed of only three elements (carbon, hydrogen, oxygen).³⁶⁾

This creature discovered in himself the gift of speech. And some tens of thousands years ago man also discovered in himself a sooner not felt timidity in front of the puzzle of life and death. Approximately 30 000 thousand years ago man began to be urged by the idea of influencing the pace of events in his neighbourhood by evidently cultic creations. He, at last, started to settle on the ground and was not, any more, content with what nature gave him. He, afterwards, felt the necessity to conserve somehow his memory and, at last, created various types of script. He also discovered in himself the need of solving problems and, moreover, of looking for, and finding, beauty in his neighbourhood. He then began to seek the meaning of the being and his life. And he now – though not generally – is conscious of various pitfalls connected with the human life. In a “teleological” projection, he is aware of the need to overcome limitations of individual life by trying to surpass them. (No important function has been played by the thought whether we are, or are not, here in this Universe alone.)

For the sake of these miracles, here shortly exhibited, we must not remain, on our life road, without an outer moral framework and without a natural internal moral thirst.³⁷⁾

Many a time and mostly totally, we do not consider and understand how a pre-school child assimilates the code to decipher this **uniquely marvellous fairy tale of life**, without always naturally in its background grasping the **necessary initial prerequisites for its – now only preliminarily suspected – need to be inquisitive and longing for general education**; to say nothing of the responsibility for one’s own proper behaviour. (Not only as an exception here can be found a precondition for later problems which cannot be solved easily, starting with smoking and sometimes finishing with drugs. Here we can also find the roots of the following violence and extremism.)

9. What, so far, this time (especially in schools) is not ripe yet for?

If we do not want to stay only “with ourselves” – and with our “computer” – and **if we intend to live with our neighbours (not only “beside them”)**, then we may also discover the arguable relativity of different professed values (not only the “ethical” ones). And, in this way, we may be coming nearer to **toleration, which is so necessary even globally**. Nothing was said about it till now although it is a moral value “in short supply”. But, it is also evident that not all can be left to take its free course.

Here is the beginning of our – not only pedagogical – problem. We can hear that “Man cannot live by bread alone”. Without a multilateral material arrangement all may be amiss (if not worse!). Since past autumn (2008) in the Czech school system there have been many talks especially about money. We cannot leave aside the fact that the oldest generation is, among us, in only scarce numbers, having lived in incompa-

rable living conditions when drawing a comparison with the middle generation, not to speak about youth. After WWII, **women stayed in the working process for good** which, especially in the industrial countries, was a social revolution also in the sphere of family relations. Simultaneously, too many women started their career as teachers which caused feminization in schools. Women less often than men take this activity as a calling (not to mention a lower financial evaluation of this work). And the **role of a teacher has not been given only by her or his teaching**. S/he is, at the same time (and not only “moreover”), to serve as a possible and very immediate model, and that not only through outward appearance or knowledge. There are not too many personalities, apart from the parents, who may remain in memory for many decennia, or forever – as just the teacher is.

It is surely not necessary to elaborate the fact that other cognitive requirements are needed for working on the elementary level and that the teaching staff on higher levels has a more exacting task in front of itself. In both these settings, we can find something common (though not always watched and seen!): the “schoolmaster” must know **how to evoke interest in her or his subject** among pupils or students, and it has, naturally and unaffectedly, to be presented how s/he knows it, not taking it only as a “work load”. Now, I intend to mention several ideas, sometimes in triplets, which are not to be conceived as declarations and should be understood in their complexity.

So, first of all: During the last twenty years, our world has been especially smaller and made nearly contemporaneous (without reference to distance). It has happened, to say nothing of TV-news, mostly owing to the internet, electronic mail, mobile phones (“cells”), twitter, or facebook communications. In these nearly 65 years after WWII, we may record such a stormy – and constantly swifter – development of sciences and technical applications that, visibly, **all the living generations are mutually divided by their experience** with technical appliances and qualification to understand professional information.³⁸⁾

In the last semicentennial time, the teaching staff has been very dramatically confronted with a situation where pupils or students sitting in front of the teachers had been attuned to life on an incomparably higher level than it was the case with themselves. And – “Therein lies the rub!” Pupils and students could, in the given course of studies, know much more than their teacher.³⁹⁾

The teacher cannot hide her, or his, authority behind some strict rigidity or frustrating raids of repeated written tests. Is it not the case that s/he in to burn with the admirable knowledge of her, or his, subject (which s/he, of course, has reasonably mastered), to be able to, at least, induce the atmosphere of “smouldering” for its appeal and mysteries, mathematics being included?⁴⁰⁾

If we surpass the hindrances of the preceding paragraph, we should not, in a parallel, miss three more things in the classroom, be the subject of whatever difficulty: admiration of life in general, the same towards the stage of the world, and specifically a similar attitude to culture.

In each of these three areas, we can register some important questions which should find their manifestation in the **scenery of mutual communication**. Before I go on, I feel some responsibility to stress once more again that the **teaching process cannot be a “one-way only” stream of knowledge** passing through a strangely insulated

(and dictated) “pipeline”, but has to have its various feedback connections, “resting places”, if not commentaries of nearly anything what, as imperative, was brought by the current day.

A lesson should have the charm of a thrilling communication, similar to a simulated “discussion” **tempting the listeners to admire such features of knowledge and following up with a striving for its assimilation.** — So now let us hint at only “three” spheres deserving our consideration. First of all: the human society stays, or falls, disposing of a certain status of family, notwithstanding its form. It should not be “patriarchal”.⁴¹⁾ Although it need not always be simple and individually viable, the importance of the family should be naturally mediated by the relationship of the teacher to her, or his, younger members of the “team”, and her (or his) membership in it as a senior, more experienced, and considerate component. Not only as if speaking for “somebody else”, I would like to emphasize that, in a broad sense, education is needed not only for the ones who are to be educated (or the educator), but also for the whole society. **The importance of education is growing steeply.**⁴²⁾ And let us add a rather controversial requirement: culture and civilization as a complex should not take a back seat in our minds, somewhere “behind” (or “outside”) the material and consumerist aspects of life, and distraction.⁴³⁾

Is there not any brake in the way of our intentions? What is there here not only among our wards, but also among us teachers? If we remain within the Central-European space and its rather impaired form of democracy, full of various illusive performances (including corruption) from above, and a lowered interest in being politically engaged from the bottom, then it is now highest time to introduce a **new type of civic education**, deserving the name, and preparing the young for making things better (and not continuously looking for a life-saving “third way”). Only then could we count on some prophylaxis against the contemporary exhibitionism of politicians, media argumentations in form of ads and TV-spots, and little perceptiveness to more general needs of society (if not of the whole planet).

We cannot cover all the necessary “curative” items. School could serve as a “filter” where the recovery of public life could find one of its reliable sources. School potentially is a **“workshop of humanity”, realizable as a never-to-be-finished thriller of continuously discovering something new and unknown before.**

There is one serious, though disguised, problem: Traditionally, the **teaching process exposes all as unproblematic and stabilized, and not open to doubt.** When our subject is not language and its rules (also with various exceptions of them), it would always be preferable to point out at the difficult process of gradual, sometimes very uneasy, penetration into more adequate knowledge. **We should never lead our wards into a dogmatic picture of the world, life and values in it.**

If it is possible, we should, in suitable contexts, show or illustratively indicate that our world, till the middle of 19th century, was outwardly static, relatively small, and – at least in our reflections – remarkably young. We should also not forget to mention the excess of optimism of the Enlightenment (from the preceding – 18th – century) counting with the possibility of edifying the human society by applying rational reasons more and more, governments not excluded. We should also remind our students of the sufferings of both the world wars of 20th century, not forgetting to explain the reasons of

genocides or economic depression or crises. We should continuously bear in mind that not all in our human world can be algorithmically solved (as if all were so solved). There are processes which are random, or there is such a number of uncontrollable factors that we should abstain from categorical conclusions and be very vigilant when arguing. **We should not hammer into the heads of our “wards” both any dogmas and, on the other hand, equally dogmatic scepticism.**

One more remark, rather “formal”, but also showing one blemish, and more than 60 years being among us, is the following: the **culture of our speech**. The users of Czech (but not only them) have infested the display of their speech acts by various inarticulate sounds (or alien tones?), repetition of some already pronounced words and inserting different verbal paddings. All that could already be acquired at school during the examining “at the blackboard”, when words did not come easy and we did not know how to continue at the moment. Some “hallmarked speakers” of various institutions and, what is more, broadcast or TV-redactors speak in such a way as if they came running from somewhere, probably persecuted, and then they groan (as if in pain), lace the message with “ehm” or “you know” (or “you see”?), and nearly every word accompany with nodding, in a similar way as a horse does with its mane. (Was it picked up from us, the elders? I do not dare to mention the standard language level which could be shown as an evidence of some respect towards those addressed by the speaker. ⁴⁴⁾)

So, we know, at least some, symptoms of this decline of our “spirit”. If being led to a certain diagnosis, can we thus be led towards a desirable therapy?

Comment

1) I want to utilize here some material I prepared for a seminar organized by the Philosophical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and taking place at the end of 2007. It could be added probably that I, nearly ten years ago, collaborated with V. Gluchman on *Ethics*, in three volumes (Prešov 1998), where I also published a study called “Moral values in contemporary ethics and morality” (pp. 61-84).

2) It is clear to me that some languages could be helpful in elaborating a more complicated structure (which I find counterproductive).

3) No definition is an automatic protection. “Theory”, e.g., should be understood as being a “verified hypothesis”, something **testable** (and withstanding falsification). If “ethics”, as a humanistic subject, is to be a “theory”, there is a rather big problem here immediately: **We do not have at our disposal any binding criteria for its generally respected cornerstones, cultivation, and possible development; to say nothing of its “testability”**. — Currently, we understand “ethics” as being an attempt at rationally reflecting about possible “norms” of what “is to be”, and the corresponding practice – on the basis of such “norms” – where, in dynamically developed human relationships, we cannot find **any aprioristically reliable and continuously binding norms of human behaviour**, without regard to their partially legal fixation in our contemporaneity. The notion of transcendently binding and “eternal” rules of God’s will must be irrelevant for atheists. And if we count with a certain – and changeable – dynamism in the way of life of *Homo sapiens*, we will be confronted with somehow “absolutely” conceived principles of behaviour in a similar way as religious people are. It may be illustrated as a, not only “academic”, question from the second half of 20th century, when new efforts emerged to give new interpretation to homosexuality and new status in society to homosexuals; or also the need to look for an admissible compromise to regulate conception (or protect against AIDS), to say nothing about euthanasia.

4) Thus we can conceive both the endeavour to present an analytical, socially based and semantic interpretation of the conceptual apparatus in this field, and – in form of a synthesis – the search after contact surfaces between different types of ethics.

5) It might be better to illustrate it by an example: In the world of arts we know the prestigious “Turner Prize”, each year awarded for an original creation in London. Sometimes it sets the fur flying. Fine art, as a realization, is an activity outside science. Its review (critique) comes out of a certain tradition which is conforming to the personal imaginations of its critics and is a product of its time (institutions and authorities). With a reasonable bird’s eye look, it is possible to create a “theory” of such criticism, if not something more problematic

which has been – not adequately – called “laws of creation”. Such an effort would bear signs of what has been currently called “science” (though here a “soft” one).

6) Half a century ago, it would be unthinkable that a worldly renowned author (a concrete case: in October 2007, J. K. Rowling) could fully, before an audience in Carnegie Hall in New York, declare that one of her crucial protagonists in her novel *epopee* “for youth” (!) about Harry Potter is a gay (Albus Dumbledore) which declaration would then even be – after a moment’s shocking silence – followed by stormy applause!

7) We can evidently be surprised by promiscuity between apes (e.g., chimps), or – what humans call – fidelity of swans. Also something called murder among us, has already been observed in apes. (See also the text preceding the end of 2nd part, paragraph containing note 15.)

8) Let us not forget an ancient Christian tradition of bodily discipline, partially inspired by customs practised in some Jewish sects. The “body” (together with sexuality and material needs) as if were a hindrance to find a sublimed relationship towards God (and the cure of “soul”, the “transcendental”, the “spiritual”).

9) Robert H. Lowie [*Primitive Religion*, Peter Owen, London 1960, p. 103] quotes that the tribe of Bagoboes (isle of Mindanao) professes faith in a “right-hand” and “left-hand” soul, where its right-hand part is a faithful guide of the body granting the bearer health and joy of life. When leaving the body its effect is death. The “left-hand soul” is a source of risks; it can become a prey of demons during life already and, after death, changes into a demonic existence. — As if – not only linguistically – what when being at the “right” side were also “right”, if not “veritable” (and genuine), whereas what is “left” should be somehow “crooked”. Not long ago, left-handers were considered “unnatural” and were ruthlessly re-trained to be right-handed.

10) Only rarely will it be acknowledged that “spirituality” is a totally vague word, if it were not another expression for directly meaning “religion” (as a “spiritual” value). It has often been accompanied by the concept of “soul” and the meaning of this life after death. Sometimes it is only a commercial lure for those who pretend to be in contact with transcendental forces (shamans, many a healer, practitioners of various cults).

11) I would not like to quote cases of clever “entrepreneurs” (not only in the Czech Republic) who rely on the fact that **what is not directly prohibited is, as if automatically, allowed**. Such behaviour may be contrary to “good manners”, but if not unlawful then it is as if wholly “O. K.”. — If such a “trafficker” has not been condemned to imprisonment, he (or she) goes on to appear proudly in media as s/he surely and indubitably is – and has always been – “honest”! Unlike Antiquity, the difference here might consist in the fact that the professional community may evaluate it in another way now: to “be caught with his trousers down” is nothing to be proud of; and if served to the public by the media, such “cleverness” is denounced. — In the Czech Republic after 1989 some clever “traffickers” made much money by annihilating the expected positive results of the so-called coupon privatization among small “investors”. Mr Kozeny, glorified in his native country, did not bog down sooner than in connection with his big international financial transactions whereby he “was out of luck”. It could be interesting and mostly enlightening if we disposed of materials showing the ways through which the “poor boys happened to be famous” (together with who and how helped them and was “helped” by them). These siphoning-off activities, in various forms, are going on even today in the Czech Republic (and not only there) which, of course, makes the psyche of its citizens lame...

12) It would not be good to judge the “character” of God in accord with this episode. The Lord only exhorts Jacob to swiftly settle down in another country (which was understood by Jacob as an instruction to cleanse the family clan of idolatry). — The text was not primarily written for the eyes of a modern reader. The story, by its anthropomorphic composition of God as its actor, evidently shows whether humans had, first, God’s will “among themselves”, or a harsh clan habit, closely near the merciless spirit of the norms of Hamurappi’s legal code (“eye for eye, tooth for tooth”).

13) If ever in some Muslim countries are such actions registered as potentially not appropriate, then their right of recovery does not qualify them as murders but – if ever subject to punishment – as an undue middle to defend family honour (sometimes punishable with one year of prison). — So it is sometimes that there is a universally, and for individual “usefulness”, declared goal (“*telos*”) which may be simultaneously connected with a causal presentation. — We humans know well that causes have their effects. The inevitability of understandable horrible effects may be evaded by the fatal imagination of miracle. Then there is an attempt to **confront two lines of causality**: one, somehow “natural”, and another one, not enjoyable which might be averted by a deity from which the praying human expects a “supernatural” intervention. — The Lord of the Old Testament taught his people to respect their mutual “contract”. A severe example of this theme may be illustrated by Ex 32:27-29. When Moses came back from the top of the Mount Sinai, the Jewish people sacrificed to the Golden Calf. Moses then assembles those ones “whoever was for the Lord”. And he says: This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbour.’” On that day, in accord with a “Mosaic” record, three thousand died. And so, what is to be done is being sometimes enforced by the shed blood of relatives, too. Or else there might originate doubts having to do with the credibility of a possible obligation and necessity to comply with an instruction which cannot be conceived only as a “recommendation”. (We would be led too far if trying to pursue it further.)

- 14) It is evidently useless to comment here the cruel medieval forms in which “legality” has been enforced in many a Muslim country, registering public whipping or executions, including stoning to death!
- 15) A trained macaque evinced its wavering to press the handle less when it saw an animal of another sort in the neighbouring cage, and a much greater reluctance when it knew the ape in the neighbourhood, or when being already familiar with the conditioned role of electroshock. (See note 7.)
- 16) Much information about this experiment is easily accessible on the internet.
- 17) Powell’s words: „They’re clean, smart, dedicated, trained, motivated, responsible, reliable, self-confident, selfless, patriotic, loyal, drug-free, respectful, tolerant, and ...caring.“ (Adapted from J. Bowman; the expression “honorable“ is missing here as shown.)
- 18) See note 10.
- 19) Already among Darwin’s famous finches one of them took a straw in its beak and strove to spike its possible catch deep in the trunk of the tree. — Recent experiments with the admirable parrot called Alex and performed for 30 years by Dr. Pepperberg, are worth to be mentioned here, too.
- 20) Among Inuits there is a memory conserved that in remote past, when the community was befallen by hunger, it set out to seek new sources of food in such a way that – owing to the scarce food for all – it left its old members behind to die on place.
- 21) Not only at Troy or in the Old Testament, but also with a generous exaggeration of the numbers, the plain fighters in *Mahabharatam* died in the battlefield called Kurukshetra anonymously as if only the stories of noblemen were important.
- 22) Swiss men – in good memory of the “old patriarchal traditions” – thought that they could manage the voting process themselves representing their wives, too, not considering that not every woman had eventually to marry, or that not each wife needed to share her husband’s political ideas.
- 23) After WWII some Italian communists were sure that after the potential social revolution they themselves would emerge as “bosses”, whereas all subordinate work would then be performed by the preceding superiors.
- 24) A very detailed description see at: Arnold S. Luknič, *Štvrtý rozmer podnikania – etika*, Slovak Academic Press, 1994.
- 25) It is a sensitive theme. On account of killed lives may live those who would do anything for some money. We could be familiarized with cases outside any imagination in Western culture. They have various connotations which cannot be seen immediately. Owing to the regulation of natality in China and preferences of male progeny there, tens of millions young Chinese have got no chance to marry. In one province, it is customary to “equip” the grave of a dead unmarried man with the body of a dead woman for the “otherworldly time”. Women’s bodies were stolen not only from morgues, but also from fresh graves; and not only that. For not small sums of money were murdered young women and girls to supply, on “exactly directed” order, the required “parameters of a common-law wife” to a rather strange funeral.
- 26) Shall I, for the third time, remind my reader that this is a very sensitive, if not also a highly vague, term? (See texts accompanying notes 10 and 18.)
- 27) In the Czech Republic the highest esteemed singer of the light muse Karel Gott has happened to be a sublimed “lover” for thousands of his girl-fans. (An added note: In January 2008 he, being 68 years old, married his latest and more stable partner which, of course, is not a sociological subject. It may be a decoy for a psychologist. And it is a good morsel for a biographer.)
- 28) By means of different expressions we run away from reality: we can see a cow on a meadow but, on a plate, there is only “beef”.
- 29) Ten years ago, who heard about the contemporary steel magnate Mittal from India? He also owns the Czech Steel works of Vítkovice.
- 30) There was a world meeting on the isle of Bali where there were to be prepared the “final” conditions for a more efficient approach about the directives of Kyoto. Some limited hopes could be created, but without any cooperation with US or China which is not only a political, economical and, directly, climatic problem but, **primarily, it is an evidence of a clear inability to responsibly and reliably face the problem from a moral viewpoint.**
- 31) In the Czech Republic we should, more reliably and efficiently, solve the so-called Roma problem. To teach Roma children Czech when they are seven years old, is not an effective optimum. Already before a child has been born, **its family should have been, socially and morally, ready for its arrival in this world.** Who else should dedicate his efforts to take part in such a difficult task?! It is not a task for only one generation if it were already – naturally from the “bottom” and from “within” – started. The core of a successful solution can be found in a consolidated family. — Such features as is the situation of displaced, or also murdered, families, e.g., in Darfur, or people affected by floods as it is repeatedly the case in Bangladesh, China or South Mexico, cannot end as headlines only for the media.
- 32) Some facts: A rather long time we are to know that dirty money is not dirty. From time to time, general interest got its new food in the news about the newly loosened partner relationship of some leading politi-

cian. In a broadcast from January 2008, Professor Josef Kouřecký remarked that some changes of attitude are inaugurated by inconspicuous terminological innovations: patients of the past have been changed to “clients”! (All this, of course, is not a specific sign of only the Czech public scene!)

33) China already occupies the first place in importing luxury autos (ignoring the contemporary economic depression). India has spectacularly realized its program of a really “popular” (or “plebeian”?) auto, for an incredible price of 2 500 dollars (till now the folk choice was a motorcycle). It is impossible now to proceed in an analysis here (not only for home market; and including the hunt for raw materials or pollution).

34) Not many people know the real economic power of Germany within the EU and the world. When considering the export of goods in 2007, the first place in the world was occupied by Germany (with 9,5 % of its share). The second place belonged to China (with 8,8 %); and the US was in the third place (8,4 %). These three states together participated in a quarter of world export. (The 4th place was occupied by Japan which was the last country reaching more than 5 %. See *The Economist*, April 26, 2008, p. 104.) The biggest world importer was US. The greatest financial reserves can be found in China (in trillions of dollars). The price of a barrel of oil has again reached more than \$100 (which could, for the oil states, mean that the so-called petrodollars would not be a desirable source of financial reserves any more again).

35) The three preceding “eras” being the hadron and lepton eras and the third, the era of radiation. Especially the first two eras have nothing in common with our perception of time and processes in it. The origin of our Universe provokes a somewhat absurd question of what could precede our Big Bang, and how. The so-called superstring theory has continuously, or so far, been a physically untestable “hypothesis”, even when it may be a viable way to a “theory of all” for mathematicians (to say nothing of the “technical” abyss of 35 orders on the number line to test this mathematically elegant and physically uneasily imaginable hypothesis).

36) Much less represented, in the basic code of cell life, are following three elements: nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulphur. (Other elements are present in the makeup of organisms, too, importantly calcium or iron.)

37) Ethical “codices” can have some value only in such a case when the society (or interest group for which it might be valid) intends to keep them and knows how to implement them. It also means to begin with their observance from the beginning of human life, to achieve a natural respect for their “conservation”.

38) The contemporary septuagenarian could see, even in towns after WWII, much more of horse droppings on the pavement than feel the exhalations from the cars. Slide rules were slowly replaced by calculators from the beginning of the 1970s.

39) T. G. Masaryk more than 100 years ago reminded the teachers of his time not to forget that the pupils might be better equipped with knowledge than themselves having various new sources at their disposal which the teacher does not think about. See Czech articles about it in: <http://www.blisty.cz/art/17558.html>, and <http://www.blisty.cz/art/17241.html>; or <http://www.blisty.cz/art/17586.html>.

40) There is a certain anachronism in the Czech school system – as if we were not yet in the “information century” (the 21st!). Subjects like mathematics are artfully suppressed in favour of language training. (Not always qualified teachers then find their way out of personal problems in examining “vocables” and in written tests.)

41) Such is, through its traditional roots, a Muslim or Jewish family.

42) We have to count with the so-called know-how which is to be paid for, notwithstanding its relatively small expenditures, in accord with its quality. A small land like the Czech Republic (without raw resources) should show more effort in this direction.

43) The “third culture” by C. P. Snow did not prevent the larger and larger gaping between the humanistic and natural subjects, or between the so-called “high” and “popular” culture.

44) One hundred years ago the Russian language counted with its three layers then existing. The highest one was the language of tsarist and Church edicts, the second was the current language of literature and various proceedings, and the lowest the spoken (and colloquial) language. — In Czechoslovakia after WWII, very early took hold a rather “plebeian” talk of the majority of communist politicians. It nearly immediately prevailed in the public performances, as if that “informality” were “sincere”, and not “affected” (or “artificial”). Now, in the Czech Republic, it is as if a somewhat strange speech style of a pub or kitchen were due and proper when speaking about culture, or addressing thousands of people in public. Standard level of Czech is disappearing, as if no one cared...

NIKOLI PŘEDEVŠÍM TĚLO JE DNEŠKEM OHROŽENO ANEB O NEDOSTATCÍCH PŘEDEVŠÍM DUŠEVNÍ HYGIENY

Abstrakt: Nejvíc nás lidi ohrožuje nedostatek morálky (K. Lorenz). Pohybujeme se v dualismu životních hodnot. Zároveň se zde promítá protiklad etiky hanby (finálně)

a hříchu (kauzálně). Nelze se spoléhat na přirozenou výbavu člověka. O cti nerozhoduje jedinec, ale jeho sociální okolí. Biosociologie přistřihává křídla „spiritualitě“. Rostou rizika rozkladu hodnot, včetně osobní integrity (vyprázdněním sebe sama). Kromě očekávaných změn klimatu neudrží se ani stávající konstelace ekonomicko-politických sil současného světa. Přitom život každého člověka je svou neopakovatelností nevyčísitelnou hodnotou. Člověk nemůže zůstat bez „přirozené“ mravní žízně. Role učitele není dána jen tím, že vyučuje. Je průběžně jedním z bezprostředních a silně působících vzorů. Zdá se, že především vinou školy došlo k zaplavení kultury komunikace. Také je zřejmě nejvyšší čas přispět k zlepšení klimatu ve veřejném životě nutkavější výchovou k „občanství“. Místo dogmatického přenosu učiva je nezbytné stále upozorňovat na nesnadný proces postupného pronikání k adekvátnějšímu poznání. Abychom nevedli své svěřence jen k dogmatickému obrazu světa, života a hodnot v něm.

Klíčová slova: duševní hygiena; etika; morálka; mravnost; dualismus životních hodnot; zlo; hanba; hřích; vina; šarí'a; čest; gloriola; sociální role; celebrita; hodnoty; globalizace; duše; mafiánství; spiritualita; hegemonie; udržitelný život; konzumní společnost; zázrak života; tolerance; role učitele; informační věk; komunikace; dílna lidskosti; třetí kultura; dogmatismus; skepse; krize; rétorika; terapie