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**THE DUALITY OF ETHICS AND THE VALUE  
DIMENSIONS OF THE CONTEMPORARY OPEN  
SCIENCE**

The philosophical and ethical ideas expressed by Kazimierz Twardowski at the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> c., particularly on the creation of a scientific ethics, present themselves today quite a sound ground for the consideration of the ethical and value aspects of contemporary scientific practices. Particularly, I would like to refer to his ideas of the clear distinction between the two 'types' of ethics – social and individual ethics, or heteronomic and autonomous ethics. Twardowski even argued that those two notions relate to the two different Greek spellings – ἦθος and ἔθος – and could be described in Polish as those of *obyczaj* and those of *zwyczaj*: “Zwyczaj i obyczaj różnią się tym, że można mówić o zwyczaju jednostki, ale trudniej o obyczaju jednostki... „Obyczaj” oznacza bowiem w przeciwieństwie do zwyczaju raczej coś zbiorowego, gromadnego, a zarazem tradycją uświęconego,

co panuje w pewnej warstwie, w pewnym kraju, w pewnym narodzie. W obyczaju leży coś usankcjonowanego. Obyczaj to jakieś nieosobowe ramy, narzucone jednostce. Zwyczaj – rzecz indywidualna, rzecz gustu” (Twardowski 1974, pp. 199-200).

In fact, the distinction in question is well evident in the ethical thought of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. For example, in 1963, Abraham Edel wrote about the two different types of morality: the first one is aimed at answering the question “What will our conscience say?”, while the second one is more concerned with inquiring into “What will help to preserve our community?” (Edel 1963). In my opinion, that distinction could be considered as the opposition between *morality* and *ethos* – and the contradiction between *the universal* and *the particular* in ethics (Mielkov 2021). In this regard, our conscience, speaking in terms of the universal categorical imperative (“do not steal”), could collide with the empirical recognition of the allegedly existing customs in a particular society (“everyone steals”, “everyone takes/gives bribes”, etc.) – and the latter can well take here precedence over the former.

As a result, a society facing such a dilemma experiences some kind of demoralization – with a particular ethos usurping the place of the universal morality. The noted contradiction means not just the opposition of deontological (imperative) and factual (custom-based, “obyczaj”) hypostases of ethical personal and social norms. As a universal phenomenon, morality is autonomous and has its goal in itself – while the ethos is just a way to achieve some other, external goal (whether it is a calm life or a stable society or virtually anything else). Ethos is thus a form of moral particularism – and the inability to separate ethos from morality, and particular customs from universal norms, could be considered as the inability to separate *primary values* from *secondary values*, goals from means, ideology from ideals.

In other words, I would argue that the heteronomic and the autonomous ethics are not exactly entities of the same order: the autonomous ethics is the fundamental background that has ontological (and axiological) precedence over the heteronomic ethics, just as secondary values could only be evaluated against the background of

primary values, the latter presenting themselves the base for the former – and even enabling them to be visualized and allowing them to exist at all. It is precisely the presence of purpose and value in a human’s personal moral consciousness that enables the value dimension of a community in which the person lives: the universal is the precondition for the particular, and not vice versa.

In fact, that moral dichotomy is true for any community as well, and not just for a society as a whole. In particular, in academic community the categorical morality of the search for the truth could be found being replaced by a particular ethos of “preserving the community” itself, thus turning scientific activity into a kind of profanation (we can see the evidence in the extremely high rate of the violations of the norms of academic integrity). Based on objectivity and strict universalism, science defies any partisanship (“Objectivity precludes particularism,” as explained by Robert Merton (1973, p.270). For instance, any attempts to build a kind of “national science,” such as in Hitler’s Germany in the 1930s or in Stalin’s USSR in the late 1940s, have resulted in complete failure. That’s why scientific

activity, being universal in its nature, is possible only when being carried out within an *open* community. Luckily, after many decades of the prevalence of closed (and if not national, then corporate and commercialized) science, we now have the emergent current of Open Science being the global trend to follow. In my opinion, openness here as the main feature of scientific practices could be considered as the value base for human activity – the base that is structured as a hierarchy of values, with the clear distinction between primary values of mertonian universalism, communism and disinterestedness in the search for the truth – and secondary partisan values of preserving and strengthening the community itself. Thus we can say that the dichotomy of heteronomic and autonomous ethics singled out by Twardowski more than a hundred years ago could be sublated in a dialectical way.

### **References**

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