Introduction

Filip Bardziński (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Joanna Dutka (Adam Mickiewicz University)

The hereby presented issue of *Ethics in Progress* is a differentiated, but complete and thorough examination of how moral competences and ethical behavior develop in various professional environments. The ever-present need for evolution and progress is not only of moral value, but also is a prerequisite for acting ethically in daily life. Thus it is of vital importance to understand how the process of moral development is influenced by different factors – be them social, professional, religious, or any other – and by what means it may be accelerated, amplified, and improved.

In the article "Courage to Trust–Discussion of Moral Personality Built on the Confucian Ethics", Lei Kang, Ying Qiu, Tie Zheng, and Anne Rubienska present an insightful reflection on how the moral thought of Confucius may prove to have a valuable and worthwhile impact on the notion of being able to trust and, thus, to build worthy relations with others and act accordingly to one's moral beliefs. The authors explore the value of Xin, that is understood by them as trustworthiness and ability trust others, derived from Analects, in light of social psychology. The courage to trust, as they claim allows for learning in the process of interaction and subsequently the development of moral personality. The practical sense of morality and moral capabilities, as stated by the authors: "Moral competence is the ability for free willpower to realize itself in moral behaviour" (Kang *et al.* 2015, 23), may be developed in a democratic and open fashion when taking into account the Confucian teaching.

The practicality of moral competences lies not only in the fact that they are achieved in practice *per se*, but also in the fact that they may be subjected (to some extent) to empirical analysis and examination. Victor Hugo Robles Francia embraced this view through conducting a comparative study of moral competences of different Mexican majors. In conclusion, as Robles emphasizes, "planned moral judgment competence in curricula is necessary to improve moral reasoning of students" (Robles 2015, 35). Robles advocates for ethical education and training with full awareness, that such practice does not guarantee ethical behavior. It does however has a value in form of rising consciousness about moral issues and more importantly sending the message, that unethical conduct is not to be permitted in the university space and in the wider scope of the society.

One of the well-grounded and widely recognized methods of measuring and developing moral competences is the Konstanz Method of Dilemma Discussion. As shown by Martina Reinicke in "Inklusion als moralische Herausforderung – das Potential der Konstanzer Methode der Dilemmadiskussion", it is a useful and powerful tool in enhancing sociomoral, inclusive, analytical, perspective taking- and adaptive abilities in interacting agents, which prepares them to face decisive challenges in daily life. For Reinicke if education process is to be truly inclusive has to foster favourable environment for developing moral competencies.

How and why it is vital to act in an ethical manner is a matter extensively discussed by Tara Shollenberger. As she has stated in "Characterizing Ethical Decision-Making and its Influences: Examining Higher Education Leaders in the United States":

> Not a day goes by where people aren't tempted to compromise their personal beliefs and the ethics codes of organizations due to the pressures of hectic schedules and potential and real conflicts of interest. (…) A better understanding of the ethical decision-making process that leaders should follow has potential to help them avoid bad behaviors and negative consequences that can result in scandals and worse (Shollenberger 2015, 50-51).

Examining the environmental factors of decision-making in light ethical scandals that affect lives of educational institutions Shollenberg underlines, that educational leaders have greater moral responsibilities than other leaders.

Not only leaders are prone to making morally reprehensible decisions. The matter of goal-achieving and the influence different demographic factors may have on sportspersonship orientation is discussed by Vassilis Barkoukis and Katerina Mouratidou in the paper "Achievement Goals and Sportspersonship Orientations in Team Sports. The Moderating Role of Demographic Characteristics." In their study, authors examined the hypothesis that "all achievement goals were significant predictors of sportspersonship orientations" (Barkoukis & Mouratidou 2015, 92). Zhu Hai-Long in the text "The Compilation and Execution of a Measurement of Chinese Undergraduates´ Moral Values Approval" examines preferences of moral values among a representative group of Chinese students. The authors inquire the influence of gender on approval of moral values as well as cognitive development immersed in tradition existing in Chinese society.

In the final article, Jerome Nikolai Warren develops a broad and insightful reflection on one of the oldest and most controversial notions in moral philosophy – that of the antinomy of moral sentiments and moral reasoning. Through an extensive reflection, rooted deeply in available literature, Warren proves thatin fact – since "human beings are inherently social by nature and hold certain regard for others' opinions (esteem preferences) as well as for others generally (altruism)", then "such preferences may in fact be

consistent with a core rational human agent" (Warren 2015, 152). The lack of understanding of human social interests is, as Warren claims, a major fault of many existing theories and models in social sciences, particularly in economy.

The broad spectrum of problems discussed in the present issue supports the claim that modern ethical reflection must embrace an interdisciplinary approach, emphasizing crucial words like moral agent, moral development, and principled judgment making and contextualizing them in other disciplines and practices, be them either social or evolutionary, economical, psychological, or educational ones.

References

Barkoukis, V. & Mouratidou, K. 2015. "Achievement Goals and Sportspersonship Orientations in Team Sports. The Moderating Role of Demographic Characteristics". *Ethics in Progress* 6(2): 74–92.

Lei K., Ying Q., Tie Z., & Rubienska, A. 2015. "Courage to Trust–Discussion of Moral Personality Built on the Confucian Ethics". *Ethics in Progress* 6(2): 11–25.

Reinicke M. 2015. "Inklusion als moralische Herausforderung – das Potential der Konstanzer Methode der Dilemmadiskussion®". *Ethics in Progress* 6 (2): 38-49.

Robles, V. H. 2015. "Moral Judgment Competence Between Systems and Administration Students". *Ethics in Progress* 6(2): 26–37.

Shollenberger, T. 2015. "Characterizing Ethical Decision-Making and Its Influences: Examining Higher Education Leaders in the United States". *Ethics in Progress* 6(2): 50–73.

Warren, J. N. 2015. "A Wedding Toast Is Not a State of the Union Address: Other-Regarding and Others' Opinions Regarding Preferences As Relevant Factors in Shaping Human Preferences". *Ethics in Progress* 6(2): 104–152.

Zhu Hai-Long 2015. The Compilation and Measurement of the Questionnaire on Chinese Undergraduates' Moral Values Approval". *Ethics in Progress* 6(2): 93-103.

Filip Bardziński (Adam Mickiewicz University)
Joanna Dutka (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Introduction

Abstract: The second issue of the *Ethics in Progress* journal is introduced.