

Dragan Poljak, Franjo Sokolić i Mirko Jakić u članku “On the Physical versus Philosophical View to the Nature of Time” raspravljaju o nekim fizikalnim i nekim filozofskim aspektima vremena, postavljajući pitanje zašto se entropija povećava u smjeru t , a ne u smjeru $(-t)$.

U posljednjem članku knjige, “The Basic concepts of Physics”, autor Franjo Sokolić raspravlja o temeljnim pojmovima u fizici – prostoru i vremenu – kroz prikaz Newtonova shvaćanja prostora i vremena te promjena u shvaćanju koje su uslijedile nakon teorije relativnosti. Autor smatra da teorija relativnosti ne eliminira metafizički pojam apsolutnog prostora i vremena u njutonovskom smislu.

Moderna atomska fizika uspješna je u opisu barem jednog dijela stvarnosti, stoga nam ona osigurava dokaze za promjene u našem shvaćanju znanstvenog znanja. Zbornik *Physics and Philosophy* predstavlja tako izuzetan zajednički napor znanstvenika u svrhu promišljanja znanosti onakvom kakva je danas i u svrhu nastavka plodnog dijaloga između znanosti i filozofije. Urednici ističu nužnost ovakvog dijaloga u Hrvatskoj, gdje često nailazimo na predrasude, posebice kod studenata filozofije koji često imaju odbojnost prema znanosti. Njihova je nada pokrenuti dijalog o novom kurikulumu koji bi podrazumijevao kombinaciju humanističkih i znanstvenih predmeta.

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Harry G. Frankfurt, *On Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 102 pp.

Almost forty-four years from the publishing of J. Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (1971), H. G. Frankfurt's *On Inequality* (2015) is published. Parts of it were published before (“Equality as moral ideal” in 1987, and “Equality and Respect” in 1997). The form of the book is similar to his previous books, such as *On Bullshit* (2005), and *On Truth* (2006). This book is composed of shortened and previously published materials rewritten in popular style. In this form, a substantial contribution is made as well, i.e. analyses, arguments, and objections to different standpoints are much clearer.

During these forty-four years, the whole field of theory of justice was developed, i.e. standard standpoints, analyses, arguments, objections, and replies were formulated. If it could be said that Rawls aimed to show that the whole issue of supposed conflict between freedom and equality is illusory by formulating his justice as fairness principle, perhaps it could be said at least that Frankfurt contributed to the idea by showing that the idea of moral relevance of so-called *the doctrine of equality* (especially economic) is illusory compared to his idea of *the doctrine of sufficiency* (which is anthropological).

On one hand, Frankfurt agrees with Rawls that utilitarian theory of justice is objectionable, and that it should be replaced by an improved model. On the other hand, they go separate ways. Rawls, as many after him (some of which were his students, such as Thomas Nagel), thought that equality has intrinsic moral value, while Frankfurt maintains that it hasn't. He claims that equality, while being socially, politically, and economically important, still isn't morally relevant. What is morally important is not that different people have different, say, amount of money (the issue of inequality); rather, what is morally important is that some people do not have enough (the issue of insufficiency).

His argumentation proceeds in two directions. One is the negative way of objecting to equality generally, and particularly as a moral principle; the other is the positive way of arguing in favour of insufficiency as a moral principle. His argument in the first direction tends to show that economic egalitarianism, while being good social, political, and economic doctrine is not authentic moral ideal as well. The second direction is that inequality, namely that different people don't have the same amount of a good or a service, is morally irrelevant compared to the fact that among them some don't have enough, which is morally relevant.

For the last claim he offers different arguments. How peoples' lives compare to lives of others is not morally important, while, do they have or haven't good lives is. Comparison of bad with good lives is not important in order to understand that they are bad, quite the opposite, they are bad in themselves without any comparison needed, since such people lack something. He applies this to the concepts of a good life, quality of life, rights, respect, consideration, and concern. For all of these instances it is not morally important that they are *unequal* for all; rather, it is morally important that they are evidently *insufficient* for some. Each and every human is entitled to a particular amount of good, quality, rights, etc. It may be that some entitlements are the same for all people, but not because equality is important, rather it is because in these respects all humans are the same.

Furthermore, equality is not a matter of comparison, but non-personal principle as well. Respect, on the other hand, is a fine balance between im-

partiality and avoiding arbitrariness and matching the particularities of the individual (he objects to the viewpoints of Nagel and Berlin). Claims of egalitarianism are derivative since they are grounded in more basic claims concerned with respect and impartiality. These are morally superior because they are concerned with avoiding irrationality, and irrationality here manifests in e.g. failing to respect someone as ignoring the relevance of his/her life situation. When respect for a human is denied, almost as if his/her “very existence is denied”, or “the reality of human self is reduced” (2015: II, 10).

Demands or desires for equality do not have moral importance, because such desires for humans “tends to distract us from recognizing the most authentic human ambitions, which are those that derive from the character of our own lives, and not those that are imposed on us by the conditions in which other happen to live” (2015: II, 11). This is the basic argument made by Frankfurt in this book. Other way around, if we are looking from the individual point of view, what is morally important is to recognize an authentic human being and to treat it with respect, rights, etc., and all of these have some manner and amount which is *sufficient* and in accordance with their individual nature, but in the same time *impartial* as well. This treatment is basically moral. A human by being human is entitled to the amount of enough. Therefore, the idea of sufficiency has moral importance. On the other hand, morality of equality is derived from the morality of sufficiency. Some inequalities may be immoral not in themselves, but because they are rooted in insufficiency which is immoral in itself.

Let us now turn to some elements that can be objected to. His positive arguments are clear, at least in a nutshell, but his criticism isn't. At the first look, it seems as if the target is the whole idea. Almost as if he is implicitly saying – *sorry guys, if you wanted to discuss a moral issue, for the last forty-four years you have been missing the point*. The motive is obvious widespread idea that egalitarianism is inherently morally good because of moral goodness of fighting obviously immoral inequality. Popularity of the idea he finds in recent book by T. Piketty, and in the *State of the Union address* by B. Obama (2015: preface; I.1). On one hand, by mentioning these he wants to emphasize popular influence of the basic idea of equality and egalitarianism as a moral imperative and a doctrine. On the other hand, by mentioning a series of influential moral philosophers and economists (e.g. philosophers I. Berlin, N. Rescher, T. Nagel, R. Dworkin, L. S. Temkin, R. E. Goodin, and economists K. Arrow, A. Lerner, P. Samuelson, and A. Sen), he emphasizes the influence of the doctrine among experts. These serve him as authors of particular arguments and in order to show how widespread the alleged misunderstanding is.

Frankfurt's basic argument can be misinterpreted. He is not claiming that equality is unimportant or that egalitarianism wrong, because it is obvi-

ous that the phenomenon of inequality refers to the reality of social, political, and economic, aspects of contemporary societies, and if this is so, then they matter. What he argues for is that, even if there is a moral dimension in fighting inequality, equality, and egalitarianism, this doesn't mean that this dimension is intrinsically there. He claims that there is no intrinsic moral dimension in equality, but only economic. If it seems that there is a moral aspect in these spheres of justice, it seems so because they draw their morality from another source which is essentially moral, and that is poverty. Therefore, he is not claiming that *the theory of equality* is completely wrong; it is wrong only as a moral doctrine, since there is nothing moral in it. Opposite to it, *the theory of sufficiency* is what matters morally (2015: I, 5–8).

In other words, equality matters morally because there is underlying element in it – the importance of avoiding insufficiency (e.g., that different people have different amounts of money which are more or less unequal), but it doesn't mean that this is immoral. What makes inequality immoral is the fact that among them there are people who are so “different” that they don't have sufficient amount of money. So “having equally” matters because “having unequally” matters. But “having unequally” isn't morally wrong in itself; it is morally wrong because “having unequally” for some means “not having enough”.

Poverty is a moral problem because essentially it damages a human being as a moral agent, and as a human being (some say that this is the weak point, since Frankfurt grounds his argument on the concept of rational agent which was debunked by behavioural economics). On the contrary, one can fight inequality without fighting poverty. Namely, if one is engaged in inequality and tries to reach some form of equality, then one is dealing with inequalities. As he, almost ironically, mentions at the beginning of the book, “Inequality of income might decisively be eliminated, after all, just by arranging that all incomes be *equally below* the poverty line.” (2015: I, 1). In other words, one can make all equally poor. They are equal, so what is the problem? The problem is that they are poor. If there is poverty, then egalitarianism deals only with differences between various amounts of goods without taking into account that some of “the different” are different not in level, but in kind.

Part of the book he devotes to rejection of economic arguments for egalitarianism (*the threshold effect*) is particularly emphasized because it is used in the second part of the book concerning the difference in kind between inequality and insufficiency. The point of this part is to establish that “an egalitarian distribution of income may fail to maximize aggregate utility” (2015: I, 9–18), and he proceeds that it can in fact minimize aggregate utility (2015: I, 19–20). He also discusses the moral intuition of egalitarianism which says that “economic inequality just seems wrong”, and argues that what one ob-

jects if one perceives inequality is not that some have less than others, but that those who have less have too little (2015: I, 21). Namely, egalitarianism claims that if the problem of inequality is solved, then the problem of insufficiency would be solved as well. Frankfurt argues that they are logically independent. There are two different issues. The one is of inequality and equality, and the other of insufficiency and sufficiency (his approach can be compared to the one by P. Singer in Ch. 8 of his *Practical Ethics* concerning the issue of poverty, where he presents the issue of poverty as the one of insufficiency, and sufficiency isn't dependent on equality, rather on well-being).

Later on in the book, Frankfurt discusses his concept of sufficiency or having enough (2015: 24–28) which basically means “to meet a certain standard”. Leaving the second part of the book to the reader, what seems to be important is stressing the issue of having enough. He naturally talks about it as if it is the same category as the one of having different. Perhaps these two belong to the different categories; the first to the category of needs, and the second to the category of preferences? (See Ch. 1–3 of L. Doyal and I. Gough, *A Theory of Human Need*, concerning the needs-preferences debate.) Given that this is so, perhaps it is possible to argue that what he defends is not just completely different theory of justice, or moral theory, but also completely different philosophical anthropology. Perhaps underlying anthropological principles should be explicated in order to understand the consequent differences in morality and justice, because taken as it is, it seems that Frankfurt writes about incommensurable models which are such not by themselves, but by being parts of different understanding of human being.

Although pursuit of egalitarian goals can reach some political and social ideals, in the last sentence of the book, he claims not only that it is wrong to claim that equality is a basic value, but that it is an obstacle to identification of “truly fundamental moral worth” (2015: II, 11), and insofar as this is the case, his book, by being a plea for a different understanding of social morality, is itself a plea for a different understanding of a human being.

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