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TO BE HAPPY OR TO BE WORTHY OF HAPPINESS?

Franjo MIJATOVIĆ

Catholic Faculty of Theology, University of Zagreb

Theology in Rijeka – Dislocated Studies

Omladinska 14, 51000 Rijeka

fran_mij@yahoo.com

Abstract

Happiness has been morally troubling individuals and communities for over two and a half thousand years, cognitively pushing them to enrich their own lives and the *poleis* they belong to. Only rarely are we aware of the extent to which what we call happiness is credited to a type of effective moral agent who manifests a blend of virtue and duty. Therefore, this article will outline a traditional approach to classifying human moral activity, first and foremost a well-known distinction of the maxim of being happy and worthy of happiness, and a derivation of the effect resulting from such distinction. As soon as we engage in the distinction of being happy and being worthy of happiness, as if it were an exclusive alternative, we lose sight of the vast complex of motivations for human behaviour. Being happy is the oldest and the most significant form of eudaimonistic philosophy whose results exceed the external states of virtue and excellence. A modern subject, as its own moral legislator, secures and intensifies moral behaviour by subjecting itself to a categorical imperative and duty. Which changes have occurred by their collision will be indicated by the question of whether the insights and structures of eudaimonic and deontological ethics can be brought closer or have to be solely diametrically observed. As the history of ethics testifies, one can, in dealing with theory and practice, transform oneself, first and foremost, in the systems of Aristotle's and Kant's ethics.

Key words: good, happiness, virtue, duty, Aristotle, Kant.

Introduction

A human is not only *Homo sapiens*, but also *Homo agens*. Every human action finally results in some pleasure. Thereby, the human mind determines the

conditions that lead it to the achievement of a desired goal. Therefore, in colloquial speech we call a man who has achieved his goals a happy man. The expression happiness (*εὐδαιμονία*) comes from Greek. As it is well known in philosophy, *eudaimonia* referred to the good spirit, a posture recommended by Socrates in all meaningful moments of his life. Ancient eudaimonistic philosophical systems offer to the educated and the uneducated a convenient opportunity for personal moral perfection. Afterwards, cultivation of happiness occurs with the double help of: »critical work« and »eighteenth-century learning. »You should not brood and dream, my good engineer, Settembrini interrupted, 'but steadfastly trust those instincts of your years and race that compel you to action. You also need to pair your scientific learning with the idea of progress. In the immeasurable expanses of time, you see how life moves onward and upward from infusoria to man, and you cannot deny that infinite possibilities for further perfection still await humankind. But if you are determined to stick with mathematics, it, too, will lead you in a spiral from perfection to perfection; and you can take solace in the precepts of our eighteenth century, which taught that man was originally good, happy, and perfect, that it is only through social errors that he has been perverted and ruined, and that by working critically to rebuild society he shall become good, happy, and perfect again.«¹ There is also a similar relationship between eudaimonistic and deontological ethics, as Settembrini explains to Hans Kastorp in the first sentence and below about a new vision of life, viewed from today's perspective, despite a renewal and revival of virtue ethics in the last century.

Namely, ancient thinkers suggest that one can in some way *learn* to be happy. The anciently praised *ars vivendi* in the modern culture of rationality turns from metaphysics to progress, regardless of what progress represents. In the context of such conflicting theses, we wish to remind about two founders of different ethical opinions (and two different books *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Critique of Practical Reason*): Aristotle, from whom the concept of ethics was systematically developed, and by whose emergence the pursuit of a happy life begins, and Kant, who represents a new beginning of moral activity from which the motive of action was exiled. By the nature of things, it is difficult to speak of the conditions of integration of eudaimonistic and deontological ethics. In short, eudaimonistic ethics is a study of virtues. According to this ethics, we do not seek the objectivity of the universal commandments of the mind, or human nature, or an optimal world situation, or even an unforced consensus

¹ Thomas MANN, *The Magic Mountain*, New York, 1996, 376.

of all participants in an ideal discussion. What we seek to find are the criteria for determining the type of objectivity we can call the truth of subjectivity. It is the truth of practical judgment of active subjects involved in the good present in their aspiration. On the other hand, the starting point of deontological, in this case Kant's ethics, is precisely the exclusion of the perspective of an interested active subject in favour of disinterested commandments of the mind, in favour of an engaged and critical mind. Moral validity has now been linked to the universality of moral principles. Only that maxim of action which may wish to become general law is moral, but not that which corresponds to the inclinations or aspirations of the subject.

Our aim is firstly to examine the relationship between Aristotle's and Kant's conceptions of happiness, so that, after the controversial uncertainty in question is overcome, we could come to as great a degree of certainty as possible. Thus, happiness, because of the initial inability to decide the essential opposites, prepares the way for ultimate determination. Happiness / satisfaction (pleasure) in eudaimonistic philosophies is the goal of moral action. And there is no dispute about it. Kant goes beyond the ancient eudaimonists because he does not introduce any incentive into a determining ground of the will, at least it seems so. We could speed things up and be content to identify the result already in sight. At the end of the article, especially when we focus in more detail on Kant's works, the dilemma *may* be different. Kant surely wants to surpass eudaimonistic schools for he cannot reconcile with the equivalence of the axiom to be worthy of happiness and to be happy. He decides to (not) eliminate the most obvious: the motivational element of happiness, a complex of propensities and interests that are enslaved by happiness, in order to secure an inner fortress, i.e. a mental laboratory in which moral imperatives are meticulously delivered.

However, the question of happiness as a moral incentive is quite instructive because, as German philosopher J. Pieper writes, »a human being finds himself in a paradoxical situation. Man is stuck between, on the one hand his natural orientation towards happiness and the inability to avoid the question of happiness, and on the other, the divergence of answer regarding the content of good that will bring him the highest happiness.«² Therefore, no matter how they take care of their own happiness, as our daily experience teaches us, people are permanently dependent on happy moments, in relying on each other's

² Josef PIEPER, Glück und Kontemplation, in: *Werke in acht Bänden*, Bd. 6, Berthold WALD (ed.), Hamburg, 1998, 168.

pleasures of different kinds. Moreover, the act of contemplation of happiness is arranged in ancient philosophy according to what is eternal and is an expression of the hints of immortality. However, in the highest realization of the human intellect, we sense certain limitations and vulnerability of the human species. With these remarks we have gained some insight into the problems that this article will address.

1. The concept of the good

Aristotle's ethics starts with the following: »Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and choice, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim.«³ The parallel of striving and the good is not of secondary importance. Of course, in the study of the origin of the good no one would indulge in such assumptions if he were sure of its direct origin. Therefore, whoever takes an ontological perspective, *eo ipso* acknowledges that the good is that to which everything real is truly directed in its essence. Aristotle's method itself wants to be reflexive by deriving from the practical good the ultimate good, the good that we strive to for its own sake. It is, therefore, the good in whose attainment the aspiration in question is satisfied. And since we are active in the field of practice, the good mentioned above should be the practical good, i.e. the good which in any form may be an object or content of an activity. Starting from this aspect, the good is an activity that is not performed for anything else, but in itself possesses a goal that is good. »If, then, there is some end of the things we do, which we desire for its own sake (everything else being desired for the sake of this), and if we do not choose everything for the sake of something else (for at that rate the process would go on to infinity, so that our desire would be empty and vain), clearly this must be the good and the chief good.«⁴

Is that not a perfect tautology? An aspiration that leads to the infinite? Who could stay true to their aspiration, knowing that they would never achieve

³ ARISTOTLE, *Nicomachean Ethics*, in: *The Complete Works of Aristotle, The Revised Oxford Translation*, 2 vols, Jonathan BARNES (ed.), Princeton, N.J., 1991, I, 1, 1094a 1-3. (Hereinafter: EN). »The fundamental question of antiquity was: what is that I truly want for myself [...]? Greek thought tends to come to a precise understanding of the object of our basic and fundamental desire, so that we could know what we are obliged to do and what is meant by living a life properly. The Greeks called this object our most fundamental desire, the basic reason for all our other desires, and the reason for all our actions, the good or the highest good.« Ernst TUGENDHAT, *Probleme der Ethik*, Stuttgart, 1984, 43-44.

⁴ EN I, 1, 1094a, 20-22.

their goal, but still occasionally sensing its fullness? On the other hand, declaring such an aspiration tautological would not only be a mistake, but a failure of the thing itself. In reality, this is no tautology but a description of an anthropological fundamentally real state. This is a fact of the psychology of action. Thus, there are such subjects whose goals are health, material prosperity, reputation, pleasure. Since these different goods are associated with the one corresponding good, »the self-sufficient we now define as that which when isolated makes life desirable and lacking in nothing; and such we think happiness to be.«⁵ This is precisely the fundamental category of Aristotle's ethics – seeking the *possession* as a life's goal, a goal he believes to contain happiness.

The close connection between eudaimonistic and deontological ethics is manifested here as well because Kant also views the perspective of morality in the context of good volition, while emphasizing our determining ground of will rather than the effect of moral action itself. Namely, even if it were not possible to do anything without guilt, our will would »like a jewel, it would still shine by itself, as something that has its full worth in itself.«⁶ Yet, this Kant's statement is ambiguous. The will as the original incentive is and remains necessarily amoral. The will is good only if it is directed to the laws of the mind. Which is why Kant thinks that »*perversity* of the heart [...] then called *evil*, [...] can coexist with a will which in the abstract is good.«⁷ Therefore, Kant disagrees with Aristotle on this point, demanding for the will a relation to appropriate imperatives of the mind, while omitting an understanding of the will as an identity of good and aspiration.

1.1. (Un)justified striving for happiness

In eudaimonistic *schools*, happiness is the purpose and the goal of earthly life. In achieving happiness, a moral subject was determined by dispositions of inclinations and practice. Practicing good and right behaviour, under the control of the mind, logically led to a happy life. The propensity for heteronomy of morality and the determining ground of the will warranted ethical self-transformation. Aristotle's expression »the good has rightly been declared to

⁵ EN I, 1, 1097b, 14-16.

⁶ Immanuel KANT, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, 6:394. (Hereinafter: G). Citations of Kant's works refer to the volume and page number in the Academy Edition of Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and predecessors, 1900–). All translations are taken from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, Paul GUYER – Allen W. WOOD (eds.), Cambridge, 1996.

⁷ Immanuel KANT, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, 6:37. (Hereinafter: R).

be that at which all things aim«⁸ viewed practically and ontologically with Kant, loses that *contemplative* aspect and is replaced by a diametrically opposite position. This new *practical* philosophy will not only emphasize the primacy of duty; it will also allow that the imperatives of its own time carry it. What Kant had in mind was to provide a zone in which a moral subject, free from excessive motional demands of existence, would enjoy permanent work on the moral self.

Kant considers that »To be happy is necessarily the demand of every rational but finite being and therefore an unavoidable determining ground of its faculty of desire.«⁹ Thereat, he understands happiness, although not exclusively as we will show below, as *something* like well-being, since »happiness is not an ideal of reason but of imagination, resting merely upon empirical grounds«.¹⁰ Such an attitude arises from a critical mind in opposition to morality wherewith Kant wanted to make a transition from natural inclinations that negate pleasure to affirmative demands of the mind. The striving for happiness fuelled by egoistic motives obscures the view of moral action itself.

Kant's critique of the striving for happiness rests on the concept of happiness that is not classical. The neo-classical concept of happiness understands happiness as a type of a psychological condition of the experience of pleasure. Kant is explicit when saying that happiness is not an »ideal of reason«, but rather an ideal of a condition of well-being, a kind of pleasure-oriented self-love¹¹ that moves on the hedonistic horizon of »well-being« and »ill-being«. »Well-being or ill-being always signifies only a reference to our state of *agreeableness* or *disagreeableness*, of gratification or pain, and if we desire or avoid an object on this account we do so only insofar as it is referred to our sensibility and to the feeling of pleasure or displeasure it causes.«¹² Moral feelings which have so far been determined by the inclination of happiness are now governed by the laws of the mind.

The perspective of happiness, as Aristotle exhibits it, is eudaimonistic. Therefore, it is legitimate to assume that the striving for happiness is hidden

⁸ EN I, 1, 1094a, 1.

⁹ Immanuel KANT, *Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:26. (Hereinafter: CpV).

¹⁰ G, 4:419. This explains how E. Tugendhat could criticize the classical concept of happiness for providing »no objective, generally valid rules for attaining happiness« because »true happiness can only determine happiness for itself« and »a definite concept of happiness cannot be grounded.« Ernest TUGENDHAT, *Probleme der Ethik*, 46.

¹¹ CpV, 5:74.

¹² CpV, 5:60.

in the act of determining what is good and right for a person. Here we come across a form of reflection called philosophical eudaimonia, a term that refers to action with the help of the mind, with a fine distinction of understanding diverse strivings for happiness. In the classical sense, the virtuous is not one who lives flawlessly, but rather one who has used his human abilities for a good cause, one who uses his skills well and competently. Eudaimonistic ethics always emphasize how good action and virtue coincide with happiness and that happiness in life consists of good action, of *eupraxiai*.¹³

Thus, according to the classical criticism, the most widely spread and persistently passed on by Kant and Scheler, the striving for happiness threatens, i.e. destroys every moral. Morality in this case denotes a purity of motives that suggest what to do in each instance. If eudaimonism is a choice of a certain act in order to become a happy person, then eudaimonism is precisely the form of egoism¹⁴ that necessarily distorts our view of what needs to be done. However, this formulation is more in line with what we call hedonism. If hedonism is a form of eudaimonism, then it is a forgery; a deception leading to hedonism is not a reduction of happiness to sensory pleasures, for *hedone* of a hedonist can also be an intellectual pleasure.¹⁵ A hedonistic mistake is in the interpretation of happiness as a state of pleasure and in the belief that what motivates our actions is the intention to achieve such a state. The striving for happiness has been interpreted as a fundamental motive for action, which contradicts the hedonistic conception of desire in the context of Aristotle's teaching about happiness. Is not Kant's understanding of eudaimonism essentially hedonism?¹⁶ Kant's ethics stem from the idea that all human beings are by nature striving for happiness, and therefore are hedonists. He also adds that this hedonistic motivation, which is inherent in man, is immoral. Accordingly, Kant rejects the hedonistic understanding of the striving for happiness as a criterion for moral behaviour and develops a concept of morality that allows us to channel our egoistic nature within the boundaries of the mind.

However, for Aristotle, and in general for ancient philosophy, apart from the Cyreniac school such an understanding of happiness as a state of experience of pleasure is unthinkable. As J. Annas explained, the ancient notion of

¹³ Cf. Troels ENGBERG-PEDERSEN, *Aristotle's Theory of Moral Insight*, New York, 2002, 27-29.

¹⁴ Cf. John DEIGH, *An Introduction to Ethics*, New York, 2010, 56-58.

¹⁵ Cf. Fred FELDMANN, *Utilitarianism, Hedonism, and Desert: Essays in Moral Philosophy*, Cambridge, 2011, 80.

¹⁶ Cf. Manfred KUEHN, Kant and Aristotle on ethics, in: *The Reception of Aristotle's Ethics*, Jon MILLER (ed.), Cambridge, 2012, 246.

happiness is bound up with the concept of virtue and subordinate to it.¹⁷ The ancient concept of happiness does not hold that a virtuous person is ultimately a happy person; rather that true happiness is a fulfilled, successful and good life that consists of virtue. Ancient ethical doctrine often has explicitly counter-intuitive features, and in any case forces us to have initial intuition about revising what happiness is. The Aristotelian formula that we all strive for happiness as our ultimate goal includes (and here again is a consensus in ancient ethics) *finding* happiness only in what we strive for, for the sake of itself. Therefore, Aristotle's formula of happiness leads us to an analysis of what may be desired for the sake of itself and in what the very rational fullness of aspiration can be seen, the rational saturation of the will. By this, the pursuit of happiness is not a psychologically empty formula that simply describes subjective states of the experience of pleasure. Precisely this kind of determination of the content of happiness is, in principle, open to rational foundation.

1.1.1. Is happiness transcendent?

Pascal expresses the human self-interested demand for happiness like this: »Despite these miseries, man wishes to be happy, and only wishes to be happy, and cannot wish not to be so.«¹⁸ Contemplation of happiness involves aspects of one's own being and telos. According to the statements of classical eudaimonists (especially hedonistic schools), man's worldly goal is also to achieve being in the fullness of his own being, in which his aspirations find their perfection. The article has already drawn attention to Aristotle's sentence which confirms that every living thing and every human action always aims for some good. The good that a rational animal most intensively wants is the highest good. »And nothing, I should say, is more certain about it than that every intelligent being pursues it, desires it, wishes to catch and get possession of it, and has no interest in anything in which the good is not included.«¹⁹

Happiness as a wholly and self-sufficient good whose possession makes a life worthy of desiring culminates in the activity of the soul in accordance with the best and most complete excellence. The explanation of the need for happiness is the request of the mental being; to grasp happiness in its essence. Aristotle confirms this, in the tenth book of *Nicomachean Ethics*: »those activities are desirable in themselves from which nothing is sought beyond

¹⁷ Julia ANNAS, *The Morality of Happiness*, Oxford, 329.

¹⁸ Blaise PASCAL, *Pensées*, New York, 1958, 169.

¹⁹ PLATO, *Philebus*, trans. Benjamin JOWETT, Oxford, 1892, 20d.

the activity.«²⁰ In discussing the issue of right living, Aristotle concludes that such an activity, which is chosen for its own sake, must put aside all other emotions that hinder the path to happiness. Hence the demand that a man of theory should live freely and contemplatively. One must acquire sustainable activities that provide nothing in themselves and yet enable everything. In *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle speaks even more clearly about considering God as the ultimate goal in which human aspiration and action itself rests. Through the *theisation* of happiness and of theoretical life, the first step towards God as a pure intellect contemplating itself has been made. The harmonization of happiness with the divine canon finds its justification in the intellect, for the intellect is the best and the most divine in us, and it is to be lived »in accordance with the best thing in us.«²¹

Moral factors are always spontaneously drawn into the ranking of a better or worse moral act, and such differences could be described as vertical tensions of human existence. This is precisely the case with the moral virtues that are in harmony with the mind, and are realized in different areas of the human common life (*polis*). »But in a secondary degree the life in accordance with the other kind of excellence is happy; for the activities in accordance with this befit our human estate.«²² Why Aristotle in front of happiness in *polis* speaks of a secondary happiness remains a mystery and a difficulty for his interpreters.²³ This is a matter of the human type of happiness, which is not characterized by a single activity, but rather by an ordered multiplicity of activities in harmony with the mind, with the most exquisite and the most divine in us. Should it be emphasized that, watching, observing what God alone observes, *noesis noesos*, is an activity that in the first place reveals itself in the

²⁰ EN X, 6, 1176b, 7.

²¹ EN X, 7, 1177b, 33-34.

²² EN X, 8, 1178a, 9-10.

²³ With reference to this problem see: John L. ACKRILL, Aristotle on Eudaimonia, in: *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, Amélie O. RORTY (ed.), Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, 1980, 15-34. Ackrill considers different solutions presented by many of Aristotle's interpreters. Aristotle's teaching about double happiness can only make sense in anthropological terms. See also: Maja HUDOLETNJAK-GRGIĆ, Ljudsko dobro u Nikomahovoj etici I, in: *Filozofska istraživanja* 108, (2007) vol. 4. (791-807). »The two conceptions of happiness encountered in *Nicomachean Ethics* are mutually exclusive. Therefore, it seems that Aristotle must be credited with only one of them, or we must claim that he accepts two conceptions of happiness for different agents, one (happiness in the best sense or perfect happiness) for those capable of living in contemplation, and the other (second-class happiness or imperfect happiness) for others, those who can achieve life in accordance with the virtues of character.« *Ibid*, 792.

act of knowledge? The emotions²⁴ and activities that result from them, inseparable from rationality, are secondary.

1.2. Pleasure as an addition to happiness

Aristotle's establishment of a reasonable life as a movement toward the good, that is, happiness, entails certain consequences. Under the shadow of the pleasure thesis dwells the apprehension that eudaimonia could be doomed to impoverish the relationship toward moral act. If we are to explain the relationship between a happy man and pleasure, it is inevitable to quote Aristotle who says: »Whether, then, the complete and blessed man has one or more activities, the pleasures that complete these will be said in the strict sense to be pleasures proper to man, and the rest will be so in a secondary and fractional way, as are the activities.«²⁵ From this we can conclude that for a mortal being the fullness of pleasure is an indicator of the fullness of happiness.

All morally important decisions must come together now. Can one speak of the equivalence of pleasure and happiness? The pervasion of pleasure and happiness, however, still does not indicate the equivalence of sensory and contemplative pleasure. Aristotle's parable with an eye shows us the possibility of differentiating happiness and satisfaction »Seeing seems at any moment to be complete«.²⁶ Each sense has its own pleasure, but contemplation or theory has its own pleasure which we call joy; a special spiritual kind of pleasure or satisfaction that is reflected in what one loves.

In the following section we will outline a number of aspects under which the relationship of happiness and satisfaction (pleasure) can be observed. Since these dimensions are related to the occurrence of appropriate actions, the question is: Is happiness merely a state of experiencing satisfaction or, an independent entity from which satisfaction also arises? It would be best to compare the relationship between happiness and satisfaction with listening to music. Suppose listening to music was the best kind of musical pleasure that existed. We do not listen to music because we are looking for a certain kind of satisfaction, because if there was an apparatus that gave us the same kind of

²⁴ When it comes to affectively conditioned judgments, Aristotle says »and also it accompanies all objects of choice; for even the noble and the advantageous appear pleasant.« EN II, 2, 1105a 6-7. In our case this means: we do not always act out of desire, since desire signifies those affects that are capable of confusing the mind, but at the same time if a desire is correctly handled, it can be the greatest support for the mind.

²⁵ EN X, 4, 1176a 26-29.

²⁶ EN X, 4, 1174a 15.

pleasure without music we would still not use it. The reason is in the listening to music, that is, in a certain activity, not in the satisfaction associated with music. Because this special music promises us the highest pleasure, it means it is simply the best. We would not be satisfied with pleasure or satisfaction only, if it meant giving up the activity of the beauty of listening to music.

The tendency to turn our aspiration into a practical good that results from a particular activity (e.g. listening to music) is a goal, not a pleasure. Depending on the context, an active subject pursues an activity that transforms our aspiration into pleasure of the highest degree. However, this does not mean that our effort is saturated because we are satisfied, but that we are satisfied when our effort is saturated.²⁷ Therefore, wanting to be happy is not an aspiration to experience pleasure. Happiness gets its own value only from the category of a perfect pleasure. The antithesis of activity and pleasure is manifested in the following: »And no one would choose to live with the intellect of a child throughout his life, however much he were to be pleased at the things that children are pleased at, nor to get enjoyment by doing some most disgraceful deed, though he were never to feel any pain in consequence.«²⁸

Pleasure always leads us astray just when we intend to achieve it directly. The result is frustration and inability to rejoice.²⁹ This is very clear in the field of sensory striving. Sensory endeavours are not driven by a presentation of an experience of pleasure, but rather by a presentation of what such experiences can cause. No sensory endeavour is directed to an experience of pleasure. The sense of sight will not be actualized by a presentation of contentment of harmony of colours, but rather by colours, coloured things and shapes. This is why humans, not animals, behave hedonistically.

The attempt to understand the genesis of pleasure is not exhausted by indicating that the mind has no pleasure for its object. It has the goods, practical goods, i.e., activities, certain behaviours that are experienced as joy. *Homo agens* seems to suffer without the object, being haunted by the loss of intentional orientation of the direct experience of pleasure. Is the focus on pleasure also a way of losing it? If the best action is the fullness of pleasure, it is only under specific circumstances which we strive for or aspire after, because sensory

²⁷ André Gide noted in his *Journals*: »The terrible thing is that we can never make ourselves drunk enough.« André GIDE, *Journals, 1889-1913*, Justin O' BRIEN (ed.), vol. I, Chicago, 2000, 32.

²⁸ EN X, 2, 1174a 1-4.

²⁹ This has been proven in psychotherapeutic research. Cf. Viktor FRANKL, *On the Theory and Therapy of Mental Disorders: An Introduction to Logotherapy and Existential Analysis*, New York, 1956.

discomfort (pain or anxiety) can currently dominate. »And there are many things we should be keen about even if they brought no pleasure, e.g. seeing, remembering, knowing, possessing the excellences. If pleasures necessarily do accompany these, that makes no odds; we should choose these even if no pleasure resulted.«³⁰ Even a hedonist – J. S. Mill had to admit that it is »better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied.«³¹

The reintegration of pleasure into happiness, which is associated in Aristotle's works with impulses toward hedonism, requires correct anthropology³² of pleasure. In this reversal of asking questions about pleasure, a change is announced during which satisfaction inherent in pleasure is created as a consequence of action. It is an anthropological factum. Aristotle does not shy away from *theising* pleasure and satisfaction, for the deities, he thinks, are the most satisfied. In terms of the metaphysics of creation, we could also say that consummation of every action is in a form of pleasure or, as in the case of spiritual activity, in the form of joy, participation of creatures in divine perfection. The experience of joy is a sign of perfection. And precisely this fact is certainly the reason why pleasure theory is so essential to ethics.

Happiness, the best activity, and the greatest pleasure coincide. And for this very reason, seeking pleasure or the pursuit of pleasant pleasures cannot make us happy, but it can disorient us. What we need to know is what is the best action for a human being. »For this reason, then, our whole inquiry must be about these; for to feel delight and pain rightly or wrongly has no small effect on our actions.«³³ The best activity is the one in which a virtuous person feels joy. In order to determine what that is, Aristotle offers a solution: »what we said before will apply now; that which is proper to each thing is by nature best and most pleasant for each thing; for man, therefore, the life according to intellect is best and pleasantest, since intellect more than anything else *is* man. This life therefore is also the happiest.«³⁴ As soon as we get into the distinction between

³⁰ EN X, 3, 1174a 4-8.

³¹ John S. MILL, *Utilitarianism*, in: *Utilitarianism and On liberty: Including Mill's Essay on Bentham and Selections from the Writings of Jeremy Bentham and John Austin*, Oxford, 2003, 188. The problem of Mill's theory is that it can not explain what would better mean in this situation.

³² Cf. John L. ACKRILL, *Aristotle on Eudaimonia*, 33.

³³ EN II, 2, 1105a 5-7.

³⁴ EN X, 7, 1178a 5-8. Aristotle's insight about happiness remains intact, despite its problematic character. »so far as we can, make ourselves immortal, and strain every nerve to live in accord with the best thing in us; for even if it is small in bulk, much more does it in power and worth surpassing everything.« EN X, 7, 1177b 34-1178a 2.

the contemplative, which is at the highest stage of life, and the moral virtues that would be at the next stage of life, we lose out of sight an extensive complex of human moral behaviour that is neither merely mental nor merely emotional.

However, this answer is essentially not satisfying and is »marked by deep ambiguity«. ³⁵ Aristotle is the last to deny it. The happiness Aristotle talks about is a very uncertain disposition. The first rank of happiness would be a philosopher's life to which a small number of those who are capable of living theoretical lives belong. Moreover, even among them there are few who truly care for themselves. There is no denying that the second rank of happiness is less perfect than the first. Indeed, Aristotle's attitude is »unstable« ³⁶, but this instability of Aristotle's attitude does not in any way mean »the collapse of eudaimonist ethics« or the replacement of some principles with the principles of happiness. ³⁷

2. Some of Kant's definitions of happiness

Kant's attitude towards happiness as a moral incentive is (un)doubtful and (un)clear, which had already been briefly sketched when we spoke about Aristotle's understanding of happiness. According to Kant, man acts out of duty (*Pflicht*) when he acts on the basis of the pure command of the mind, and not on the basis of inclination. A moral person is therefore the only one who acts out of duty, but not toward duty, while paying attention to the moral law. Despite literature which clearly states that Kant's view is that one can only be worthy of happiness, certain eudaimonistic germs run through Kant's works. In what follows, we will try to show how far or close Kant is to eudaimonism.

We have said that in Aristotle's happiness there is an undeniable necessity for man's moral life. Kant accepts Aristotle's claim that: »Every [...] to aim at some good.« ³⁸ and for him happiness is: »to be satisfied with his

And the best thing about us is »that divine in us«, that is, a mind that reveals »the dimension of truth, of goodness, of holiness, and of the absolute.« Robert SPAEMANN, *Happiness and Benevolence*, London, 2000, 54.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

³⁶ Julia ANNAS, *The Morality of Happiness*, 364.

³⁷ Cf. Otfried HÖFFE, Aristoteles universalistische Tugendethik, in: *Tugendethik*, Klaus RIPPE – Peter SCHABER (eds.), Stuttgart, 1998, 65.

³⁸ EN I, 1, 1094a 20. »There is, however, *one* end that can be presupposed as actual in the case of all rational beings (insofar as imperatives apply to them, namely as dependent beings), and therefore one purpose that they not merely *could* have but that we can safely presuppose they all actually *do have* by a natural necessity, and that purpose is *happiness*.« G, 6:416.

condition«³⁹; »a maximum of well-being in my present condition and in every future condition«⁴⁰; »Now, a rational being's consciousness of the agreeableness of life uninterruptedly accompanying his whole existence is *happiness*«⁴¹; »Happiness is the satisfaction of all our inclinations (*extensive*, with regard to their manifoldness, as well as *intensive*, with regard to degree, and also *proten-sive*, with regard to duration)«⁴²; »always to the way you would like it to.«⁴³ But the illusion of cognation with eudaimonism is, for the time being, deceiving, both formally and contently.

Already in the formulation of happiness, due to its origin, a motive as an incentive by which moral subjects as such opt for a certain moral action comes to the fore. The motive, therefore, does not mean the sum of its various interests, but it is also a set of mental and practical procedures that help their agents in the transition from everyday to practical relation. Ever since Aristotle understood happiness as a movement of human aspiration, the term that has spread like an epidemic. Kant references the plausibility of that argument »But it is a misfortune that the concept of happiness is such an indeterminate concept that, although every human being wishes to attain this, he can still never say determinately and consistently with himself what he really wishes and will.«⁴⁴ In this sense, we are doomed to seek again the means of achieving our purposes. Since the content of happiness is essentially indefinable (i.e., individually definable), the maxim of self-love (prudence) has no universal validity. If in Kant's work happiness is indefinable and plays no motive role, then why does *Chapter II* appear in the *Critique of Practical Reason: On a Dialectic of Pure Reason in Determining the Concept of the Highest Good*? Namely, Kant reiterates in both the *Critique of the Practical Reason* and in the *Religion in the Boundaries of Mere Reason* that moral requires neither objects nor purposes, because the moral law is itself the determining ground for the will. Although we would characterize Kant in accordance with his ethics, using quotations from his works, as an ethicist who constantly debated the question of the clear meaning of the fundamental problems of practical philosophy and the method

³⁹ CpV, 5:117. »Power, riches, honor, even health and that complete well being and satisfaction with one's condition called *happiness*.« G, 4:393; »happiness, that is, satisfaction with one's state« Immanuel KANT, *The Metaphysics of Morals* (Hereinafter: MdS) 6:387; »*Happiness* is the state of a rational being in the world in the whole of whose existence *everything goes according to his wish and will*.« CpV, 5:124.

⁴⁰ G, 4:418.

⁴¹ CpV, 5:22.

⁴² CrV, A.806/B.834.

⁴³ MdS, 6:480.

⁴⁴ G, 4:418.

of its solution, he suddenly appears as a supporter of a rigid eudaimonistic ideal: the highest good pertaining to human sensibility. Where does the demand that the moral of »pure« will should be identified with the highest good come from?

2.1. *The highest good as a motive for moral action*

Kant's move can be judged either as a further development of the starting point in determining the moral law as a determining ground of the will or as a non-distant relation towards the difficulty of getting out of the hitherto prevailing eudaimonistic current in moral philosophy. It cannot be denied that Kant, because of man's weakness, had to conclude that subjective or pathological motivations are much stronger than moral ones. He therefore finds himself in a certain *dilemma* between an ideal morality which claims that moral action is only that which is done out of one pure motive; and one real morality, which holds for the ultimate purpose of all actions happiness. Is the idea of Greek philosophers, the idea of happiness as a motive for action, doomed in advance to impoverishment from all disinterested relationships?

At this point, we wish to emphasize that Kant himself distinguishes Zeno's eudaimonism, which admittedly contains purity and moral value, but no reality, while the Epicurus' system lacks purity and moral value, but has effect and action. In Kant's view not only purity is important but also reality. To reconcile happiness and virtue, Kant introduces the concept of the highest good.⁴⁵ The concept of the highest good is not an accidental phrase in Kant's vocabulary. The whole moral life in a practical attitude, according to Kant's understanding, always implies a morality that does not require any purposes and motives. The objectivity of the moral law as the determining ground of the will should be able, if not completely resolve, but nevertheless able to suspend the fixation of the subject on the highest good. If the second alternative, the concept of the highest good, is correct, then we do not get a valid

⁴⁵ CpV, 5:109. The meaning of the concept of the highest good in his philosophy has been debated throughout literature on Kant and the discussions are ongoing. Two eminent names have marked the discussion: Beck and Silber. Beck believes that the concept of the highest good in Kant's works has no meaning and that is why this question is irrelevant. Cf. Lewis W. BECK, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, London-Chicago, 1966. On the other hand, Silber claims that the highest good is a material object of pure will for the highest good »adds content to the abstract form of the categorical and gives direction to moral volition«. John SILBER, The Importance of the Highest Good in Kant's Ethics, in: *Ethics* 73, 1963, 183. On the contrary, Kant himself held that only a pure practical mind can determine the will.

argument but we do get an orientation that implies caution. The argument: »The production of the highest good in the world is the necessary object of a will determinable by the moral law«⁴⁶ brings into the game a new aspect which is *worth desiring*. The highest good will become »that whole which is not a part of a still greater whole of the same kind (*perfectissimum*).«⁴⁷ This new perspective will not only emphasize the importance of the highest good, it will also allow us to observe it as a motive since the moral law is »merely formal [...] it abstracts as determining ground from all matter and so from every object of volition.«⁴⁸ In the concept of the highest good all purposes are united⁴⁹, all that one can desire, not only virtue but also happiness as the highest moral good. Thus the subject borders on the question of whether virtue and happiness, as moral dispositions, can be grounded in the highest good? And how?

»Two determinations *necessarily* combined in one concept must be connected as ground and consequent, and so connected that this *unity* is considered either as *analytic* (logical connection) or as *synthetic* (real connection), the former in accordance with the law of identity, the latter in accordance with the law of causality.«⁵⁰ Only through this narrow door can thought enter the realm of the highest good, in which virtue and happiness are connected, as a »unity of concept«.⁵¹ Let us recall that for Epicurus happiness is the highest good, the highest purpose of man, and virtue is its means and consequence. Whereas for the Stoics, the highest good is virtue, and happiness is only a consequence of the realization of a virtuous life. Of course, although we notice an external similarity between the two concepts, it still remains unclear what kind of identity it is about. The result of that unusual identity of the »unity of concept« are analytical judgments. A judgment is analytical when in the relation

⁴⁶ CpV, 5:122.

⁴⁷ CpV, 5:110.

⁴⁸ CpV, 5:109. Beck also admits that in this case the highest good has a function of a motive because the highest good is »psychological necessary to a semblance of morality«. Lewis W. BECK, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, 244.

⁴⁹ Cf. CpV, 5:111.

⁵⁰ CpV, 5:111.

⁵¹ CpV, 5:111. »This is not to say that reason alone determines every aspect of the highest good. For Kant also relies on claims about the status of virtue and happiness, specifically about whether they are conditioned or unconditioned, in constructing the concept of the highest good. [...] So it is ultimately fundamental to his entire conception of the highest good, even if it does require further claims established elsewhere.« Eric WATKINS, *The Antinomy of Practical Reason: reason, the unconditioned and the highest good*, in: *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, Andrews REATH – Jens TIMMERMANN (eds.), Cambridge, 2010, 166.

between subject A and predicate B »Either the predicate B belongs to the subject A as something that is (covertly) contained in this concept A.«⁵² The analytical connection of virtue and happiness understood in the form of this scheme of belonging of happiness to virtue and virtue to happiness, according to Kant, necessarily means their subordination; virtue is the cause of happiness, that is, happiness is the cause of virtue. Nevertheless, one fact is obvious. Although both Stoics and Epicureans are misled, their claims have their own justification. While Stoic teaching has features of a pure ideal defining virtue as the sole purpose, this ideal suffers defeat in reality because it possesses no motive. In the latter case, Epicurus' ideal is realistic, because happiness is the motive, but it does not possess any purity, because virtue is only a means of achieving happiness. Therefore, identity is not a path in connecting happiness and virtue.

Can the solution to the relation of virtue and happiness refer to a more respectable source than identity? To causality? It seems the conditions under which the relationship of virtue and happiness can be viewed as a synthetic connection of cause and effect have been met. In the light of causality, happiness is the reason for virtue, i.e. virtue is the reason for happiness. If happiness produces virtue, it is its motive. In this case, only virtue exists because it causes the striving for happiness which is a characteristic of eudaimonism. Therefore, Kant has never taken this conception of the highest good into account, since it contains eudaimonistic elements, and he considers it in the *Critique of Practical Reason* to be »absolutely impossible«.⁵³ Virtue must be sought for its own sake. In brief, as soon as virtue has weakened and lost its power and intrinsic willingness for people to seek it for its own sake, a tendency for happiness to focus on virtue comes to fore. Nor was Kant satisfied with the second conception of virtue as the cause of happiness. For variety in writing one who is virtuous is also happy because virtue is the source of happiness.

It is therefore clearly impossible, that in the world virtue directly and necessarily produces happiness in terms of physical happiness. Moral laws have no natural connection with happiness. The value of morality lies in the purity of thought.⁵⁴ Thus, once again, happiness cannot be the cause of virtue

⁵² CrV, B/11.

⁵³ CpV, 5:113.

⁵⁴ Cf. CpV, 5:114f. »Because any practical connection of causes and effects in the world, as a result of the determination of the will, does not depend upon the moral dispositions of the will but upon knowledge of the laws of nature and the physical ability to use them

in the form of a motive, nor can virtue be the cause and source of happiness. Both variants are wrong for Kant. Does Kant offer any other solution in the self-formation of a disinterested moral subject?

2.1.1. To be worthy of happiness and hope for happiness

We tend to carelessly pass by the phenomenon of the highest good, giving credibility to a moral law directed at will. On the other hand, the moral law by using virtue is not only a part of the highest good but the supreme condition of its existence. In Kant's ethics the highest good has a necessary function in relation to the motive of moral action. »Now, since the promotion of the highest good, which contains this connection in its concept, is an a priori necessary object of our will and inseparably bound up with the moral law, the impossibility of the first must also prove the falsity of the second.«⁵⁵ Because of the way in which Kant understands the connection between the moral law and the highest good, the problem of the reality of the highest good is crucial, for that moral law is not »fantastic« or »directed to empty imaginary ends«⁵⁶ depends on it.

Therefore, the original thought about the reality of the highest good is nothing but the reality of its elements: virtue and happiness. Following the breakdown of the *conglomerate* of happiness and virtue, which could not be explained by causality and identity, a new radical meaning of virtue appears. It will be an opportunity to explain how to achieve happiness. But above all, virtue, understood as a conscious return to happiness, contains an ambivalent meaning. After all, is not a virtuous one who has good will and one who acts morally by adhering to his duty? In the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant not only speaks of a *perfect* virtue, which is also called holiness, but also of a *simple* virtue. »and his proper moral condition, in which he can always be, is *virtue*, that is, moral disposition *in conflict*, and not *holiness* in the supposed *possession* of a complete *purity* of dispositions of the will.«⁵⁷

for one's purposes; consequently, no necessary connection of happiness with virtue in the world, adequate to the highest good, can be expected from the most meticulous observance of moral laws.« CpV, 5:114.

⁵⁵ CpV, 5:114.

⁵⁶ CpV, 5:114. »If morality is not false, then the highest good must be possible as an object of pure practical reason.« Eric WATKINS, *The Antinomy of Practical Reason: reason, the unconditioned and the highest good*, 152.

⁵⁷ CpV, 5:85.

This *simple* virtue that refers to the will is not perfect but it fights for perfection and it is possible to achieve it. However, this is not the subject of our interest at the moment. The subject of our interest is the highest good that can be achieved, but not in the sense of the greatest *perfectissimum*, »the whole and complete good.«⁵⁸ Only virtue in the sense of holiness, i.e. perfect virtue can be an element of the highest good. After all, as Beck rightly observes, Kant mixed both notions of virtue.⁵⁹ If perfect virtue is an element of the highest good, it must be possible to achieve it, otherwise the highest good cannot be real. Kant resolutely rejects such a possibility. »Complete conformity of the will with the moral law is, however, holiness, a perfection of which no rational being of the sensible world is capable at any moment of his existence.«⁶⁰ But there is a practical necessity of showing the possible reality of virtue, for it is precisely virtue, i.e., holiness, that is the highest good, and the highest good is the supreme object of pure will. In order to show the attainability of virtue, Kant refers to the postulate of the immortality of the soul.

From this the decisive element of Kant's conception develops the idea of virtue as happiness, i.e. the idea of worthiness of happiness.⁶¹ In this way, the motive in moral action could be avoided and the disinterested attitude of the moral agent could be justified. The individual will thus no longer seek motive

⁵⁸ CpV, 5:110.

⁵⁹ Beck rightly noticed that for Kant virtue is replaced by the highest perfection of virtue. Beck calls this conception of the highest good, the »maximal conception of the *summum bonum*«. When he speaks of the »maximal conception of the *summum bonum*«, it is a matter of perfect good or holy will as a condition for attaining happiness and also the highest good. According to Beck, Kant has two different notions of the highest good. The highest good is, on the one hand, the connection between holiness and happiness, and on the other hand, it simply consists of virtue and happiness. Beck calls this second notion the concept of the highest good, in which only virtue is a condition, »juridical conception of the *summum bonum*«. Kant's replacement of the maximum with a »juridical conception of the *summum bonum*« obviously has consequences. With a legal conception, happiness can be achieved, although the highest degree of virtue remains unattainable and the happiness that is achieved does not depend only on the degree of worthiness one seeks to achieve. Cf. Lewis W. BECK, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, 266-269.

⁶⁰ CpV, 5:122.

⁶¹ CpV, 5:130. Talanga says: »To be worthy of happiness, and not to be happy, seems to be a dispute that our mind must try to resolve [...] No man can fulfil the requirement of the moral law as prescribed by the categorical imperative. Also, we do not see anywhere that the degree of happiness completely coincides with the degree of fulfilment of the moral principle. Acting completely contrary to morality often brings happiness and external bliss.« Josip TALANGA, *Uvod u Kantovu etiku*, in: Immanuel KANT, *Utemeljenje metafizike čudoreda*, Kruzak, Zagreb, 2016, 30.

through happiness in the realization of virtue. In the future, virtue can only be realized through the assumption of the worthiness of happiness, which is *at the end of the road* anyway. Happiness is still a consequence, and a possible consequence of worthiness, not purpose. By the power of virtue, we think of happiness, and by happiness God remembers us. Kant goes a step further when he articulates the idea of hope as a feeling of relentless optimism, the echoes of which are present in one who lives morally. According to such an argument, an individual who lives morally can only hope to be rewarded, but this must by no means serve him as a motive, for otherwise the purity of moral action cannot be preserved. Virtue leads us to happiness by making us worthy of happiness.

But even Kant's paradoxical attempt to offer a timely solution is not entirely devoid of eudaimonistic admixtures. Is the difference between Kant's and the eudaimonistic conception really relevant to motivation in action? For instance, if we ask a man guided by the eudaimonist principle why he acts morally, he will answer *because I want to be happy*. And if he can achieve happiness with virtue, he will certainly try to be virtuous. The answer to the same question posed to another man, who guides himself by Kant's conception in moral action, might be as follows: *I act morally because I want to be worthy of happiness and because I hope, if I am worthy of happiness, that I am also happy*. The motive is therefore in both cases the possibility of being happy, while in the second case achieving happiness is not certain. But happiness is still a purpose, and virtue is still a means of achieving it.

It seems that Kant distanced himself from eudaimonism in one place. According to his conception, the connection between the worthiness of happiness and happiness is not necessary and is based only on hope. According to Kant, happiness does not come directly, although it is a condition here. To hope and to desire⁶² is the only thing that can be done, if a man is virtuous. Happiness is a reward that cannot be claimed because it must be earned. In this way, hope becomes central, for although happiness cannot be a motive for moral action, it necessarily plays a role in motivation. Achieving happiness must in any case be at least a part of hope. The question is, what is this hope based on? The whole of Kant's conception of the concept of the highest good seems to depend on this problem. But why can someone who is worthy of happiness hope to *just* participate in it?

⁶² Cf. MdS, 6:482. »So our happiness always remains a wish that cannot become a hope, unless some other power is added«.

2.2. *God, the guarantor of morals*

The answer to this question lies in Kant's postulate of God's existence which makes hope meaningful.⁶³ The word God⁶⁴ is not a pathetic word in Kant's dictionary. Moreover, Kant's entire endeavor is dedicated to establishing the unity of virtue and happiness that should be grounded in the proper postulate of God's existence. God, as Kant says, is an adequate cause of happiness. This new practical situation will not only emphasize the primacy of God, it will also allow God, as a righteous judge, to *crown* those worthy of happiness with it.⁶⁵ As a result of this postulate, the connection between virtue and happiness, which was originally supposed to have acquired the status of a disinterested attitude towards action, now becomes necessary and therefore, »it is not impossible that morality of disposition should have a connection, and indeed a necessary connection, as cause with happiness as effect in the sensible world.«⁶⁶

In the creation of a realistically existing moral subject oriented to the imperatives of the mind, its laws suddenly intertwine with religion as a possibility of achieving the highest good. The universality of the religious phenomenon and the multiplicity of the religious is essentially an argument that religion is a deep human reality. Thus religion has an architectural function in human life. Furthermore, religion as a fundamental guarantee of the possibility of the highest good, along with the two stated postulates of immortality and God's existence, enables the connection of virtue and happiness. That is why in the *Critique of Practical Reason* Kant says: »In this way the moral law leads through the concept of the highest good, as the object and final end of pure practical reason, to religion.«⁶⁷

⁶³ Kušar says »This hope is necessary if moral action – to which we are unconditionally committed – is to be possible and effective.« Stjepan KUŠAR, Pojam vjere u Kantovoj filozofiji religije, in: *Prologomena*, 13 (1) 2014, 74.

⁶⁴ This becomes especially clear in *The Transcendental Doctrine of Method*, at the end of the *Critique of Pure Reason* where Kant writes: »The belief in a God and another world is so interwoven with my moral disposition that one cannot exist without the other.« Cf. CrV, A829 / B857. But what about one who is completely indifferent to moral laws? Kant replies that »yet even in this case there is enough left to make him fear a divine existence and a future.« CrV, A830 / B858. Does this mean that Kant believes that it would not be possible to achieve a moral sense without the fear of God, whose existence is postulated?

⁶⁵ CrV, B.838 / A.810. »and the necessary connection of the hope of being happy with the unremitting effort to make oneself worthy of happiness that has been adduced cannot be cognized through reason if it is grounded merely in nature, but may be hoped for only if it is at the same time grounded on a highest reason, which commands in accordance with moral laws, as at the same time the cause of nature.« CrV, B.838 / A.810.

⁶⁶ CpV, 5:115.

⁶⁷ CpV, 5:129.

This sentence is central because it is one of a few in which Kant explicitly declares the relationship between the moral law and the highest good. Since the highest good is the supreme object of the will, and since it can be thought of only under the assumption of religion, the highest good becomes real. Such meaning of religion refers to the motives of moral action. In this connection with the highest good, the moral law itself will no longer be regarded as »fantastic« and »wrong«. Moreover, moral laws will be the realization of our duties as God's commandments. »That is, to the recognition of all duties as divine commands, not as sanctions – that is, chosen and in themselves contingent ordinances of another's will.«⁶⁸

Of course, this is a reductive concept of religion. At the same time, however, this does not emphasize that moral action can be religiously motivated, although such motivation does not free us from the task of understanding what is our duty. In other words, to the extent that the postulate of God's existence is present, the mind commands certain acts. At the stage of natural morality, God is never the object of action, for He is not the goal of action in this case. Man, who is judged by a righteous judge (God), must act according to the moral law, and according to this law he will be judged. Therefore, we must view moral laws as God's commandments »because only from a will that is morally perfect (holy and beneficent) and at the same time all-powerful, and so through harmony with this will, can we hope to attain the highest good, which the moral law makes it our duty to take as the object of our endeavors.«⁶⁹ Only the virtuous and that means *the holy ones* can hope to achieve the highest good, because their will agrees with God's. If the will must be harmonized with God's, i.e. if man must be *holy* and in order to be able to hope to achieve the highest good at all, he must accordingly harmonize his own maxims, which determine action, with the divine laws.

But in that way, when Kant explicitly in *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* speaks of two kinds of God's legislation »Now a divine legislative will commands either through laws in themselves *merely statutory* or through *purely moral* laws.«⁷⁰ Statutory legislation refers to the law, given to us through God's revelation, tradition, and Scripture. Moral duties can be viewed as God's

⁶⁸ CpV, 5:129. »Thus God is responsible for the positive capacity to act according to the moral law, while our tendency to act contrary to the moral law is connected with being the sensible needy creatures that we are.« Pierre KELLER, Two conceptions of compatibilism, in: *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, Andrews REATH – Jens TIMMERMANN (eds.), Cambridge, 2010, 136.

⁶⁹ CpV, 5:129.

⁷⁰ R, 6:104.

commandments, only if God's legislation is understood as moral legislation. God offers to follow the moral law, even though He is not its legislator. Kant's statements on this topic are sometimes puzzling and confusing. The preface to the first edition of *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* says: »So far as morality [...] it is in need neither of the idea of another being above him in order that he recognize his duty, nor, that he observe it, of an incentive other than the law itself.«⁷¹

Why does Kant need the highest good and religion, and on the other hand, how does Kant believe that it is possible for religion and the highest good to have a function in morality without falling into contradiction? It is a question that opens up new research possibilities and that would go beyond the given framework of this paper. Notwithstanding the many problematic points in Kant's philosophy, the above stated testifies that without an object and a purpose man's will can hardly be determined. The moral law is, as Kant says, purely *formal* and therefore the highest good is the object and the purpose of pure will. The fact that religion has a function in morality still does not mean that morality can be derived from it. According to the results of this research, the highest good and religion make the object of the moral law possible, necessary elements, on which the reality of determining the will depends. In the end, it is difficult to say that Kant's ethics leads to (religious!) eudaimonism, although his contradictory statements are often inevitable.

An example, instead of a conclusion

Aristotle and Kant, however, agree on one point: duty has common elements with the commandments of the mind. Kant would of course say that Aristotle's commandments of the mind are not categorical but rather hypothetical imperatives, i.e. imperatives that take the form of »if-then« of the conditional clauses that deal with what is useful for realizing our desires and intentions, especially the goal of happiness. Let us take the example of friendship. If a man visits a friend out of the inclination of friendship, in this case he follows a hypothetical imperative because he chooses to visit a friend as a means to an end of satisfying his own desire for happiness. It is a classic argument against eudaimonism promoted by Scheler and the ethics of values. But this understanding lets the classical attitude presented by Aristotle slip away. Namely, when a man visits a friend out of the inclination of friendship, he does so simply

⁷¹ R, 6.3.

because he *sees* the visit as good and his will is in the habit of doing good. In this context, a visit to a friend is good. In other words, he loves his friend and by visiting him he will also make himself happy. Satisfaction of such aspiration is happiness that causes joy.

But where is the duty here? It shows itself as a pure duty only to the extent that it is prudently separated from inclination. Or it may be the case that our man has some urgent, rival obligation of care and is therefore in a »divided state of mind.«⁷² Finally, however, the judgment that my friend just needs a visit wins. I cannot leave him stranded. All other things can wait, even if it means further deterioration of my affairs, family quarrels, etc. It is simply my duty. The mind mediates and if a man *obeys* it, he does so out of the habit of friendships, out of a good act towards his friend, and not just to be happy or because of greater pleasures that have emerged from such action. This situation can also be observed vice versa. The visit could be postponed due to some other more serious obligations which can be explained to a friend via mobile phone by postponing the visit for another more convenient time which can express an even better value of the friendship. Friends usually understand each other in such a situation and judge each other's motives correctly and with good will. Of course, this is not a collision of different virtues. On the contrary, conflicts of duty are resolved, although virtues in this way, in most cases, remove possible contradictions between colliding duties. In any case, if we look at virtues from a perspective of duty or an abstract moral obligation without taking into account their narrative and contextual features, it can be concluded that virtues are in conflict with each other. If we talk about the collision of different virtues, the essential aspect of what the virtues truly are is lost.⁷³

This conception does not seem very attuned to our moral intuition, although we may agree that it may happen to a man who does the same thing for selfish motives. But we all tend to rank morally superior one who visits his sick friend because he loves him, because he is his friend. On the other hand, we have a completely different opinion of one who visits his friend only on

⁷² Cristoph HORN, The Concept of Love in Kant's Virtue Ethics, in: *Kant's Ethics of Virtue*, Monika BETZLER, (ed.), Berlin-New York, 2008, 148. Critics of Kant's deontology say that for every moral act, besides its probity, a certain affective attitude must be required. The notion of moral good in the virtuous tradition has always gone hand in hand with inner harmony. Therefore, the moral quality of an act is determined not only by the answer to the question: »What was done objectively, but also how it was done?« Michael STOCKER, The Schizophrenia of Modern Ethical Theories, in: *Virtue Ethics*, Roger CRISP – Michael SLOTE, (eds.), Oxford, 1997, 70.

⁷³ Cf. Anne M. BAXLEY, *Kant's Theory of Virtue: The Value of Autocracy*, Cambridge, 2010, 75.

that basis, because he thinks he is obliged to visit him, on the basis of the maxim which is the foundation of his action and which can become a universal law. Kant himself understands this and tries to alleviate such consequences of his moral theory in *The Doctrine of Virtue* of his late work *Metaphysics of Morals*.⁷⁴ But the dichotomy between duty and inclination remains. Kant's teaching on virtues cannot properly solve the core of all ethics of virtue. Kant's moral subject conscious of duty, on the contrary, does what is right because a categorical imperative commands him to do so as a kind of action that can become a universal law.

And at last, can we say that the *alternative* between duty and motivation ends either in torturing the hope of happiness or in happiness itself? It is indisputable that man must act at the crossroads of *self-interested* and *pure* motive. An acting subject in all preoccupation with passions and interests, including regressions into inclinations and duties, respecting the worthy tradition according to which cognition belongs to those most divine among us in the new age, replaces empirical interests with *superpersonal* attitudes. These ethical developments gave rise to the inevitable metamorphoses of an acting subject that has followed the transmission of the aura of that demand for happiness. There is still a consensus between eudaimonistic and deontological ethics in many places, although general representations of these ethics say otherwise. Even today, despite numerous problematic developments, duty and motivation can be exercised as a noble exercises of moral life, although naive mistrust has played its part.

Sažetak

BITI SRETAN ILI BITI DOSTOJAN BLAŽENSTVA?

Franjo MIJATOVIĆ

Katolički bogoslovni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu
Teologija u Rijeci – Područni studij
Omladinska 14, 51000 Rijeka
fran_mij@yahoo.com

Sreća već više od dvije i pol tisuće godina moralno uznemiruje pojedince i zajednice kognitivno ih tjerajući na oplemenjivanje vlastitoga života i polisa kojem pripadaju.

⁷⁴ Cf. Immanuel KANT, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, especially *Introduction to the Doctrine of Virtue*, 6:379-416.

Samo rijetko smo svjesni toga do koje mjere je ono što zovemo sreća zaslužan tip učinkovitog moralnog djelatnika, kod koga se manifestira spoj vrline i dužnosti. Stoga će u članku biti prikazan tradicionalni pristup klasificiranju ljudskog moralnog djelovanja, prije svega poznato razlikovanje maksime biti sretan i biti dostojan blaženstva, te polučiti učinak koji proizlazi iz takvog razlikovanja. Čim se upustimo u razlikovanje biti sretan i biti dostojan blaženstva, kao da se radi o isključivoj alternativi, iz vida gubimo opsežan kompleks motivacija ljudskog ponašanja. Biti sretan je najstarija i najznačajnija forma eudaimonističke filozofije čiji rezultati prelaze u vanjska stanja vrline i izvrsnosti. Novovjekovni subjekt, kao vlastiti moralni zakonodavac osigurava i potencira moralno ponašanje podvrgavajući se kategoričkom imperativu i dužnosti. Do kojih promjena dovodi njihov sraz bit će naznačeno u obliku pitanja mogu li se uvidi i strukture eudaimonističke i deontološke etike približiti ili isključivo dijametralno promatrati. Kao što povijest etika svjedoči čovjek se može, baveći se teorijom i praksom, prije svega u sustavima Aristotelove i Kantove etike samopreobraziti.

Ključne riječi: dobro, sreća, vrlina, dužnost, Aristotel, Kant.