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### **GOOD AND BEAUTY: AN AESTHETICAL ARGUMENT\***

Ancient Greeks, after they won the Peloponnesus war, became enormously rich society. According to statistics, every Greek citizen had at about 10 servants in average. Society was gradually becoming prosperous and there was time enough for doing arts and philosophy. Some people in those times did such a huge leap in the advance of knowledge, that their ideas have their impact on our modern views, although those ancient people had no need to get their diplomas, grades, qualifications. There is no special need to mention that since then European society has been developing only in quantitative way, not qualitative one. For example, Pythagoras noted that morality is, probably, the most important science,

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but it cannot be taught. It seems to be true even for today. For example, ethics, as a course, does not make people better because it only explains notions, rules and codes of practice.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, 1894 a new round of their development restored one ancient principle “Citius. Altius. Fortius” by French priest Henry Didon and it was accepted by one activist, Pierre de Frédy, baron de Coubertin. The same principle finds its reflection on modern social life. We try to become faster, higher, stronger but, as Alfred North Whitehead taught, we should be careful with language, with that tool of philosophy. Namely, it would be more careful to say here, that many people try *to appear* and try *to seem* faster, higher, stronger, in their social life. A principle “to live good, to live well, to live better” sometimes require to be involved in a huge loan, to live for money which is not earned yet, to borrow resources from the future and to say more, to live for an account bill of our children, many of whom still have not been born yet. However, our previous statement has been slightly mistaken again: all those expenses required do not make our life good, neither well, nor better. What we achieve here is only *appearance*, not *reality*.

Did such a difference between *appearance* and *reality* take place in Western European dualism? Would the amount and quality of goods overcome to a great extent our *moral* development and what could be done in order to overcome such a gap between notions and things? Here in the paper we try to find some ways to achieve an existential and natural integrity of human beings. Also, we try to restore the meaning of the notion of “good will” that was overwhelmed by not such integral notion of “success.”

We would like to avoid discussion on the Western European dualism in details as this topic is huge enough for one paper. Instead, we try to highlight some modes of thinking that could seem to be different and inconsistent at a glance, but which can find their coherence in the whole.

Immanuel Kant, a great German philosopher, in his “Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals” (Chapter One) was wondering about the feeling of respect that arises even in contradiction to the will of the person who experiences it. We can hate some persons, but respect them at the

same time. Why this strange difference takes place? It remained as a riddle of the practical reason for rationally and perfectly organized Kantian thinking. This question is of greatest importance in our quantitatively multiplying world where we can observe surface of the things in economy, politics, and daily life that traditionally are called as “facts.” According to Kant that feeling of respect arises from the well-known notion in philosophical circles ‘ding-an-sigh’ – a thing that is under the surface of such phenomena like “Freedom,” “God,” “immortality of the soul.” There is no doubt that we cannot say something truthfull that lies beyond the facts, those building blocks of of the very premices of any syllogisms. That is why Kant finds so great abyss between the Pure and Practical reasons. Thus, any kind of behaviour (read: relationships) still remains without theoretical justification (read: truth). But the irony of every person is that each of us (being in some marginal circumstances) is trying to do as we did in the past namely, try rather to survive (in many senses) regardless our conscience (recent researches in “Proceedings of the National Academy of Science. Agence France Press” shows that in 18 shipwrecks men survive two times more than women (67 and 33 percents respectively), and children’s lives were secured only in 15 percents). To be sure, life represents a gap between ethics and science, between an idea and instinct.

It would be inappropriate to consider such great thinkers as Immanuel Kant and Alfred North Whitehead in their comparison to each other. We believe both of their systems are consistent enough *on their own*. The difference arises only in analysis due to ambiguity of language. Both Kantian and Whiteheadian modes of thought are holistic. The only difference is that philosophy of Kant considers mainly an individual (he speaks about things in themselves for observer instead of *their aspects* for *many observers*) and allied to logical coherence meanwhile philosophy of organism does not reject logic but attains its coherence on real level, instead of phenomenal one and thus it is more onthological than mere epistemological. In a nutshell, to ask about *what the system of thought is better* is to ask... *whether computer games develop skills or not?* Of course they do! But it is only *half* of the truth: they do improve *some* of our skills, but those, which scarcely will be paid off. We do not know anybody who

got married just because he or she could gain more scores in computer games than other it did... In this example we can discern the difference in modes of thought: gamer interacts with the programme, abstract calculations, pixels to which he ascribes images and notions. A person who has real relationships in their actual world, with all its measure of unpredictable future (i.e. – freedom of their choice, novelty etc.) is more alive and moral (we cannot be moral with the machine!), and their skills are in greater demand. Thus, the question about superiority of Kantian or Whiteheadian modes of thinking over each other is inconsistent: everyone can choose their own policy and world outlook, and thus gain relevant consequences. We compare transcendental idealism with the philosophy of organism in order to find out the merits of both systems. Let us move on to more concrete examples.

After some reflections on our university studies we became to conclusion that those teachers had their impact on our learning process, who knew not only *what* to say, but also *how* to say and teach. They had some special quality in teaching, some kind of beauty of their modes of explanation. We have been learning *what* they explain just because of *how* they explained it (scalar form is derivative from vector one, as Whitehead could explain it). We mean that the *content* of the subject taught was just derivative of the *person* who they were. Quantity of the content learned was just a derivative notion of *quality of those persons*, for it is difficult to believe someone who teaches you and who has appeared in education by chance, not due to their vocation.

According to Whitehead, the beauty belongs both to qualitative and quantitative parameters. The first shapes our subjective form and is derived from our past (actuality). The second is craving for the future (subjective aim) and appears in the present (appearance). The play of the whole that built upon physical data (limitlessness) and of individual parts that brings novelty (here this part seems closely related to eternity of objects) evokes the feeling/understanding of the beauty. But the notion of “good” (in moral sense) lies in *relationships*, not in the experience (that is to say, it has not *aesthetical* character) . However, we can “*experience*” the beauty of the deed and we are able to feel esteem to some persons. A

cosmology of Whitehead gives an answer: for the subject who provides a verbal justification is himself a subject involved in such and such relationships. For example, if one threatens to individual (part) for the sake of prosperity of the society (whole), or another helps to his family (part) by means of playing with the meaning of his position (wants to bribe or wants to be bribed, or rejects the value of the whole in any other way) then, in both cases, we feel no beauty, nor good. For there is no “absence of mutual inhibition among the various prehensions... no absence of mutual clash” (Whitehead 1933, 324). That is why a particular fact is of no use for premises and especially for moral conclusions. But on the other hand, when we observe an individual who gives himself to the interests of the whole society, we feel drama – the beauty arises as an utmost appearance of the part and the whole and thus, an aesthetical argument or rather relational one, appears as the actuality with its history up to the present.

According to the Kantian system there is twofold meaning of the notion of good. One is objective notion of the law; another is subjective feeling of esteem to that law (Каут 1965, 236). These two should determine a good will. Nevertheless, Kant admits that the feeling of esteem does not require special definition and is evoked by means of some kind of spontaneity (*selbstgewirkter*). “Immediate definition of my will by that law is called *esteem*. Thus, esteem can be considered as an action” – says I. Kant.

The difference in Whiteheadian philosophy and in philosophy of Kant is that they consider the keyword “esteem” in quite different ways, namely Kant says that the feeling of esteem arises by action of the *concept* of law *on* the will, and Whitehead says that the feeling of esteem, so far as it is feeling, must be arisen owing to the history of events that have their impact on definite actual occasion and they are reflected on subjective form of that actual occasion.

Kant fails to go further in his definition because, as he states in “Critique of Pure Reason,” our feelings are neither right, nor wrong. True or false judgments can be found only on the categorical level and could be applied on abstract level (however, it is to be noticed that some of the definitions that are required for the description of character of person, their

feelings and emotions, have been developed in his “Anthropology from Pragmatic Point of View”).

To sum up, a feeling, according to Kant, is an action provoked by *notion* of law, meanwhile in Whiteheadian terms, feeling is an effect of *external* causes. They consider a feeling in almost opposite ways. If Kant would be right here, the musicians and artists could create from themselves whenever they want and what kind of art they prefer (like spiders create their nets). But a really good art can find its embodiment also because of the history of an artist, of what had happened to him in his personal life and owing to those events which urged him to limit his physical freedom (music as a discipline, a theory) in order to increase mental one (music as creativity) . That is why Whitehead says about two kinds of processes: macroscopic and microscopic one, where the last is just derivative from the former. Thus, neither suffering itself is not *conditio sine qua non* for creativity, nor mental operations can support an artist, but only if past events (macroscopic process) are supplemented by reflection (microscopic process). These two components give a birth to prospective creature, would it be a good music or a human child<sup>1</sup>.

Going back to Kant, we have to mention that our example with the notion of esteem explains many other details in the systems of ideas of both thinkers so far as their systems are perfectly coherent on their own. And the aim of our paper is to show whether those systems have also their external coherence, creating by that fact (if so) a harmony. First of all, we

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<sup>1</sup> One could argue that comparing child to music, as creatures of the same kind, is not appropriate enough here. For example, first is created by both man and woman, the last one is only by one gender. However, we suggest consider twofold relation not only as depended upon one substance, or genus, but also and foremost as relation between some aspects. Thus, an artist or scientist both are related to an idea. They, probably, bear it in their mind, feed and then give to their idea a birth. As for man and woman relation, they both share the same characteristics with the only difference that lies in their different poles, mental and physical. For example, man, on *physical* level, has primary function and *active* character. Woman on physical level is rather *passive*: she receives, feeds, and gives a birth to human being as a *physical* creature. This is only half of the truth. The other half lies in that fact, that from the mental aspect their relationships are vice versa. For example, it is only woman who gives a hope (notion, concept, *mental pole*) and thus, has primary (or *active*) character over man on *mental* level. And it is man who bears that hope that can be broken, or could have its embodiment in reciprocal love. Thus, two different genders have no priority over one another. The only difference is that their mental and physical poles replace one another, or they function in opposite directions.

would like to mention one quotation of Whitehead: “The type of Truth required for the final stretch of Beauty is a discovery and not a recapitulation” (Whitehead 1933, 343). This was stated by Whitehead because he admits that we will never achieve a perfect definition of Beauty or method to achieve it. By the word “recapitulation” Whitehead, as we understand that, mentions that every so-called *True* statement prevents us from the creativity, and thus, from the future at all (and so, even from the good). Let us consider the next table:

ANALYSIS

Past	Present	Future
Science	art	morality
Truth	beauty	good
“instinct”	“here and now”	“depth of an idea”
Knowledge	action or performance	“hope,” “belief”
Perception	emotion	relation
Determinism		teleology (freedom, self-causation)
Macroprocess		microprocess
Reality	harmony	appearance
actual occasion		eternal object <sup>2</sup>
Continuity		discrete
I N T U I T I O N ( u l t i m a t e )		

<sup>2</sup> Here eternal object might seem not appropriate to be put in the “future” column as it is “eternal” (thus, opposite to temporal). However, for the sake of analysis we suggest to take into account next presuppositions:

1) actual entity has its own *historic* route and acts in deterministic way. An eternal object is contrary notion to actual occasion and thus, it must be allied rather to the future (e.g. “hope” is a concept, “peace,” “law,” “justice” are also concepts that have their meaning that has never fully been observed in the past, although we have these concepts as clear and full in themselves, regardless past events);

2) eternal objects can be simple and complex (they have various degrees of complexity) so, they have only one way (towards complexity). Since eternal object becomes complex it can be divided onto simple only in mind (in our analysis), in abstraction. It is only actual entity which reveals new degrees of complexity of eternal objects and not eternal objects by themselves. For example, it is hardly possible to become to an idea of green colour not being able to see it before. For the ideas of blue and yellow in abstract thinking are insufficient for approaching to an idea of green colour if we consider them only by means of consciousness and do not use painting. Thus, an actual entity, which was once prehended in the past, may create a new eternal object which then could urge us to look after things with green colour and so, eternal object of green may be component of subjective aim which leads us to the new possibilities;

3) such notions as *good, peace, eternity* urge us to search for them in reality regardless the past events (like war, genocide, lie, injustice) so, in this particular sense at least some kind of eternal objects, let me say, are “borrowed from the future” and have nothing to do with the past (so far as we make up our analysis here).

The most interesting place in “Process and Reality” for us is where Whitehead reveals some thinkers, who believed that the very destination of their life was to find the truth. In this way, as Whitehead admits, they failed to create their theories of morality because they were turned to the past (which should correspond, as they were expecting, to their notions). The trick with the notion of “truth” lies in the Categorical nature of the language. For example, past events are very important for gaining and advancement of knowledge, but experiment or observation in science is not *truth* in its initial meaning, it is rather half of the truth because we find it only in one direction, namely, in the past. If this would be so, then biology should be reduced to physics and animal life to mechanical machines. However, the very events of our life prove us that even if we consider ourselves as mechanisms and all things of the world should have their cause, then we also should admit that the very complexity of our bodies goes beyond that presupposition.

As a conclusion we could sum up the next.

Beauty is a cross-section of the past and the future. It is impossible to create a “theory of kindness” due to one-sidedness of theoretical method: it operates only by the notions and its truthfulness, based on the facts, is not enough because of lack of its contrary: hope, future, interesting propositions etc. However, the “theory of beauty” can be evolved in aesthetic way where neither part, nor whole inhibit one another. In practice, this aesthetic argument works as an attraction or a disgust of someone or something so far as in deterministic, causal way we *feel continually* the truth (i.e. intuitively, with no logical justification, though). At the same time, we *understand conceptually, discretely* that any state of being (data that is felt) belongs to any kind of possibility. This last supposition allows us to commit deeds regardless any attempts of coercion from the others. So, good can be *represented* via beauty, and the truth can be *represented* via beauty. But it is good that *creates* beauty and beauty both *justifies* good and truth. In other words, there are two kinds of movement: a) beauty justifies the truth, and good justifies the beauty (it reminds a microscopic process); and b) truth causes the beauty, and beauty causes the good (it reminds a macroscopic process).



Kantian categorical imperative that demands to do as if the maxim of your behaviour would be the general rule for others is based upon logical arguments and *logically* remains perfectly consistent (if human being has twofold nature, empirical and transcendental, then it is more reasonable to do more good for the human kind, than for individual himself (we have no knowledge about empirical mortality of humankind so far as someone should experience its either mortality or immortality, thus, remaining as still alive person, what is contradiction. At the same time, Kant admits that the very thought of unexistence of logical subject (judgment: “I *am* dead”) is impossible so far as the very thought of that kind is contradiction (KaHT 1986, 402). So, an individual is likely to be transcendently immortal. Or, to be more carefull in our analysis, we should admit that Kant says that we have no knowledge about empirical limitness of humankind and, on the other hand, it is impossible for us to know that we are not able to think (this thought is closely related to Cartesian “cogito ergo sum”). That is why Kant turns to absolute, timeless logic as a tool to create his definition of good. And here is good for others stands out as logical consequence which has no contradiction to the notion of existence both on individual (transcendental) and social (empirical) levels. That led German thinker to antinomy stated in his “Critique of the Power of Judgment”: 1) *thesis*: judgment of taste is not based upon the notions, otherwise it would be possible to argue about it (to solve by means of the proving). 2) *Antithesis*: judgments of taste are based upon the notions, or, regardless their difference, it woud not be even possible to argue about them otherwise (to pretend on agreement of others with this judgment) (KaHT 1966, 359). So, in Kantian system good and beauty are divided not only by their nature, but also by thesis and antithesis. Any *logical* analysis is fraught with this kind of dichotomy.

In Whiteheadian cosmology the final appeal is made to intuition, not reasoning and judgment (Whitehead 1978, 21-22). And the argument is not logical, but aesthetical one. For the good should not be only abstract, but concrete. The interplay of these contraries found the sense of beauty and good as well. Where the part does not inhibit the whole and the whole does not inhibit the part we can observe true happiness in social life. And when

there is no mutual clash between abstract and concrete we find the beauty as well, according to Whitehead (Whitehead 1933, 324-352). This same rule can be applied if we slightly change terms and use temporal and eternal we may conclude the similar statement about the truth. But the beauty is primordial in the triade of truth, beauty, and good as it does not require *true* explanation (it is *explanation* what can be derived from it, instead), neither it needs to wait for peace in distant (read: abstract) future for the common *good* (as Kant believes).

This ideal had been flourished in Ancient Greek culture where common good has been developed in *actual world*, not in abstract reality where relationships (morality, good) were mediated by media, and perception (science, truth) alienated by specialization and bureaucracy.

Either Kantian approach or Whiteheadian are self-sufficient on their own. We should not blame German philosopher for not being aware of the temporal character of being, or excessive use of logic as well as we should not blame him for comparatively short period of human life span, dedicated to philosophy.

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