

Sustainable Development in the Context of the Integral Approach of the Human Person Guido Gatti

Zrównoważony rozwój w kontekście moralnego ujęcia osoby ludzkiej Guido Gattiego

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Abstract

In the proposed article we undertook the analysis of the question connected with the idea of moral personality in the study by Guido Gatti and its correlation with the sustainable development. The fundamental element of our research was to indicate that there is an interdependence between the dynamics of moral development and moral personality which, in consequence, leads to the idea of sustainable development as a condition *sine qua non* of the order in the life of man.

Key words: Guido Gatti, moral personality, moral person, education

Streszczenie

W proponowanym artykule pojęliśmy analizę zagadnienia związanego z koncepcją osobowości moralnej w badaniach Guido Gattiego i jej korelacji ze zrównoważonym rozwojem. Podstawowym elementem naszych poszukiwań było wskazanie, iż istnieje zależność między dynamiką rozwoju moralnego a osobowością moralną, co w konsekwencji prowadzi do idei zrównoważonego rozwoju jako warunku *sine qua non* porządku w życiu człowieka.

Słowa kluczowe: Guido Gatti, osobowość moralna, osoba moralna, wychowanie

Introduction

The dynamics of individuals in the context of moral development observed by different researchers dealing with ethics, axiology, deontology or education, shows a multidimensional model of changes in the sphere of social behaviors. The integral part of human existence is ethical-moral development which is not so much a phenomenon but the source of building sustainable development in different spheres of social life (Bartoszewski, 2015).

Obviously, it all depends on accepted anthropological concepts which result in legal and social norms,

as well as economic or environmental consequences. Hence, it is always a challenge to approach the question so as to comprehensively and at the same time logically describe the process of human development, as well as education to become sustainably integrated with the animate and inanimate world.

The task set by Gatti led him in the direction of presenting his view of the person development, and, at the same time, moral education (SolarSKI, 2013). In this way, basic issues of this article come up, so in the first place, it is to depict the purposefulness of the developmental process of human individuals itself, because without this analysis it would be difficult to

take on the issue of sustainable development. It is also necessary to pay attention to the fact that personality integration takes place in the process of socialization and education, it was perfectly highlighted by Gatti who indicated, that without this element there is no moral-ethical growth in individuals' lives. Therefore, personality development is the basic assumption of educational view of moral growth of an individual and, hence, sustainable development.

In the article we will present possibly comprehensive picture of the before mentioned issues in Gatti's approach. These assumptions are the condition to correctly understand the idea of sustainable development in social, local, family and individual life.

The perspective of moral development and sustainable development

Theological-moral approach to Guido Gatti human person directs the so called structuring of morally integrated personality. The basic perspective of this approach is:

- a) Autonomy,
- b) Rationality,
- c) Altruism.

These three elements become the condition *sine qua non* of mature moral personality, in this way they set the goal which is aiming for the full relationship with the reality of animate and inanimate world. Gatti's view is not the only reflection of biblical-theological understanding of the universe, that is macrocosm and microcosm, but it also finds its reflection in developmental theories for example by: Piaget, Eysenk, Jung and Adler.

The first fundamental direction of development is transition from initial heteronomy, that is immaturity of individuals to moral autonomy (Gatti, 1983, 1992). Here, it must be stressed that it is not about autonomies in the context of distance from Aristotelian-Thomist question of truth, which does not eliminate the aspect connected with the relationship between freedom and conscience. Taking on such an assumption leads to recognition of moral experience as the source of human development. Therefore, heteronomy is nothing else but the theological approach to the world of human existence, so man at the beginning of life undergoing socialization and education confronts good and evil, and the choice must be conditioned not so much by the consensus or dialogicality, but by good relating to objective truth. What is more, the choice must not be determined by desire, because it eliminates the freedom of choice. If it is so, then the motivations of specific deeds cannot be recognized as right resulting from coherent personality, because they are generated by desire, for example financial means. This factor of misinterpretation and justification of utilitarian behavior is connected with, on the one hand, dysfunctional behavior rejecting the relationship *choice – conscience*, and on the

other hand, the biblical reference (*be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth*) and *subdue it*. Because of that, Gatti postulates that in the world of human existence we should return to morality of the natural and eternal law and not of the civil law. Natural law, which has its source in eternal law implicates the idea of sustainable development. The world of nature, which in Gatti's opinion is *Signum Dei*, shows us how to realise moral education to keep balance on the level of one's own being and the beings of nature.

In case of determinants – utilitarianism, desire for profits, lack of coherence of actions and deeds – and the lack of interiorized balance of the world, and in this case sustainable development, a person is perforce not so much internally torn but disintegrated, and only after showing information he or she tries to integrate in himself/herself the principle reinforced in the process of education, for example, moral utilitarianism with the principle of the idea of sustainable development, which in consequence leads to the creation of illusory moral – ethical solutions. Gatti, as Solarski indicates, claims that even if such an immature man tries to do good, he or she cannot define himself or herself as good because he/she does not love good and does not understand its rights and values. The internal conflict comes from the fact that the particular person is different from what he or she does (Solarski, 2013).

The full autonomy therefore emerges in the maturity of man and is connected with responsible freedom, so a man does good, or in other words behaves morally, not because it is imposed by positive law, but is obedient to interiorized values, which he or she accepts as the truth reinforced by conscience, which is not the echo of delusional voices but the voice of his or her inside and the expression of his or her maturity and responsibility for himself or herself and for the surrounding reality of the existing world (Gatti, 1985), so the full autonomy is gaining unity between internal goodness and the goodness of individual choices and actions (Solarski, 2013). Therefore, in the subject not of discord but between the utilitarian principles and values included in the idea of sustainable development.

This perspective, directed at autonomy, has for the Italian researcher educational significance stating that education leads to the liberation of human beings from heteronomy, and at the same time leads to internal unity.

Another significant determinant of the full moral personality is rationality defined as the ability to build a dialogue of norms and principles compatible with the natural law and eternal law (Slosiar, 2015). At the same time, it indicates that the development of personality takes place in the processes of social, parental and institutional interaction.

Talking of rationality, it is impossible to ignore the basic fundamentals of understanding the word rationality itself. According to Gatti, the concept can-

not be analyzed without referring to ethical – moral principles, and at the same time the truth, because it leads to relativisation of human and natural reality. As a consequence, we can adopt each event connected with economy, education, environment to our subjective needs without taking into account the laws of nature: natural and eternal law (Gatti, 1994). Accepting such a state of things, Gatti remains consistent with educational system by Jan Bosco, who indicated that the fundamental role in shaping individual's personality is played by:

- a) Reason,
- b) Religion (in universal meaning),
- c) Amorevolezza (fondness, tenderness).

This standpoint leads him to the definition of rejecting the balance in the world as the evil in itself that is *intrinsece malum*, which should be understood as irrational approach to the laws of nature and the eternal law and accepting criteria of the so called order rationality (Gatti, 1988, 1994), that is established. As a result, the deed, action, decision is conditioned by for example: utilitarianism, pragmatism or materialism.

Professor emphasizes that understanding these principles – connected with rationality – requires the right approach who a human person is and what role he or she plays in the world. That is why, it is necessary to look for ideas which will implement sustainable development between what is conscious and this which does not have this consciousness.

Otherwise, we will have the so called infantile morality called expedient morality.

This morality appears in opportunistic actions having no consideration for the people, environment, animals or the natural resources. That is why, it calls for education based on rationality, which requires such factors as:

- a) Trust,
- b) Reasoning,
- c) Referring to intelligence,
- d) Basing on the so called objective truth (in this case, Aristotelian-Thomist).

The creativity that rationality allows is the very ability to solve problems, looking for strategies and innovative solutions, without negating universal moral values (Solarski, 2013).

The third and the final element of the perspective of moral development is the successful transition from egocentricity to altruism. Here, Gatti, following Kohlberg, indicates that the fundamental element is cognitive development. It is not about the reduction on the cognitive level, but about showing the developmental process of man. Therefore, in his opinion, the way to altruism leads through autonomy, rationality to fully manifest human personality in altruism. Altruism cannot be divided nor graded, although in contemporary world it often occurs in the form of:

- a) Pro-social behaviors – they are characterized by unilateral submission to authority, for example: *political celebrity*,

- b) Philanthropy – this stage is characterized by cooperation in the form of sharing for example financial means,

- c) Voluntary service – at this stage an individual assumes duties with the assumption of getting profit, for example: professional experience.

In these stages one can see mutual benefit, where postconventional aware man revises the legal order not for the sake of the good connected with the sustainable development, but for his or her personal gain.

Obviously, we should not approach the above graded concept of altruism one-sidedly, because not all behaviors are motivated in utilitarian way. It often happens that qualifying an individual to a particular group without proper analysis results in making a mistake of type: *pars pro toto*. Altruism is constituted by activities resulting from interiorized laws, values.

Therefore, behavior which is based on general positive view of the world and other people, on responsibility, kindness and love for others (Solarski, 2003) indicates empathy, which in consequence allows positive attitude towards the animate and inanimate world. Basing on this, it is necessary to state that altruism is a positive feature, the effect of good education.

Moral personality as a subject of education and the idea of sustainable development

Discussing the question of education in the context of shaping personality we cannot ignore the structure of understanding personality by Gatti. Contemporary psychology, as a theoretical and empirical science, does not offer an explicit answer to the question what personality is. Here, we cannot omit various concepts adopted by researchers such as Freud, Piaget, Frankl or Allport, Cattell, Bandura and Mischel (Pervin, John, 2001). What seems to be common, in all concepts, is the fact that personality is a unique, individual, nomadic element of human being.

Therefore, psychologists describe this structure having in mind the adopted key closing in anthropology and psychopathology, in other words, they indicate what the source of human development is and alternatively his or her anomalous features. Not seldom, the source of adopted assumptions was referring to philosophy, sociology and natural sciences as places for considering the issue of personality (Oleś, 2005). Being aware of this heterogeneous knowledge, Gatti deals with these issues in view of their significance in understanding moral development and moral education. Also he does not try to clearly define personality, but he presents it in descriptive way, emphasizing, above other things, its individual elements – as it seems – chosen or confirmed in the before mentioned developmental theories (Solarski, 2013).

In Gatti's opinion, personality is nothing else but the result of the factors that form it. Not without difficulty can we observe that Gatti's analysis goes in the direction of describing personality in the context of freedom and responsibility as well as ethical approach to natural reality. For him, the three elements are significant in terms of studies of the essence of human existence. This element is also recognized in the idea of sustainable development (Mulia, Behura, Kar, 2016).

Therefore, our author understands personality dynamically, which is constituted from various coherent components. The first element is *corpus biologica*, that is man is a bodily being. So not only does he/she own a body, but he/she is a body. However, this element is not a determinant in existence. Another partial component of human personality is the unity of primal drives *ens per se* (Gatti, 1988, 1994). The drives can be sublimated, they give energy to act in the form of accepting civic attitude, pro – natural or pro – social. The third link of moral personality is trust, discussed extensively by Erikson (Gatti, 1994). Trust generates faith on which an individual is based and authenticates himself or herself as the essence of moral activities. Here, we can notice similarity to the theory by L. Kohlberg who indicated that only taking into account objective morality, can we realise our full potential as human beings, so it is worth being just in the world of injustice. The fourth element of formed moral personality is in Freud's *ego – force*, that is:

- a) Clearmindedness
- b) Rational knowledge
- c) Realistic interpretation of the world
- d) Avoiding judgement
- e) Ability to communicate with others,

Therefore, *ego – force* which is subjected to educational and self-educational influence leads to the full personality of an individual, with keeping at the same time elements such as:

- a) *Corpus biologica*,
- b) Drives,
- c) Trust.

These aspects of moral personality lead an individual to adopting, speaking in Gatti's language, the culture of a person, understood as the world of symbolism shaped by language, art, technology, norms of social life and reflection (Gatti, 1994, 1997). The culture of a person conditions significantly moral life affecting the constitution of moral personality, manifesting itself in care of the world in which the person happens to live. In this way, it introduces balance, which in consequence leads to educational activities, by means of which a person develops himself/herself, his/her relationship with micro – and macro – society, environment, vegetation, natural resources and animals.

The picture of the development of moral personality leads to the idea of sustainable development (Sar-

zała, 2013), as the complex world is on various levels of awareness of an individual and cognitive dimensions connected with knowledge and moral insight. This moral insight takes place in conscience shaped in educational processes.

In this way, Gatti completes his own concept of understanding the structure of moral personality in responsibility, reaching in consequence the definitive and the most determinative part of his studies, namely freedom (Gatti, 1981, 1983, 1985).

The presence of freedom in the structure of moral personality is the place of conscious choice of common good with keeping the imperative of conscience. Freedom is incorporated in the structure of personality, and, because of this, the past lives in the presence, shaping and conditioning social activities, individual for future generations, so each free choice is nothing else but the driving force of a certain sequence of events. For sustainable development, it is proper education for responsible and free management of common good which is the Earth.

Gatti's project assumes development, but characterized by moral engagement, which – being vertical typology – indicates the sequence of developmental stages of an individual for common and sustainable good. In this place it is necessary to specify five types of character negating sustainable good, these are characters:

- a) Amoral,
- b) Opportunistic,
- c) Conformist,
- d) Irrational,
- e) Altruistically – utilitarian (Gatti, 1995).

This typology is valuable for its engagement in moral life. What is more, such a view of verification of educational strategies only in the processes of bringing the idea of sustainable development to awareness.

Therefore, Gatti rightly tries to convince that in the structure of moral personality there are visible different dimensions and constitutive elements which cannot be reduced to a blurry theory of development, such as in Freud or analytical psychologists (Gatti, 2003, 2008).

The proper structure of moral personality leads to responsible actions for the development of individuals both *hic et nunc* as well as in the past. This in consequence leads to the acceptance of free and empathic management of the earthly goods for future generations.

Conclusion

In Gatti's view we have the so called laws of gradual development, which are shared by each human being. What is more, the laws can serve theoreticians dealing with educational reality, and, at the same time, they may serve those who are looking for the-

oretical justification of their ideas in this and the idea of sustainable development.

Knowledge of man and everyday experience leave no doubt about the fact that Gatti's dynamics of moral growth has its stages which appear in the processes of *social – cultural – economical* interaction. This truth has a crucial meaning, as it leads us to realise, that moral education of a human being affects the future of our children and their children, and so on. It requires from us adjusting educational activities to the plausibility of understanding what the world in which we live is and the consequences of overexploitation for human kind. Furthermore, shaping or forming is to guide us to the so called moral personality, which was described by Gatti in the context of moral theology.

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