Sources of ethics of globalization

Reflection in the context of Anna Teresa Tymieniecka’s phenomenology of life

Mruszczyk, Magdalena

University of Silesia in Katowice

Modern times – times of globalization – which we – modern people – are the creators, pose a lot of different challenges for us. These are scientific, technical, economic, ecological and many, many other challenges. But regardless of the number of these challenges and speed of their multiplication all globalization challenges are combined into one big challenge: challenge of building the ethics of globalization. The idea is to establish rules and principles of community life in a “global village”. Nowadays, human beings need unquestionable theoretical ground that could serve as foundation for the ethics of globalization. Some kind of proposal to develop this theoretical ground is the concept of the phenomenology of life by Anna Teresa Tymieniecka. This is the proposal to look at global ethics from a cosmological perspective, and this cosmological perspective is an ontopoietic perspective.
INTRODUCTION

Inquiring sources and specific articulations of global ethics is a task for specialists from various fields of science: natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. It is obvious, therefore, that this task is also a task for philosophers. The accomplishment of this task is absolutely urgent need nowadays. Nothing other than contemporary science reminds us that we constitute one world not only with other people, but also with other living beings. Furthermore, we humans are one cosmos with other living beings. Thus emerges an idea of a cosmic perspective of human life and human morality also. This cosmic perspective, as we will see later in the article, is not some higher level of human life in the distant future. It is also not a utopian vision of human life in space: neither optimistic nor catastrophic, because human beings live in the cosmos. This is the natural environment of human life: natural and original. So, as Tymieniecka believes, this human’s life cosmic level should be understood as a source of all products of the human spirit and human culture. And there is no doubt that human culture affirms itself through every human action, also through activities such as the economic and ecological sphere. It means that we cannot think about politics as ethically indifferent. Wherever the human spirit is “present”, and it is “present” in every human action, every sphere of human activity becomes moralized.

A.T. Tymieniecka’s vision of one world in a cosmological perspective is the deepest sense phenomenological and ontopoietic vision of global ethics. It is a phenomenological conception, because it refers to human self-awareness. Simultaneously, it is an ontopoietic conception, because it shows that human being’s reference to the living world is essentially creative and that throughout this human being’s creativity we can reveal sources of morality as deposited in the original resources of Nature. For example, in this context, Peter Singer (2004, 2006) – an Australian philosopher who deals with the issue of global ethics in the book: One World: The Ethics of Globalization – claims radically that we have no right to separate the product from the production process, obtains philosophical (theoretical) justification. So, let us first to look at his philosophical position. Singer’s and other researchers’ philosophical, and not only philosophical, positions will serve us as a background for Tymieniecka’s concept.

The demand for ethics of globalization in modern times

Globalisation, as a process that shapes a single world today, brings a number of consequences that are inevitable for particular countries and nations, both positive and negative. As a member of a globalizing society, an individual is better and better able to perceive the ambivalence of these consequences, and especially their scope, which – having a global dimension – is increasingly understood as de facto (literally) cosmic. Such a dimension of globalisation processes, which can be observed today, makes our thinking about internationalisation a thing of the past. The dependencies and interdependencies between individual states and societies, as well as between cultures, are so multilateral and profound that they force a change in our understanding of national sovereignty and, consequently, of justice and moral responsibility at the level of political, economic and cultural life. Singer (2004, 2006) draws attention to this issue.

Researchers into the issues concerning justice, as an example of the subject of ethics in the area of international law, draw attention to its multi-faceted nature and the difficulty associated with defining what we call global justice nowadays (Wiśniewski, 2016). However, when comparing global justice not so much in terms of the scope of its influence but, above all, in terms of its subject with, for example, international justice and, even more so, internal justice, it becomes clear that in the case of global justice, it (the subject) is not the state itself. The absence of the state as a category, as the subject, but rather its replacement with any international commercial corporation, also does not allow the definition of transnational justice to approach global justice. Marta Soniewicka (2010) writes:

[...] the concept of global justice sensu stricto is most often defined, in opposition to the international justice mentioned above, as justice at the level of individuals, but extended to the whole world, regardless of national borders, where nationality does not determine people's reciprocal obligations. The concept of global justice sensu largo should be understood as justice that concerns the world as a whole, regardless of the subjects involved (and therefore includes international and transnational justice).

In the following part of the article, it will be shown that in her concept of morality based on the phenomenology of life, A.T. Tymieniecka combines both scopes of understanding global justice, narrow and broad - into one general scope. A similar point of view is reflected, inter alia, in the following words by Miłot Kuniński (2010):

As for global justice, or as it is sometimes called cosmopolitan justice, it is the general idea or concept of extending the principles of justice respected and enforced within individual societies (since modern times in nation states or multinational empires) to a universal level, including relations among all people and across all states. One can, therefore, assume that global justice consists (or should consist) in recognising that all people in the world have the same rights (entitlements) and that there are general ethical norms and principles of law that apply equally to all people and also to states.

Mentioned above an Australian philosopher seems to offer a similar interpretation of global ethics. Soniewicka (2010) describes his position as follows:
Singer’s revolutionary approach lies not only in questioning the current world order and its obligations, but also in questioning our hitherto moral thinking about obligations in general.

The change from moral thinking to global thinking must start with a change in thinking about the subject of global justice and ethics. As Singer (2004) himself expressed in his book titled: One World. The Ethics of Globalization:

Implicit in the term «globalization» rather than the older «internationalization» is the idea that we are moving beyond the area of growing ties between nations and are beginning to contemplate something beyond the existing conception of the nation-state. But this change needs to be reflected in all levels of our thought and especially in our thinking about ethics.

This is a clear shift towards the need to show some common ground in the lives of all people, a foundation on which the interests of all social groups and all cultures can be built. Furthermore, Singer (2004) writes:

We also need, though it will be far more difficult to achieve, a sense that we really are one community, that we are people who recognize not only the force of prohibitions against killing each other but also the pull of obligations to assist one another.

Thus, the platform for common understanding is absolutely necessary, but it must be source-based and universal. In the same book (Singer 2004) we can also read:

[…] that how well we come though the era of globalization (perhaps whether we come though it at all) will depend on how we respond ethically to the idea that we live in one world. For the rich nations not to take a global ethical viewpoint has long been seriously morally wrong. Now it is also, in the long term, a danger to their security.

Human life is the greatest asset of all the goods available to people. It is everyone’s responsibility to protect it, both in relation to their own lives and to those of every human being, regardless of where they live in the world, what their nationality is, what religion they profess, whether we understand the relationships they have with their environment, whether other people (apart from us) find their situation worthy of concern, etc. Singer (2004, 2006) believes that on the basis of five reasons, namely: distance, directness/lack of directness, sharing responsibility with others, significance of national borders and moral abilities of individual people, certain moral prejudices are formed, which do not allow us to build a global ethic to this day.

The change of thinking about our moral duties is therefore to free us from the dictatorship of these superstitions (Soniewicka, 2010). Stanisław Ignacy Fiut (2006), a researcher in the field of sustainable development, speaks of changes in ethical thinking on a global scale as of a change in awareness, and thus of a change taking place on the phenomenological level. It denotes “entering a higher level of thinking,” onto the level of de facto human self-awareness. We shall return to S.I. Fiut’s philosophy later in this article. Meanwhile, it should be noted that in Singer’s utilitarian approach, based on the principle of minimizing suffering and maximizing happiness in the world, we are dealing with a demand for an egalitarian principle of redistribution of goods and humanitarian intervention when justified (Singer, 2004, 2006).

Apart from important, though not for the purposes of this article, problems related to the utilitarian position in ethics itself, what draws attention in Singer’s (2004) creed is a certain general reflection, which is expressed in the following words:

Whatever it is we value about political equality including the opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect us globalization means that we should value equality between societies, and at the global level, at least as much as we value political equality within one society.

It is therefore a question of equality for all societies, states, but also for all people in the face of the rights and obligations associated with the redistribution of goods of all kinds. When human thinking reaches the level where this equality and the right of every human being to the supreme good of life – regardless of where in the world they live, what religion they profess, what political doctrine they are subject to – becomes a concern for every human being in the world, without assigning responsibility to the state or some humanitarian organization, only then can we say we understand what it means to live together with others in “one world,” or even – applying the phrase used by Tymieniecka (2000) – what it means to “share-in-life with others.” Hence, it is undeniable, a revolutionary ascent to a higher level of moral thinking constitutes an ascent to a phenomenological level.

As stated above, the right to life is the highest right and good of all people and that is why when it comes to the concern for life, issues regarding ethical reflection are also very important for ecological reflection.

The common interests in the face of which the world is becoming a “global village” (Kuniński, 2010), due to the development of science, technology and, above all, communications (Janikowska, 2016), are multiplying in an unprecedented way, reaching out to the cosmos (both figuratively and literally). And perhaps because human interests today transcend the Earth, which humans seem to think they have completely under control (or at least they think they may have under control), the space in which the planet Earth revolves inspires reflection on the authentic potential of the human race to build one world on the basis of unity that can be called “originally founded.” The contemporary humans, thanks to science and technology as well as global mobility, can and even have to perceive the rooting of their human self, their culture (irrespective from all cultural differences) including, what we can call the Nature, and in consequence make the world of nature (in its cosmic
dimension) the area of particular, moral concern. This issue is also seen by Singer (2004, 2006), who in the previously quoted book named: One World..., devotes a plethora of space to discussing contemporary problems of human kind connected with the necessity to undertake global actions in order to protect nature from pollution and degradation caused by people’s industrial activity. As it also arises out of the philosopher’s other publications, this concern about nature should constitute the most important right after human life and life of living things, the point of reference for globalization policy as the atmosphere that all people breathe and which is used (directly or indirectly) by the entire world of living nature, constitutes common good of this world to which every human and every living thing are equally entitled. Since people are the polluters of atmosphere then people should take responsibility for the recovery of its well-being. Thus, there appears a question: should it be the concern of every person individually, or of a state or a pro-ecological organization?

There is no doubt that the decision regarding even the emission of greenhouse gases are taken top-down by particular state governments or adequate organizations. However, as it has been said, Singer’s thinking is revolutionary. Although he perfectly understands that it is difficult to reach global agreement on such issues, he strives for total change in the conditions of human thinking on the relationship of human beings with the world of nature. For example, one can indicate that according to Singer the historical principle of distribution of justice (i.e. where the state is the ultimate law-giver regarding the distribution of goods as well as of rights and duties), which in the case of pollution of atmosphere would mean imposition of responsibility and penal sanctions on the country that emits the largest amount of pollution (and the largest amount of pollution is emitted by rich, economically developed countries), in the perspective of globalization needs at least to be corrected (Singer, 2004, 2006). In other words – this principle fails in the conditions of globalization. One should necessarily start thinking of atmosphere as of such a natural good that must be equally divided among all people and in the same manner – responsibility for its protection must be divided among all people (equally and justly). In practice, the philosopher says, although not in a perfect way, one can execute this principle of equality and justice. It is shown even in the so-called “Kyoto Protocol” of 1997. So globalization has led to the situation, where almost every human behaviour must be justified before the entire world, before our entire planet. And it is a fact which should be accepted.

Deeper and deeper consciousness of inseparable dependence between the safety of human life on our planet and intervention of humans in nature, the intervention, which de facto always leaves a trace in the form of human-made transformation of its natural resources, opens a discussion on the necessity of building global ethics in the context of balanced development, meaning such economic development which does not violate human environment and does not lead to degradation of biosphere, simultaneously infringing the rules of nature, biosphere and economics. In other words, the point is that the co-existence of anthroposphere and biosphere is thanks to global economy of harmonic character and that the distribution of natural goods is fair and takes into consideration future generations (Fiut, 2006).

The previously mentioned S.I. Fiut (2006) points out to the fact that the issues of balanced development should be discussed today in the context of the newest definitions of the ecosystem category. It is this category that describes all relations of an organism with its environment, and the newest definition takes into account research achievements of different areas of science, not only natural sciences, but also social and human sciences as well as philosophy. In particular the last one seems to be important for the thinker as it allows to analyse all of the considered problems at the highest level of generality. In the discussed case, it refers to the ecosystem category and global ethics. S.I. Fiut (2006) writes:

Adequate understanding of the meaning of the term ecosystem constitutes a result of many processes connected mainly with development of ecology and biological sciences, changes that occur within biosphere and atmosphere, which almost force the necessity to newly define the relationships between living things and their environment and the role of the man in these relations with biological and social environment in larger and more complex network entered successively and quickly [...] this «increase of knowledge» of biology has still one more important dimension, that is it make a man realize the scope of responsibility and its burden that rests upon him for efficient functioning of ecosystems and biosphere as a whole.

Pointing out to the significance of philosophy in the performance of characteristics of balanced development, next to various paradigms (social, anthropological, ecological), to which particular philosophical conceptions refer, S.I. Fiut (2006) additionally distinguishes the ontopoietic paradigm, indicating its source in the phenomenology of Anna Teresa Tymieniecka’s life. The ontopoietic paradigm is in other words the cosmological paradigm – cosmological (fundamental for global ethics) perspective of performance of assessment and definition of the direction of human economic actions on a global scale. Therefore, it is the perspective that is most adequate to the requirements of contemporary times. The requirements were indicated above: the point is that in the pro-ecological thinking and in aiming at balanced development one should take into account both the relations of humans with nature and their influence on changes that occur in it as well as certain naturalness and inevitability of human economic actions being a sort of human creativity that expands the horizons of human spiritual world (culture). Moreover, the cosmological perspective allows to look at every sort of human creativity as at the possibility of going beyond natural conditions of human life, which can be named its transcending, simultaneously putting life as such in the centre of human thinking and acting. Tymieniecka (2009) writes:
I submit that the living being recognizes itself as «himself» or «herself» not by a cognitive act but by «being alive»—by experiencing itself within its milieu of beingness, directing its instincts and appetites, recognizing the elements of the circumambient world in their vital relatedness to itself, and lastly, but foremostly, by recognizing that one is the acting centre of the universe of existence, as a self-sustaining agent who directs within this universe of existence through experience, observation, reflection, and deliberation his or her own course and who, finally, endows that course with moral and aesthetic values, and upon the wings of the spirit seeks to understand the reasons of it all and soars to the metaphysical and spiritual realm above, carrying within a thoroughly felt self-aware conviction that to be is to be alive.

The cosmological paradigm combines in itself all other paradigms, making not as much a simple synthesis of main assumptions into one assumption, but rather changing the value of a particular assumption so as to see that the possibility of transcending nature does not break people's connection with it. Such connections are a condition for duration of human life, its development as well as for self-development. This is how humankind should take responsibility for their actions within nature: the one that is outside of their self and the one that is in themselves. Global ethics becomes cosmic ethics, because in the philosophical approach proposed by Tymieniecka, what is outside a human being is also inside them. What is external—creates human interior and constitutes the source of activity common for all people and the source of human morality. A closer look at the phenomenology of life and human condition allows to understand this dependency of man and nature.

Ontopoiesis of life as source of ethics of globalization

M. Kuninski (2010) writes:

*Extension of circles of duties to neighbours, residents of a city, commune, other cities and communes, country or compatriots abroad requires raising (a sort of training) so as to form in oneself a permanent moral attitude (the ancients would say learning of the virtue of philanthropy). Only formation of such attitude, although it does not have to comprise all of the circles, can become a foundation for consolidation of the feeling of duty to help strangers of whom we only know that they suffer and live in a certain, faraway region of the world.*

It is difficult not to agree with these words emphasizing however that they accentuate working out of or even training in a person of permanent moral attitude—philanthropy (kindness). This does not decide about the acquired/learned character of the moral sense. If we follow the road designated by the ancient, as the afore-quoted author desires, especially the road designated by Socrates, and we assume ethical intellectualism—the conception that claims that the source of morality is in *logos*—“reason of the world” (Janikowska, 2016), in which the human mind only participates—we must admit that the moral sense is in the humans themselves. It does not mean that people do not constitute morality. Human beings “excavate” the original meaning of truth and good from themselves and then create their image and explication in the form of ethical principles. And this way of interpretation of the sources of morality corresponds to philosophical concept developed by Tymieniecka (1983, 1986).

A.T. Tymieniecka, whose scientific activity focused mainly on the analysis of rationalistic positions in philosophy: Husserl, Ingarden, Leibnitz, Kant and others (Tymieniecka, 1988, 2009), finally assuming the form of polemics and leading to elaboration of the mentioned conception of phenomenology of life, simultaneously paid great attention to how and in what direction all sciences, in particular natural sciences, evolve. She did not believe that philosophy could develop separately from other sciences both human, social and natural sciences and she did not see the possibility to separate philosophical discussions from human artistic activity (Tymieniecka, 2000). First of all, she points out that there is no way to treat mutual human activities as morally neutral:

*The moral sense, as the virtuality of the Human Condition, allows the individual to establish a link with the Other in a morally significant “transaction”* (Tymieniecka, 1986).

A.T. Tymieniecka also did not dissociate from the possibility to conduct dialogue with different theologies, even if her intention was to continue phenomenological concept of Edmund Hussler, to elaborate, following the pattern of the ancients, the first philosophy (*philosophia prima*). Such philosophy could fulfill the role of theory of cognition for all sciences thanks to which the said sciences could contribute to solution of ethical problems. By the way: one can say that Husserl also intended to create global ethics, reaching the moral sources itself in pure awareness, but it could be only idealistic ethics. Tymieniecka (2009) rejected idealism. She was close to naturalism, similarly as to the idea of phenomenology itself. According to Husserl these two paradigms of thinking disturb each other (and concretely the natural attitude towards the world and man disturbs the phenomenological attitude—the one, where the man can reach his own authentic, human, transcendental “I”). Tymieniecka believed that natural sciences in sufficiently large scope managed to present that the human is a natural living being subject to influence of the rights of Nature, the rights, which govern the life of the entire Space. Human being is not only awareness, even more pure awareness, but also a body, organism, physiology. These are indeed the sources of his consciousness. Without a body, organism and physiology there is no life and consciousness. The human spirit grows out of nature and this is an essence of ontopoiesis of life. So, Tymieniecka (2000) writes:
The ontopoietic unfolding of the logos of life manifests itself in the spectacle of the All, cosmos, world, nature, life, the works of human spirit...

... and human ethics – also. On the basis of this grounds, the Polish philosopher formulated metaphysical vision of the beginning and development of the entire Universe, including also humans. We learn from it that unspecified beginning of the beginnings, following the pattern of the Big Bang, initiated the activity of two opposite and simultaneously cooperating forces: the force of impetus and balance. Since, within the scope of this article, it is impossible to discuss in detail the entire metaphysical vision, what is worth pointing out are its most significant threads with regard to the elaborated subject. The impetus and gradating balance acted, as Tymieniecka writes, in the so-called original reservoir of forces, energies and dynamisms, thus beginning the activity of cosmic, universal force called the logos of life. The life of every being is the result of the activity of the logos of life. As a result, there occurred the entire network of life which also encompasses human life. Human being lives in the unity-of-everything-there-is-alive. Human is an animal. In this context, Tymieniecka writes:

The life-impetus on bursting forth is bridled as its otherwise wild force encounters the rules of the entelechial code deposited in its synergy as its indispensable counterweight. These direct it to a constructive outlet, giving it constructive propensities and direction; only they may appropriately responded to another measure of logic constructive equipoise, the preestablished conditions of the life system that the unfolding impulses and means have to meet. The entelechial sequence that is the guideline for the self-individualization of the life of the backbone of life’s equipoise, its fundamental ordering tool (Tymieniecka, 2000).

Although the Polish phenomenologist had no doubt that the source of human life is in nature, and life itself has an originally vital sense, she firmly emphasized that human being is an animal, but a creative animal. It means that we, the humans, do not live exclusively our life in a vital sense, but we also live in the intellectual, social, moral and even sacral sense. We go beyond the vital sense by creating the said senses of our life and creating the particular human world: the world of spirit, the world of culture. But it is made by humans themselves and their creative condition.

The logos of life, developing life in general, has not acted “blindly.” It would not thus be the reason of world. It acted (through impetus and balance) so that finally there emerged a human life with its as particular – for the world of nature – creative condition, creative towards themselves and the entire world of nature. This creative condition also means special power of human beings to reflect upon their lives, upon their way of thinking and acting. It is our power, but in a sense a curse, which does not allow total admission of egoism.

The logos of life has not acted independently. Tymieniecka’s polemics with pure rationalism boiled down to presenting irreplaceable role of imagination – Imaginatio Creatrix – in the creation of the world. It is imagination that allows the human logos to go beyond the borders and to explore regions hitherto unknown. It is imagination that constitutes the creative factor, creativity which human mind can also create. First a human being is born, then he or she matures, becomes (usually) capable to procreate, and then – as the Polish phenomenologist presents – the logos of life withdraws from life and transfers its creative power to the human him- or herself. Now the largest spiritual work begins: giving life to the scientific, social, moral and even sacral meaning. This work reflects the essence of human life – its self-individualization, which is human self-interpretation in life. This self-individualization (self-interpretation in life)

Therefore human beings are the creators of their lives and the form of life that they create is an expression of how they understand their lives, their relations with other people and their references to other living things. The ethics that they create and that they apply in relation to the entire world, constitutes their understanding of human life in general. On the basis of this understanding humans make decisions, choices, they carry out actions or not. In other words, they act and influence according to their will:

The human individual is the core of the preoccupations of human science, morality, and the socio-civic laws, regulations, and structures and, paradoxically, they are all founded on the assumption of the very same thing which they puzzle about in their investigations: man’s autonomy with respect to his circumambient conditions (Tymieniecka, 1983).

However, the sources of moral potential of human being are in Nature and not in his/her reason, imagination or will. Nature “feeds” the human spirit. Separated from the nature, we are not alive, we do not experience ourselves. Life is awareness. Feeling, with which the simplest form of organisms are already gifted, is the lowest form of awareness and life. Self-awareness is the highest form, individualistically human, allowing us to experience ourselves as live beings living with other live beings always in some moral relation.

Therefore, we are dealing here with the evolution of the world of nature into the world of human spirit, human culture, within which all areas of human activity are included. The moral sense is immanent to our human condition and our consciousness. This is where humans also receive natural kindness towards other living beings (not only humans themselves), but without which it would be impossible to mitigate conflict situations and to put the good of others over our own good. Because, life should be the most important think. Life, not only human life, must be a pivotal point of reference for all decisions made by man. Life as such is a moral matter. In this context, Tymieniecka (2000) writes:

The attainment, fruition, to which the growth of life leads and in which its cyclic unfolding culminates with
the passing of the torch of life to another generation is the ultimate principle of measurement and valuation, a principle that saves the transient individual from insignificance and oblivion.

It thus seems obvious that taking care of nature both of the one that surrounds us as of the one that constitutes the basis of our being, is our indisputable moral duty.

**CONCLUSIONS**

In Anna Teresa Tymieniecka’s conception of phenomenology of life, achieving the highest degree of unfolding of life means achieving the highest level of consciousness development – moral development. But this moral level of conscious life should be constantly improved. This is because the human world is constantly changing. Therefore the ethics of globalization should be incessantly verified and evolved. This is the first and the most important conclusion that flows from this philosophical conception. Human creation of culture is simultaneously uncovering the foundation of the ethics of globalization. It is a creative and continuous process, as well as a difficult one. In his struggle with and for life, man is like Sisyphus and such a Sisyphian life is his ultimate destiny.

Secondly, thanks to this phenomenological conception we can see that this postulated ethics of globalization should be extended to the entire world of nature: lively nature and inanimate. Building such an ethics becomes a great challenge for human beings. However, human being have equally powerful tools to cope with this challenge: human reason (human logos), will and imagination.

**REFERENCES**


