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Professor Gasparski on Design and Entrepreneurship¹

Abstract. The purpose of this paper is to combine two fields and show their essential connections. The concerned fields are the theory of design and the proper understanding of business ethics, especially entrepreneurship; both of them are Professor Wojciech Gasparski's main areas of interest. This is a significant and laudable project because in the modern world business is a key field, yet it is not without its problems, especially ethical problems. Therefore, in the present context I see Gasparski to be an ethicist and axiologist who takes notions like responsibility and the satisfaction of human needs very seriously.

Keywords: design theory, business ethics, Gasparski

Poglądy profesora Gasparskiego na temat projektowania i przedsiębiorczości

Abstrakt. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest połączenie i pokazanie istotnych związków pomiędzy dwoma dziedzinami. Zarówno teoria projektowania oraz właściwie rozumiana etyka biznesu, skoncentrowana wokół przedsiębiorczości – o których tu mowa, stanowią przedmiot zainteresowania profesora Wojciecha Gasparskiego. Omawiane tu połączenie jest ważnym i godnym pochwały projektem, ponieważ we współczesnym świecie biznes jest jedną z kluczowych dziedzin ludzkiej aktywności, jednak niepozbawiony jest problemów, również natury etycznej. Zatem, w przedstawionym kontekście postrzegam Gasparskiego jako etyka i aksjologa, który traktuje takie pojęcia jak odpowiedzialność czy ludzki dobrobyt niezwykle poważnie.

Słowa kluczowe: projektowanie, etyka biznesu, Gasparski

Designs for a Better World

In this paper my purpose is to combine two fields, both of them are Professor Wojciech Gasparski's main areas of interest, and show their essential connections, as he thinks of them. The fields are of course the theory of design and the proper understanding of business ethics, especially entrepreneurship. This is a significant and laudable project because we know that in the modern world business is a key field, yet it is not without its problems, especially ethical problems. Therefore, in the present context I see Gasparski to be an ethicist and axiologist who takes notions like responsibility and the satisfaction of human needs very seriously indeed. One may ask, why discuss business ethics at all if you do not take them seriously, in

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the sense that you want to understand them and also apply this knowledge to real life problems.

Let me start by a quotation from an older paper by Gasparski and his co-authors, “Contemporary History of Design Science” (1983), which lays the foundation for his later work on the praxiological interpretation of business ethics. Gasparski et al. write as follows:

[T]he design activity links science to unified practice in relation to a particular value system. Designing is also an area of confrontation between the rules that have been cognitively established and conventional rules of problem solution. Thus designing may be regarded as synthesis, as confrontation between “facts,” and “values,” between “what is” and “what ought to be,” between “the part” and “the whole,” between “the old” and “the new.” (Gasparski et al. 1983, 148).

Notice that design means a confrontation between facts and values, in the sense that facts form a static background that as such resists change, acting as a conservative factor, when values always imply a change in a better direction, or a better possible world. Here we can imagine two possible worlds, first the actual world of facts where we happen to be now and then a better possible world where we want to be if we recognize a given set of values, or where we should be. We discuss here contingent facts that can be changed, that are malleable and vulnerable to change via intentional action. This is to say that we can, when our scientific understanding of the world is correct and our practical methods are effective, change the actual world so that it changes into something that resembles more closely the ideal possible world. We cannot realize the ideal world, that much is clear, but we can realize a possible world that is better than our present world and as such closer to the ideal world. As we know so well, values and ideals cannot be derived from facts alone and therefore we need much more than empirical science to determine what this better world is like and why it is better than the actual world. Moreover, we may be able to reach an agreement on facts even if it may not be easy, but in the case of values we may expect disagreement, quarrel, and even fight. Value descriptions and moral norms are too often essentially contested; yet, many of us are optimistic here as I think Gasparski is, too. Rational discussion on values and the characteristics of the possible world is possible and it can produce results. But this is a postulate only, a prescription of optimism, which we hope will ultimately lead us towards progress and a better world. Its opposite is not only pessimism but also cynicism that spells nothing but despair. In this way, we need design science that leads us towards the implementation of our plans on the basis of better values. One way to do this is business ethics. From a values point of view, it is not possible to design better business models independently of focusing on the role of business in the modern world, when we want to fashion a better world. In that case, the essential question is, what do we mean by better in this context? Gasparski has always emphasized the praxiological trinity of E’s,

efficiency, effectiveness, and ethics. Here is a context where we need to combine all three always remembering that ethics comes first. This has been called, in Kantian ethics, the overridingness of duty, what is, ethical considerations come first. It can also be applied to values by saying that you must plan your actions and realize your designs thinking of their consequences in terms of ethical values first. Such values as aesthetics and hedonism come second even if in the ideal world all such values are exemplified in unison. So, we need to add an obvious counterfactual restriction here, in the following way: If values cannot be realized together, you must start from ethical values – but without forgetting the rest of the value fields. Let us see how such preliminaries get implemented in Gasparski's work on business ethics.

The Nihilistic Challenge to the Ethics of Entrepreneurship

In his paper “Entrepreneurship from a Praxiological Point of View” (2010), Gasparski applies and develops many of the themes of his earlier paper on the praxiology of design. I find this long-term continuity a truly remarkable achievement in the sense that it tends to verify the existence the author's dedicated and consistent train of thought and the continuity of his dynamic interests, or his defining mission in the field of Polish praxiology.

Gasparski starts from an account of Ludwig von Mises' praxiological account of business and entrepreneurship, as he sees it. What we have here is an essentially positivistic account of the field of business, as it is easy to see. Gasparski rightly criticises this approach and by doing so cuts the connections of his type of praxiology to von Mises' interpretation of the corresponding ideas. It must be said that these ideas are rather unsophisticated as such, especially because von Mises misses the role of values in practical life: he seems to think that some practical fields, like business, may exist such that they are on the other side of ethics altogether. Gasparski provides a nice analysis of this and contrasts his own, much more sophisticated ideas, to it. This is what von Mises says, according to Gasparski:

As far as the ethical aspect of entrepreneurship is concerned Mises points out that it is not the entrepreneurs' fault that consumers, i.e. ordinary people, prefer alcohol to the Bible, detective novels to the classics, and guns to butter. Entrepreneurs gain higher profits not because they sell “bad” things instead of “good” things. The higher their profit, the better they are able to deliver products consumers want to buy with greater intensiveness [...] It is not the entrepreneurs duty to encourage people to act better onto substitute ideologies with their opposites. That it is the duty of philosophers; they should change the ideas and ideals of human beings. An entrepreneur serves consumers such as they are, despite the fact that some of them are sinners and ignoramuses. (Gasparski 2010, 24)

I find this almost shocking in its callousness and deliberate indifference to human values and progress towards a better world for all of us. Von Mises says people are what they are and business entrepreneurs serve them accordingly. I do

not think von Mises can say even this much without dismissing his value neutral point of view, that human beings are imperfect creatures who may want many evil things. He does not seem to be able to commit himself to an idea of bad or evil; on the contrary, he says something like this: If you think action A is bad or evil, it is the philosopher's task of fixing it. The emphasis is on "you think," that is, on the subjectivist interpretation of value judgements. Values are always based on what you think. They have no essential connection to universalized normativity so that values would be action guiding to all people regardless of what they think. This is sometimes called value externalism, or values are not internally binding. The view that values are internally binding is called internalism.

A good example is Socrates and his analysis of values: If you know that A is good you necessarily recognize and respect A, only because it is good. The externalist position is Humean: you recognize and respect A, which is valuable, only because your relevant positive desires. Von Mises may even be interpreted as a value nihilist and as such as someone who is neither a values internalist nor externalist. For him, values simply do not matter. What matters is efficiency which is measured in terms of profit making and business success, if these two are not ultimately identical. He argues like this: Human beings are violent and therefore they need weapons against each other; businesses sell them weapons and make a maximal profit out of it; this allows them to sell their weapons to people in a more intensive manner – if this does not sound cynical, what does? If you want to kill your neighbour, business sells you expensive weapons and uses the profits to sell you more expensive and efficient weapons. The problem is, as it is easy to see, that selling poison and weapons all too efficiently cannot be a sustainable strategy in the long run: all your customers will be dead sooner than later – as an entrepreneur you possibly cannot want that as it is not good for you future business. I have hard time understanding why von Mises does not see this elementary point about sustainable action strategies.

The real purport of ethical considerations is to see the problems of sustainability in the limelight of practical rationality. You need not say that your action is wrong or unethical, you may be suspicious of the meaning of such terms, but at least you should think of sustainability. Perhaps von Mises thinks, without really realizing it, that once the old customers' killed by the weapons and poisoned by the ink, the entrepreneur moves over to another field of business and starts working profitable havoc there. Of course we should be considerate concerning von Mises and his view. They are the products of the bygone era of positivism and positivism never found a way to handle the problems of ethics, duty, and values. This is their great failure, that is, they never saw that design science and business are both intrinsically value bound fields in such a way that to try to understand them without an ethical component must end up with a failure. It is as if you tried to justify the practice of business independently of values when all practice is essentially

guided by values. If there are no values, there is no practice; there is only causally determined instinctive behaviour.

Towards a Better Theory

Gasparski is fully aware of what is going wrong with von Mises' praxiological account of business and business entrepreneurship. He writes: "It would be as simple as Mises writes if entrepreneurs were busy only with meeting consumer needs." Then comes the critical point: "Today entrepreneurs are busy with innovations" and "creating consumers' appetite for new needs." But "creating needs is not an axiologically neutral" effort. "Entrepreneurs are becoming more responsible for good, which they produce and market." The reasons, or at least a part of the reason, is that "they know better even than the consumer, the characteristics of the commodity they are offering." Let us see first how this line of criticism works and then we can go into Gasparski's positive contribution to the ethics of business entrepreneurship; these two lines of thought must be closely connected.

Let me now compare the ethical approaches of von Mises and Gasparski. Von Mises says,

(M) Consumers know what they need and we sell them what they want; how could we be responsible?

Gasparski's response is as follows,

(G) We create new commodities that the consumer does not yet know and we make them need and want them; that is why we are responsible.

As I tried to explain above, the final question in M elicits the response of disapproval and even blame: yes, you are responsible and accountable because you may sell people commodities that they really do not need or want; or, as it also happens, the consumers cannot see what these commodities do to them in the long run. The moral principle involved here can be formulated as a modification of the Golden Rule: You only sell commodities you would want to use yourself, or let your children have. In this way we can see that there is no special business ethics – all ethics is one. The common rules of ethics apply in all fields of human practice in the same way.

Therefore, G is not really an ethical coup de grâce; instead, it is a reinforced and modernized moral argument against von Mises' positivism and value nihilism. We also can say that it redirects the basic argument from omissions to actions, which makes G all the more convincing. My original argument against von Mises is founded on the moral relevance of omissions, which is fine if you happen to be a conscientious utilitarian, otherwise the moral status of omissions can be problematic. For instance, I said something like this, I sell you this, I know it kills you but that is not my concern. In other words, I let it happen that you kill yourself with the thing I sell you. In a sense, I am not involved otherwise than

through an omission. It seems my duty is not to sell it to you, which would be another omission. In fact, I first act when I sell and then then I am guilty of an omission when I let the thing I sold you kill you. I could have prevented it, either via an initial omission (not to sell) or an active intervention (stop you from using it). Here the cynical question is: Why would I not sell it to you, if you think you need it and, therefore, you want to buy it? In this sense, strangely enough, my activity (selling) is at the same time the fatal omission that makes me vulnerable to the accusation of immorality. My morally relevant omission is nested within actionist context. My action entails the fatal moral omission.

With respect to G, the context now is fully and completely actionist, so to speak. The entrepreneur creates an invention, or a marketable commodity, that he sells to his consumers. We can distinguish several levels of action and activity here: first, the creation of a new commodity, then creation of a new need whose satisfaction requires the new commodity, and, finally, a creation of a new customer. All this entails a sort of overkill: any one of the three listed types of action is a sufficient condition of moral responsibility of the entrepreneur but now we have three of them. Gasparski and his G formulate such a strong case against positivistic value nihilism that no one can doubt or challenge it. G does not prove more than what can be derived from M alone but it does it in a way that must convince its intended audiences. It is an actionist argument that does not rely on the dubious notion of omission. In G, the entrepreneur is active all the way to the bitter end, namely, to her moral condemnation. He invents something that he subsequently develops into a marketable innovation. Here the emphasis is on marketability, which ever so subtly hints at value nihilism. The point is that we do not speak of usefulness, desirability, or satisfaction of needs – we only speak of marketability. Next, Gasparski makes it clear that new needs need to be created; this is the basis of marketing. The principle is this: If and only if an invention satisfies a need is it marketable – if it is not marketable, do not try to market it. It follows that, sometimes, the entrepreneur must create new needs. Obviously, what he creates he is responsible for. This case is unlike the one where the need is old and well-established; when I need and then buy, it is my own autonomous decision, as von Mises thinks.

Now, when I create a new need, for instance by advertising and other manipulative rhetorical trick, I mess with you inner life, your personal values, and private being. One can, of course, deny this by saying that if you adopt new values and new needs via advertising that is still your personal decision and responsibility – and hence G fails to convince us. The easiest way to shoot down such a bogus argument is to leave the suggested super-individualist perspective behind and focus on the statistics of mass behaviour, in the following way. It is a well-known fact that in a group people do things that no one in the group would like to do, if asked in isolation and individually. A group of men, as a group, attacks a woman but later

they all say, individually, I did not want it. The dynamism of a group is not the sum of individual wills – that much is clear through verified empirical evidence. No positivist can deny it. Therefore, marketing may well work even if all individuals say they want to resist it and they are confident they can resist its effects. Once some small groups get infected, the epidemic spreads via imitation of desire, or mimesis if we use the term favoured by René Girard (1961). Soon we all want it and the commodity is marketable and possibly profitable as well. Then, as von Mises says, the profits can be directed to even more effective marketing procedures and methods. It seems unquestionable that creating new needs is, without exception, a source of full and undeniable moral responsibility. Mass marketing is too difficult to resist and reject by an individual.

Needs and Desires

Let us make a small digression towards a better understanding of some of the key psychological concepts here, that is, needs and desires. Gasparski says, “Creating needs is not axiologically neutral with respect to fulfilling already existing needs.” (Gasparski 2010, 24)² If I understand this correctly, he says need creation and need satisfaction have a different status, axiologically speaking. How do you create needs? I do not ask about the techniques of need creation, like advertising or propaganda, I mean psychologically. The first step is to recognize the difference between needs and desires. This is not always done and the relevant difference is left implicit, as if it did not exist or the difference were largely insignificant and trivial. This is not true. The difference is real and radically important in the context we are interested in here. Let me explain: desires are propositional attitudes, just like beliefs, which are characterized by what is normally called their direction of fit. If S desires X, this entails that her actual world would change so that X is present there. In this sense the world fits what S wants. In the case of beliefs, S’s relevant cognitive state should fit the world, or be true of the world. In both cases the propositional content is the same, as it is in “I believe that X” and “I want that X,” only the direction of fit is different. The second point is that desire is based on desirability, in the sense that if S desires X it logically follows that X is desirable. The third point is that desire is not a motive for action – in early literature desires were called a motive, but today most writers think it is a mistake. This is easy to see as follows: X may be desirable for S even if S does not desire it. Desirability is a necessary condition of desire as a mental episode; however, it is not its cause. We need more, like say an opportunity, moral clearance, and required resources. We learn not to desire many things we accept as desirable as such, like excessive search for pleasure vs. doing out duty. Once we actually desire, the background

² See also (Rescher 2014, 9).

conditions are right. Then S is motivated to reach for X if the desire for X is actionist and the background conditions are right. For instance, the desire is “I want to go home,” where going home is action. Some desires are non-actionist, like “I want Manchester United to be the championship team.” In this case, my desire does not entail, or allow for, any action from my part (Airaksinen 2012; 2014).

Needs are different. If I say “I need coffee,” I may well add to it “I do not want coffee” without inconsistency or cognitive discrepancy. I need coffee to stay awake and I feel I must drink it even if I do not want coffee as such. What I want is to stay awake and in this situation coffee is understood as being instrumentally useful for this given purpose, staying awake. We often instrumentally need and use things we do not like or want as such – it is a sad truth about us and our world. Notice, if desire were a motive, we would have a problem here; however, desire is not a motive and hence no problem may exist. If “I do not want coffee” were a motive for avoidance of coffee, it would be problematic to say “I need coffee” in the sense that now I am willing to drink coffee to stay awake. In this case we would have a conflict of motives, which we obviously do not have. We colloquially say, “I drink coffee now because it is the only way to stay awake.”

Now, how do we create new needs? Obviously we may create new desires which then necessitate new needs. How do we create new desires? Obviously we must prove to S that in her world there exist desirable things she has not recognized before, either because these things are novel or she has not paid attention to such things before. You have invented a new machine that creates new things. If I do not want those new things I do not need the machine, which brings about those things. So, I show you why the new things are desirable and then argue that the only way to get them is to buy my new machine. In many other cases the desire is old and the means to satisfy it are new. A new chemical has been developed that can be used as a recreational drug. Some people want to advertise it saying it brings about supreme pleasure with minimal harm to the user. The desire is already there, namely, desire for pleasure. The seller only must convince the prospective user that this new one is better than the old ones, or that the user needs this drug more than the old ones.

In this way, needs are always based on desires; if no desire exists also needs fail to emerge. Therefore, I say the key to need creation is manipulation of a person’s perceptions and judgements of desirability. Desirability judgements always are value judgements and, therefore, to manipulate them is to manipulate a person’s value system. Once this is done, new needs follow.

Suppose you tell me, “You want to be happy but it is impossible to be happy without X; therefore, you need X.” In such a case, once again, the desirable thing, happiness, is already given. Therefore, you only need to recommend X and you create a new need, a need for X. But notice that you may not like or desire X as such. On the contrary, you may find it undesirable or even repulsive as such.

Now, from your marketing point of view, you need to make X look desirable. In the end, you hope that I desire happiness and because X is a means for reaching happiness I like X, too. This is to say I find X desirable as such because it brings me happiness. You say I should love X, and then X is easy to market and sell to me. In sum: originally I found X undesirable or repulsive but you change my perception of X referring to the fact that I want happiness and X promotes happiness. Therefore, two ways to manipulate my values judgements exist: you change my ideas of desirability to create new needs or you change my evaluation of my old needs.

We see that creating new needs is not a trivial thing. You cannot create new needs without promoting something which, at the same time, means using value judgements in a manipulating way. I do not mean by manipulation a necessarily negative evaluation. I understand the concept in a neutral way so that some instances of manipulation are good and some are bad. However, manipulating other people's values systems is a serious matter that always requires one to take responsibility for the effort. We know that people, especially collectively and en masse, are vulnerable when they are asked to change their values in a direction that is not to their own benefit, especially in the long run. Therefore, von Mises' approach to need manipulation and its value background is irresponsible. People may be able to resist such efforts, but whether they can or cannot is not really relevant here. What is relevant is that one tries to change people's judgements of desirability in a certain direction without paying attention to their good. The problem is not only to create new desires and in their wake new needs but also to change the perception of things needed so that they start looking desirable as such. Think of cars, which are means of personal transportation but look like independently desirable objects to own. In this case means have become ends, or mere instruments have become independently desirable items. In our modern world, it is all too easy to confuse means and ends. We should not do that, so that any effort to encourage and promote such confusion is morally irresponsible. Yet, our modern culture of marketing rests on such confusion. Perhaps more serious problem is the creation of new desires, like air travel to distance places, which was promoted by airplane industry and then backed up by tourism industry – a clearly unsustainable development. Before the modern airplane, no one wanted to travel to the distant beaches of the Canary Islands. It is a new desire, although not many people actually desire the air travel part of the trip. The airlines try to convince people that flying is fun, but that kind of lie is unlikely to convince anybody – except if you have not flown before.

Entrepreneurial Ethics as It Should Be

In the best possible world, what is entrepreneurial ethics like? This is to ask a question in an idealistic mood, but then normative ethics always contains such an aspect. Gasparski's praxiology is ethically oriented and hence it is also idealistic.

There is nothing wrong with this, as long as we take care of not crossing some limits beyond which we become idle dreamers.

Gasparski discusses the ideal ethical aspects of entrepreneurship and refers to the great Polish philosopher Father Bochenski, as follows:

From the very structure of an enterprise there emerges the ideal *entrepreneur*, a person who serves the enterprise unselfishly, even in opposition to others, if necessary. There are many examples of great entrepreneurs who uphold this ideal, concludes Bochenski. (Gasparski 2010, 25)

Regardless, or because, of the fact that I myself gave my first ever university lecture course in Turku University in 1972 on Father Bochenski's fine little book called *Die zeitgenössischen Denkmethode* (1954), I find this at the same time appealing and deeply problematic. It is true, as I see it, that entrepreneurship can be fully ethical and morally laudable even if it always has its problems. Think about the story of Kodak Company, the large American photo equipment producer and its great, genius founder George Eastman.

One can both like and dislike Eastman, a figure more complex and caring than the wooden character of the legend. His feisty business skills included industrial spying, the cornering all the significant patents (except the primary one) and the squeezing out of competitors. But it is hard to fault his deep beliefs concerning the value of education, healthcare, racial and industrial relations, low-cost housing, and the importance to the human spirit of art, music, and designated parkland. (Brauer 1996, x)

His conduct was in a many ways laudable and even ideal but certainly not saintly; it also has its blemishes, for instance, the rumours of stealing the ideas of other inventors. All great inventors and entrepreneurs are like that, as it is easy to verify from history books and biographies – not autobiographies though. Perhaps inventor Nikola Tesla has some saintly features, but that is mainly because of his vulnerable character and tragic life (Cheney 2001). For instance, Tesla surrendered the contract on the rights of his greatest industrial invention, alternating current motor, to George Westinghouse for the false promise that Westinghouse will support Tesla in the future – an empty promise of course. The original contract between the men was worth millions and millions of dollar to Tesla and was too expensive from Westinghouse's point of view. Tesla died in poverty, Westinghouse did not. This must be one of the most fantastic industrial frauds ever.

What I want to say here is that we can use the term "ideal" in two senses here. The first one means something like as good as it gets or something you would want to imitate with clear conscience, perhaps not in all aspects but wherever it really matters. This use of "ideal" is common, like "He is my ideal player, I would like to be like him." But then there is another idea of "ideal," a kind of transcendental normative sense of the term, which entails perfection in any possible perspective and values system. Such perfection is for gods, it is the true ideal that we may try to

imitate but always without success. Yet it provides us with valuable guidelines and shows us the way, the Tao, that we should follow if we hope to be good persons. Perfection is the ideal we should aim at even if we never reach it. I know all of this sounds paradoxical but then we cannot help it; on the contrary, if our life, plans, and actions are not guided by ideals, we can never become what we potentially are, or as the age-old saying is “Become what you are.” Therefore, I cannot accept Bochenski’s idea of a Saint Entrepreneurship even if I accept the idea of an ideal entrepreneur in the limited sense of the word.

Gasparski is perfectly right when he calls for an ideal conduct in business; I agree with him. I also think he is right when he calls for grounding of ethics via praxiology and its three E’s. The point is as simple as it is valid, namely, the ideals of ethics or ideal ethics or ethical idealism generate too much hot air and not substance, if they are used in an unrealistic contexts. What we need is a bridge between ideal ethics and real life, or what should be and what is. It does not help much if we repeat what should be and what the ideal values are, if we do not say how to implement our ideas of good and right: “Cooperation between praxiology and ethics creates the conditions enabling good practice in economic life and outside it.” Notice, however, that the praxiological three E’s already mention ethics, so Gasparski must mean the two other E’s here, namely, efficiency and effectiveness. Here is an additional interesting question, which I cannot discuss any further here but which might deserve our closer attention in the future: If praxiology builds a bridge between the ideal and the concrete ethics, what kind of ethics do we mean by the third praxiological E, or ethicality. Obviously, it cannot be what I have called ideal ethics; so what is this praxiological ethics? If it is applied or concrete ethics, why do we need a bridge from our ideals to the world where we live; we already have our concrete ethics?

Now, I do not want to discuss the E of effectiveness. We have much literature on that concept and its application for instance in economics. The question is, how do we use our scarce resources to the maximal effects? In philosophical ethics, John Rawls discusses such problems in his justly famous *A Theory of Justice* (1971). Notice by the way that effectiveness is a deeply normative notion because in the core of it is the demand that we should use our resources in a sustainable manner, or effectively. Yet, we do not discuss ethics here. We do not inquire into the good uses of our resources.

What about the second E, efficiency? As I read it, the question concerns our ways and abilities to reach and realize the goals we set to ourselves. Again, this is not an ethical question because those ends can be mean and evil as well as laudable and good. But it is a normative E anyway. We should find the ways of realizing our goals if we want to live a long and successful life. Again, we do not discuss morally normative questions here. Now, this is the point: because these two E’s are independent of ethics they can be used to build a bridge between ideal ethics

and real life. Their inherent normativity helps us here because now we are asked to apply ideal ethical consideration effectively and efficiently to the hard reality where we live and which we want to make better.

Think of effectiveness. How could I live a good moral life if I am unable to realize my goals? I may know what is ideally good but that does not help if I do not make them part of my life as it is here and now. Many ideals are inapplicable in human life, so I must moderate and modify them as needed, and then I can successfully apply them. This is effectiveness in moral life. In fact such effectiveness constitutes moral life in this real world, which is full of compromises and negotiations anyway. To illustrate, some plans and courses of action are supererogatory in the following sense. They are good but they cannot be moral duties because such a duty would be too demanding. It is a mere ideal without proper applications in this world. I cannot have an unconditional duty to rescue because many rescue cases are too demanding. Suppose a house is burning and some people unknown to me are trapped inside. I could go to the door and open it but in that case I would get badly burned, as one can predict. It is good and admirable if I rush in; if I do not, no one can blame me with any justification. The rescue action is supererogatory, in ethical terms. In the same way, in business a Saint Entrepreneur would sacrifice his whole business and all the workplaces of so many workers to save just one job. If he does, he fails in the efficiency point of view and even his effectiveness is flawed, but perhaps he did the ideally right thing. He says he is responsible for every worker as an individual so that many is not more valuable than one. Alas, we may not think he did the right thing.

Here is another problem case for us to consider: I know one of my products is defective in such a way that it will kill its user and the rest of the products are fine. I have no idea where the product is; should I recall all of them, which costs me lots of money and tends to ruin my reputation. This is not the case of supererogation for obvious reasons. I have a moral duty to recall the products regardless of the business consequences. It may even happen that the cost of the recall is more than paying compensation to the family of the victim of my faulty product. So, I have a financial motive not to implement a full recall – but all that is morally callous. As we can see, considerations of the two E's of praxiology are essentially important for practical and realistic business ethics, just as Gasparski argues. Ideals alone are not useful, considerations of usefulness are often straightforwardly callous, and therefore we need a third way out between the horns of this moral dilemma. We can get out by considering our laudable goals and how to realize them in real life (effectiveness), how to do it in a sustainable way (effectiveness), and considering what ethics demands from us. The point is, ethics should not demand so much that we never can be ethical. I think this is the true message of the last of the E's, ethics. This is to say, against von Mises, that every entrepreneur should also be a philosopher who is able to understand where the limits of one's responsibility

lie. Against Father Bochenski: we do not require that entrepreneurship be a saintly job; that would go against the rules of moral realism established via the idea of supererogatory plans and actions. It is enough to be a moral person who aims at sustainable goals and knows how to reach them in an efficient manner. As I read it, this the message of Gasparski's praxiologically oriented business ethics, which he recommends to be actualized in terms of the three E's via good design practices.

In Sum: The key points of professor Gasparski's philosophy and ethics are as follows; first the problem, "The theory of designing social systems warns against ignoring the ethical dimension of entrepreneurship, and also highlighting the causes of methodological mistakes," and then the solution, "Co-operation between praxiology and ethics creates the conditions enabling good practice in economic life and outside it." (Gasparski 2010, 25 and 31)

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