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## **"The relationship between Ethics and biotechnology and gencechnology"**

--- Problem

Is it allowed to experience with fertilized embryonal cells?

In Germany Professor Oliver Brüstle, Bonn, wants to make with the results of his experiements with embryonal cells money. The German laws forbid this, because its defend the dignity of man. (GG Article 4) There is a discussion, when does human life starts?

-- In Austria parents, who cannot get a child, want to put the fertilized egg in the body of an other woman. The born child would have two mothers. This doing is an ethical problem.

There is necessary to find an ethical decision for both dilemmas, because religious Ethics are against the uncontrolled experiments with human embryonal cells. .

Today these two examples show the ethical problems of biotechnological and gencechnological experiments with embryonal cells and their heritage and their hereditament and the religious Ethics and the human rights to protect human life.

Discussion:

Human beings are not God. But they want to become scientists. This is for human being the possibility to inquire after the laws of the nature and cosmos to make some experiments with the nature for human profits and advantages. Today biotechnology is an very important science, to which human beings have many wishes and hopes for human health and human foods. The human being can be scientist but not creator. This difference must be seen in the relationship between Christian Ethics and Biotechnology. Christian believes, that God´s word about his creation is good, Genesis 1, 31.

The human being as scientist knows by exoeriments, that each human invention in the creation has two sides: a good and a bad. This is also for Biotechnology. God has given human beings for their life the Ten Commands and the reason to decide, if their works are good or bad. These orders of God protect the dignity of man and the human life. Human being has to consent to these orders of

God. But today in a secularized world without the understanding of God, who will protect human life? During the human history human beings have made for living in society a social contract, by which they created laws to order human life and the community. But power and dictator can change the laws every time. What is to do?

I) The human being is demanded to find for himself laws to protect human life.

--- a) My first thesis is, that there is only one reality. But different views to it. Reality can be come in to question by Religion, Politics, Ethics, Biology, Sociology a.s.o. Each of them speaks, from their subjective view in different manner of reality. It is necessary to remember always this diversity of standpoints. All these human aspects to the nature have their own Ethics with different rules and orders.

--- b) The human being is the centre in all relationships between subject and object, because he thinks about his benefit and fortune. This point there is the problem between the relationship between Christian Ethics and Biotechnology. The goal of biotechnology is the health of human being, because human being knows about his imperfection and his sickness and the human desire of healing. All the medicines try to repair the human being outside by their technical instruments. The religious message of God is competent for the inside of human being and also for human life with the others.

--- c) My second thesis is, that each human sphere has its own Ethics. On the one hand the ethics for human beings is dominated by human reason, will and rights and on the other ethics of the sphere are stamped by the interest of human being and of his wishes, of fortune and of benefit for them. The human being has a goal with the spheres for himself. He wants to get real his fortune and his benefit. There must be an ethical behaviour to reach the goals.

--- II) The standpoints of the two Ethics. Two spheres of sciences and of religions

In the discussion between sciences and Christian belief we recognize a significant fact, that Christianity no longer reigns the whole range of our society. or civilization. The result is that none of the human philosopher can provide the comforting certainties of truth about the human being. During the Enlightenment the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1720-1804) reclaims an ideal moral reasoning by his sentence: "Do unto others as you would be done by". Kant's categorical imperative is nothing other than a formal version of the moral law and is another formulation of the Golden Rule. Without God the human being has to think about the good. The modern society must constantly work out and take responsibility for the fundamental difference between good and evil in human lives and world. Human being makes the important distinction in his life between "is" and "ought", between how things are actual and the possibilities that they actually bear within himself. Human being has constantly to work out and take responsibility for the fundamental difference between good and evil in human life. Also sciences have to think in the relationship and in the dialectic of good and evil, because otherwise they get inhuman in their goals. Therefore Scientists have to find for the human being in their doing an answer of the dialectic of good and evil and what is useful for human being. This is the duty of human Ethics.

Faith is not blind acceptance of ends, and reason is not blindly instrumental in focusing on means. Both faith and reason are truly to be understood within the modern tradition of the Bible and philosophy of Kant as practice, as living the categorical imperative in treating all human beings as ones neighbour, as one world, as ends in himself. The golden rule is constituting the ethical life. Kant shows in the "Critique of Pure Reason," (1) that one must distinguish moral possibility from both logical possibility and empirical (natural) possibility, because that what is practical possible is not found outside the actuality.

Both sciences and Christian belief are different in thinking. Both think causal. Sciences think: subject – object. Christian belief thinks "sub species aeternitatis", also from God to human being. Sciences think on the horizontal level; Christian belief on the vertical. Both think functional, rational and logical.

They have different valuations from their standpoints to their objects. Therefore it is necessary to

care for rights. Both need a respective responsibility of reason and of dignity of man. Therefore they have to declare their Ethics. Sciences find their Ethics by their rational and practical votes. The laws of nature represent one of the first sustained attempts in modern scientific thoughts to comprehend the principles in the nature of human being. This is an unavoidable ground for human thought, that "means of subjective judgement", when we consider nature as the totality of experience. We have to think of God as an intelligent designer of Nature. This makes sense for human being and the world. We have to recognize also the human megalomania to become a designer.

Sensibility qua intelligible phenomena in the Kantian vein can only, and certainly does, connote a divine being, but it can never provide the direct evidence denotative of such a being. Paul Ricoeur describes Marcel-Ponty's version of phenomenological reflection so: "It reduces our participation in the presence of the world only in order to break off our familiarity with the world momentarily and to restore "astonishment" to us before the strangeness and the paradox of a world which situates us. It turns to essence only in order to gain distance and reconquer the "facticity" of our being in the world" He speaks and reflects in a dialectic way. (2) The human being is for Merleau-Ponty condemned to meaning like Kant. (3) But the Christian believer has his Ethics by God and his order.

Sciences and Christian belief meet themselves in discovering of the absolute. But the absolute is for both different. The Christian believer can say God is the absolute. The human philosopher can underline the absolute is the being, the existence or the nature. Both want to build their Ethics by the absolute to help for a good life. They wish to work together for the good of human being. In spite of the differences of the Christian Ethics and of the Biotechnology the human being has to combine both spheres in his reason and conscience, because the human being belongs to the divine and to the natural sphere. But the both ethical spheres run against each other and make ethical problems, so that the human being has to decide which of the spheres he want to follow practically. It is decisive, how he sees the human being as subject or object.

--- a) The Christian Ethics see the human being as a creation and child of God, Genesis 1, 27-28. The Ten Commands and the faith to God give the human being his salvation and his safeguard for his life.

--- b) The other ethical spheres are objects for the human being to reach his goals for his benefits. The human being dominates the process of benefits and utilization with his spheres. They have no Ethics of their own. The human being concepts the specific Ethics accordingly for himself. Sometimes it happens that the human beings become object by the human being. But this is not allowed by divine and human rights, because human being is free born. .

Both Ethics that of God and that of human being want to fulfil the human rights, because the human being does not want to be hurt in his human life.

--- c) Also the personal wishes plays an important role. The parents want to have a healthy baby. The situation is like a triangle: I with my wishes - Religion - Laws.

The ethical dilemma and the differences of these three must be seen. Some favour the ideas of Greek philosophers, Ethics concerned the attainment of true happy life. It can be associated with self-possession and / or self-government. Aristotele as realist compromises, that the ethical life is to be found in the relative security of the polis (=society) and within the polis in the relative security of the well-born, owning sufficient store of goods to sustain their relative power and independence. Therefore Aristotele knew about the fragility of goodness. According to him, we need good fortune to be enabled starting to be good. Aristotele remarks, if we fall, for example, under the rule of a tyrant who commands us either to betray the city or else to allow a member of our own family to die, we have, by bad stroke of fortune, been tragically removed from the context in which we can continue to be unambiguously virtuous people. (4) The Greeks defined the ethical goal of happiness as a passionless inner tranquillity. (5) Christianity was not offered any inner refuge against what time may bring, nor was an utterly passionless life regarded as desirable. For a Christian, "to be good" was dependent on "fortune" in the new guise of grace of God. Christianity thinks of the ethical life as the deepest identity. (6)

Self-defence of human life is in Christian sense a violent defence of an illegal attack against own life. The Christian Ethics are against a conscious injury or killing of human being on own authority,

because this will be done by presumption and superstition of human being. This is a strong argument against Biotechnology and Gentechnology. Gentechnology is killing sometimes human embryonal life. Often scientists want to make money with the results of their experiments with embryonal cells.

In this point starts the Ethical problems. It cannot be said, that an embryo is not a human person. It is the "potential" starting his way to activity and to become a human person. The arguments for medicinal Ethics about human life are not clear. They have no answer: "When does it start?" They have insufficient answers: "Own heartbeat"; "Own cerebral". The Christian standpoint is, that it is a human person from the beginning, because God is the creator of life and not the human being. Therefore the church is against abortion, foeticide and the experiments with embryonal cells. Christian ecclesiastical Ethics based on the Ten Commands and on the order of God. They have its moral character by its dominated moment of warding and defence of human life. Morally ordered self-defence of human life follows objectively and subjectively the consideration of the orderly human rights. They respect human self-determination. The human rights must be also regarded to an embryo or foetus. But the technical view is: An embryo is not an human being. The medicinal arguments are: no own heartbeat, no own cerebral a.s.o. From this position the medicines can experiment with the embryos and can kill them, if they are useless and not needed.

### --- III) Call for Authority

But there must be an authority. Christian Ethics speaks in the authority of God. The code of Christian morality is observed by all men starving for salvation. The code is given in the Ten Commandments and their traditional ecclesiastical interpretation of them. They are part of the general revelation for the individual believers. The authority and the sanction of these ethical codes come from the invisible world. They are the way in which men should act. Christian ethics are in this point opposite to human ethics about human personal life.

Human being has no authority for ethical orders, because for modern man, whose world is quite "horizontal" and without heaven, all knowledge is derived from a study of the things. The modern thinking has a rupture with the metaphysic. Since the philosophical secularity the human being creates his own conception of life. The message of Charles Darwin (1809-1882) experiences was "the fittest livings will survive". This is the rule of life without God. The nature itself is for evolution and selection of livings. The biological theories are dominated by determination. George Mendel (1822-1884) has found the rules of hereditary character. Therefore the human being means by his knowledge to become a designer of the living beings. Some of the scientists want to experience with embryonal cells to change human beings. Opposite to them others say. "It is not allowed to experience with embryonal cells, because they are human beings and must be protected by human rights.

Therefore human beings have for Ethics neither authority or sanction in that "horizontal" world. Modern man endeavours to establish his rules of ethical behaviour from an analysis of the objects to which he can examine. The human beings as society can give themselves their laws in the sense of Jean Jacques Rousseau "contra social" or by a legislator and in the democracy by parliament and by UN so the human rights after the terrible World War II. The government of dictatorships gave itself ethical rules about good and bad by the standpoint of its benefits and uses. For example the Nazi-Regime was for racism. It favoured the German race against the Jewish one. Nazis oppressed human beings with other minds.

Modern analysts do not accept either blanket prohibition of contraconception nor general commandment. The analyst analyses birth-rates, food supplies, health problems, economic exigencies, foetal stages of growth, psychological adaptability a.s.o.

The Christian human being finds the laws of divorce and abortion abstract and unrealistic. He decides autonomously that, what religion would call pornography. The modern human being cannot abide clerical or ecclesiastical control, so he expels it from his government. He decides that he can it better than religious groups. Scientists are aware more and more of the moral and social impact of their fast-changing technologies. Not merely was it stated that the politicians must be aware of the technical character of policy making, but it was maintained that the standards to be sought were to

be civilized standards, involving moral, cultural, spiritual values, the kinds of achievements recognized in the broad agreement upon what were the great societies and the golden ages in the past. Now the WHO get this character. The WHO has a fine mechanism for transmitting conventional wisdom in a relatively static society and will ensure to the human being the necessary for survival in a rapidly moving world. Modern man is seeking and apparently finding sources of ethical inspiration in the unheard-of quarters of science and applied techniques.

The new situation is, that human beings discuss moral problems in a social kind. Human beings have to participate in a constructive exchange, seeking to establish viable standards and objectives suitable to the health of human being and society. The sense of responsibility can function for the benefit of all. The scientists are working for it. The sick human being are curious of the results of the scientists. The price and the cost of the results are big and the success is less. Therefore the Ethics have to decide about biotechnology.

The problem between Christian Ethics and human Ethics is the authority. These two described standpoints of ethical views must be recognized. Both have the goal to help and make healthy human being. But they differ themselves in the authority and in the anthropologic view of human being. The Christian belief underlines that human being is a child of God. It is necessary to remember the sentence of "imago dei" of human being.

The social view of human being is the benefit for the society. The government decides, what is good for human being. Aldous Huxley describes in his book "New brave world" the methods of government by which human beings can be divided by pharmaceutical pills in classes and categories. The government decides and not the human being, what he has to be and not he by himself. The biotechnology and the gentechology can make it today possible, that parents can decide what colours the eyes of their children should be and they can wish a PID baby.

The anthropological question and also the Christian are: Is the human being than a child of God or the product of the will of his parents? This question is important. The Christian religion teaches like the Bible says by Matthews 10, 28. the human being has an immortal soul. It underlines that each man has an individual soul of his own Genesis 2, 7. Therefore it can not be morally good or bad without the immortal soul of individual man.

Human beings who does not live with the belief, they will not have the problem with the soul. They seek to create their child after theirs wishes and want to have designer babies. This is the point of difference recognizing human being. The human being has to struggle for his human rights. Human rights and the European human rights convention do not allow, to make a human being to a thing. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1720-1804) tells, that a human being does not be of use of an other man. The human being is free born in the sense of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Therefore also an embryo must be respected as the beginning of a human being.

--- IV) The Christian Ethics can underline the possibility of help by biotechnology for human being:

The Christ and his belief to God are not against technical sciences, because God speaks to the human being to reign over the world, Genesis: 1, 26ff and 2, 15. He gives him the order to cultivate "the garden" and to protect it. God himself finds his creation is good Genesis 1, 31. The human being has to cultivate well the creation of God. Therefore sciences and scientists have the duty to help human being and the nature. God gives the human being the knowledge about good and bad. Therefore the human beings needs rules, laws and orders of God or of the himself and of the society to act for his benefit with the others.

The Christian belief supports the human reason and the human experiences. But the human reason is unable to comprehend the destination of the human being without God. The human reason can not give the human being his dignity. This is given to him by God. Therefore the human being needs for his law a legislator, who tells him, what is right or wrong and to act in responsibility. He needs from the outside measure for his actions and conscience. This leads me to my argument, that the question about Christianity and Biotechnology is a serious question. In making such an assertion, I am aware of what we usually refer as the process of Religion in the modern technical world. It concerns what happens when God-talk and man-talk. The problem is, when latter cancels

out the former. It can happen, that the process of Religion and Biotechnology consists in the mutation of religiosity from one form to another.

Therefore the question: Which authority does give the human being the guarantee for the protection of human life? In the Christian doctrine it is clear: it is the will of God, who speaks to the human conscience and demands human being to render account of his doing and the Christians have to act with the will of God. But in the Ethics of biotechnology is it the idea of Darwin with his thoughts of the survival of the fittest, selection and evolution. Also the government can determine to have new human beings. Can this be the protection of life?

The bioethics have to clarify the relationship of rationality, morality and procedure. The biogenetic technique has the power to make itself independent of its creator. The human being starts the creation by biotechnology and its using. But it may occur that the creation by biotechnology develops a new kind of human being and plants, because it has, following Aristotle, the beginning in itself and starts to continue the development of itself. The human being can not more influence this development. He has not the capability of God, who is the creator of life and nature. The artificial development and evolution differ against the natural selection.

The artificial creation develops different agriculture, so for example of American maize (=Indian corn). The product of the plants are bad for human being, because they change the common heritage of mankind. This process cannot be made retrograde. The same problem is the procession with embryonal cells. There are "totipotent" and "pluripotent" embryonal cells.

a) "Totipotent" embryonal cells are able to build textures and complete beings.

b) "Pluripotent" embryonal cells can build textures and organs.

The biotechnology can help with its experiments of "totipotent" and "pluripotent" embryonal cells human beings with sick organs. Indeed this is good. These experiments should be supported, because they can heal sick human beings.

But the intervention in embryonal cells can lead to uncontrolled growth of human beings. What do with these uncontrolled "totipotent" embryonal cells? They are living beings and can not be killed according to the Christian belief and human laws.

V) Should be values absolute or relative?

The biotechnology needs a conception of values to define the protection of human life.

Commissions of Ethics have to solve the problem: "When does start the beginning of human life?"

The lawyer have different meanings. Some of them say human embryo is porter of human rights, other of them do not underline this. If the question is answered by "Yes", nobody is allowed to kill human embryo. If the question is answered by "No", than the interests of parents and government may decide that it is free to be killed. The Ethics of responsibility of Hans Jonas (7) means: It is not given free to be killed, because it must be protected as living person in its human life and in its potential to develop human life in responsibility. Therefore it is necessary to have absolute values for the human being.

Medical man means, that the embryo is since fertilisation an human genom. (8) It develops itself continually. The embryo has the capability to become a formed human being. Finally the embryo shows the attributes of a system, that organises itself into an human being. The knowledge of the development of an embryo indicates that the embryo must be seen as a human being since the fertilisation, because it has the attributes of life. .

The biotechnology will go on to seek for methods to help sick human being. It want to help sick human hearts, brain collapsed, Alzheimer, cancer, sick organs a. s. o. by therapy of embryonal cells. But the success is still not big. Until now, it is successful only in helping unfruitful women to get a child. In Scotland the biomedicine had cloned a sheep, with the name Dolly. It was successful for a short time, then it get sick. The biomedicine seeks for a better method of cloning. The goal is, perhaps it may be possible for human being. Some of the human beings are against this method by ethical arguments.

The medicine wants that biotechnology help them to remove defect of gens. This is allowed in some cases. But the problem is , that nobody knows the result of it. It can correspond to the horrific vision of Aldous Huxley "Brave new world". In the secularized time human being will do what he can do.

So the medicines want to make money with the results of biotechnology. The government forbids this by laws. Responsible scientists underline, if you will change today a genom, you give him a new direction of destination, that you never can change.

Therefore Ethics may define edges, but it is a helpless call in the desert without God and without a feeling of love for human life. But the answers to these question are difficult, we because two meanings ware in opposite. One which wants to help sick people and the other in the sense of Greek philosopher are for good luck and fortune as absolute values. We need for an responsible decision values and laws. We have to answer following questions:

Is absolute perfection in everything humane or contra any humane failbility?

What price is mankind paying for some masterpieces to which God did not concieve?

Is love dying while perfection does not give any more reasons to love?

Can diversity of mankind be postponed?

What about racist selection?

What about absolute uniformity?

The biotechnology therefore demands a great responsibility to protect of human life, species and human genom. Christian faith as religion can help biotechnology to find the right way.

Today there are some last news for biotechnology experiments by the European court of justice.

-- The court of justice of EU in Louxembourg decided on 18th October 2011 a border to the question: When does human life start. The decision was: When the egg of a woman and the sperm of a man are combined, than human life begins. So the is no possibility to experience with a fertilized egg of a woman.

--The court of justice of EU in Strasbourg decided on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011, that a fertilized egg can not be put in the body of an other woman, because the born child would have two mothers.

The court of justice is in a secularized world and human society the last authority about the dignity of human being and of beginning of human life, These are decisions of a rational and social authority and can help medicines to a responsible doing wit pluripotente embryonal cells..

-- There is also an ethical problem of man who marries a man like the English entertainer Elton John, who married his friend. Both wanted to have a designer baby of each both genes. They found a woman, who got the fertilized egg with the sperms of both genes in her body. She gave birth to a boy, who has now two fathers and a strange mother, who he will never see.

Therefore it is necessary for human dignity to have absolute values and laws against biotechnological and genetic experiments with fertilized eggs.

-----Notes:

- 1) Kant, Immanuel: Critique of Pure Reason ( A 230-232)
- 2) Ricoeur, Paul: Husserl, Analysis of Phenomenology, Northwestern University Press, 1967, p.33
- 3) Maurice Merleu-Ponty: Sense and Non-Sense, Northwestern University, Press 19644, p. 94ff
- 4) Aristotele, Nicomachean Ethics, 1109-1110
- 5) Spaemann, Robert: The Glory of the Lord. San Francisco 1991, p., 451-597
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- 7) Jonas, Hans: Das Prinzip Verantwortung, Frankfurt/M. 1979
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