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*Inocent-Mária V. Szaniszló***Resurrection of Singerism in our Czech and Slovak Post-Communist Society**

Abstract: In recent years, the thought of the Vienna-born Australian Peter Singer has had an increasing effect on several Czech and Slovak philosophers like David Černý or Peter Sýkora. In this paper we present some views and responses on Anglo-Saxon thinking close to Singer's speciesistic theory and his other views from the perspective of philosophical and theological ethics. We consider mainly the views of authors from the German-speaking area, who in their works discuss Singer's speciesistic theory. Germany is still struggling with the consequences of Nazism, the nightmare of the 20th century, which is closely linked precisely with this theory. The aim of the article is not to logically refute Singer's theory but to point out its shortcomings and highlight the reasons for its ethical unacceptability. In the end we turn the arguments towards those who would prefer to perform research on human embryos and human embryonic stem cells. In discussions on the value and the beginning of human life in Czech and Slovak societies diverse positions are taken on different levels, which are often influenced by different philosophical currents and different mentalities. However, these professionals should clearly prove that the human embryo is not a man or a human person and may therefore be freely killed and used for research.

Key words: bioethics research, history of life issues, embryonic stem cells, Peter Singer, speciesism

Povzetek: **Obnova singerizma v češki in v slovaški postkomunistični družbi**

V bližnji preteklosti se je vse bolj večal vpliv misli na Dunaju rojenega Avstralca Petra Singerja na mnoge češke in slovaške filozofe, kakor sta David Černý in Peter Sýkora. V tem članku predstavljamo nekaj odzivov in pogledov na anglosaško mišljenje, ki je blizu Singerjevi specistični teoriji in njegovim drugim pogledom na področju filozofske in teološke etike. V glavnem obravnavamo odzive avtorjev z nemško govorečega območja, ki v svojih delih ocenjujejo Singerjevo specistično teorijo. Nemčija se še vedno sooča s posledicami nacizma v 20. stoletju, ki je tesno povezan s to teorijo. Cilj tega članka ni logična zavrnitev Singerjeve teorije, ampak prikaz njenih slabosti in navajanje nekaj razlogov, zakaj ne more biti etično sprejemljiva. V sklepnem delu poskušamo obrniti argumente na tiste, ki bi želeli opravljati raziskave na človeških zarodkih in na človeških

zarodnih izvornih celicah. V razpravah o vrednosti in začetku človeškega življenja na Češkem in na Slovaškem so izražena različna stališča na različnih ravneh, ki so mnogokrat pod vplivom različnih filozofskih tokov in mišljenj. Ti profesionalci naj jasno pokažejo in dokažejo, da človeški zarodek ni človek oziroma človeška oseba in ga zato smejo ubiti ali uporabljati v raziskovalne namene.

Ključne besede: bioetične raziskave, zgodovina življenjskih vprašanj, izvorne zarodne celice, Peter Singer, specizem

If we want to talk about democracy, the importance of humanistic sciences and human rights of these days' Central Europe, we have to ask what is the position of the human being in this world and society, especially in relationship to other creatures. They also need an exact specification of their position in this world.

Recently, in our Czech and Slovak society, slowly but surely, people have been discussing the protection of human life and the need to adopt an attitude towards more and more accessible manipulation with germs of human life. In the name of treatment of some difficult treatable diseases or possibilities for further transmission of human life, there are on the other hand sought methods which defend these newly discovered bio-technical processes and which are often conducted in the name of humanity's bright tomorrows.

Controversies, which now move the philosophical and theological world, concern the problems that may seem unnecessary for some, because the answer is clear to him. On the other hand, somebody can have considerable difficulties dealing with this issue. Actually it is a problem frequently mentioned in the media, where we address dealing about the fact of the beginning, and therefore about actual human life - a person who deserves protection. The issue of protecting human life has become a problem to the extent that many times we cannot find a satisfactory answer for both views. In practice, however, it simply regards the fact that all bio-medical practices that are currently in use, should be in accordance with ethics and natural law. The general rule should be that any man in the stages of development should not be killed for therapeutic research; even if these might be important and beneficial. Each person's life should be protected by law. But the same law that protects life also allows this killing in special cases and under certain conditions for example: artificial abortion, artificial insemination, cloning, euthanasia, etc... If we argued that human life in some situation has lower or greater value, we would admit that this life and therefore man does not always have the same value and thus a potential human being can be deprived of life at any time without breaking the law. It is necessary to think deeply about this and to justify the argument which states that human life always has the same value from beginning to end. (Zálesová 2010, 8)

Similarly, in the Slovak daily, and especially in the professional press, there quite often occur discussions about this issue. We can consider these efforts as a positive trend. More recently, in professional journals, in the periodical journal of philosophy, the scientific and argumentative discussion at a philosophical level

between Peter Volek from the Faculty of Philosophy, Catholic University in Ružomberok and Peter Sýkora from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of St. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava has taken place concerning the topic of the need to protect human zygote. (Sýkora 2008, 804–16) In the final analysis, in 2008, by the Slovak Writers' Society, with the support of the Ministry of Culture, some Singer's articles were published (with the tagline »The most read professional book since Bertrand Russell«) showing interest in some parts of the Slovak public on his ideas. (Singer 2008) We would like to contribute a few remarks to the current philosophical debate and so expand from our philosophical-theological-ethical position on the horizons of the issue.

1. Problem of speciesism acceptability

Sýkora reproaches Volek for not accept a generally accepted understanding of human dignity in modern liberal-democratic societies of the Western type. (Sýkora 2008, 804) But against such an understanding of Western thought about these fundamental questions the Vatican instruction *Dignitas personae* was published. In article 35 we read: »Implementation of experimentation on human embryos means a crime against their dignity as human creatures, which are entitled to the same esteem as children already born and which we owe to each person. It is always a heavy moral offense.« (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith 2008) Sýkora, however further criticizes Volek for not allow killing of any human being just for one reason: that this is a member of the human race. This argument, as well as the concept of human dignity is considered as the speciesism attitude that recognizes the right to life only insofar as it suits his argumentation. (Sýkora 2008, 805)

In case of speciesism Sýkora argues already mentioned Peter Singer (and Ghiselin's concept of biological species from 1966) who clearly condemns this reserved philosophical position against such creatures that feel pain and show signs of intelligence. (805) Sýkora has already pointed out such a speciesism in his previous contribution (Sýkora 2006, 562–8), nevertheless, he does not defend Singer's speciesism theory itself but he wants to be morally consequent. (Sýkora 2008, 805) Thus, as it is similarly ethically unacceptable for any other categorization of people such as racism or nationalism, he rejects the killing of other intelligent creatures, not only humans. (Sýkora 2006, 562–8) But right at this point his argument does not show a clear attitude. As if he could not decide whether he is or he is not in favor with the specific speciesisms.

Since the speciesism theory, after its major Western European controversy has appeared with some delay in our Slovak space; let us at least scoop in history caused by Singer's argument in moral philosophy and theology in Slovakia.

2. Reflection of Singer ideas in the philosophical and theological ethics

Skepticism founded towards Singer's and similar speciesism arguments¹ (as they are supported at the end of 80s and early 90s for example by: Derek Parfit, H.-M. Sass, M. Lookwood, William K. Frankena and Joel Feinberg, Joseph Fletcher, Michael Tooley, and others) are already reflected in the articles, 16 years ago, vehemently opposing these theories. (Wildfeuer 1992, 201–211) Against these, mainly Anglo-Saxon views of biologists and philosophers of biology of the 20th century, we will try to give some opposition, coming from the various important moral theologians and philosophers who have dealt with these ideas.

Although Singer's speciesism theory from the mid-80s period is really out dated in media², it is interesting how at the end of the first decade of 21st century it again begins to be quoted. Also lecturers on the 3rd year of International days of ethics in Strasbourg who were dealing with the integration of ethical and philosophical values to biological and medical practice tried to take a strong negative position to Singer often during their lectures.³ Because Singer cares for the application which is called »preference utilitarianism« which is related only to a being which has its own particular interests. Because the intensity and extension of the concept »human« and »member of *homo sapiens*« is according to Singer different, he suggests the distinction between the concept of »human« between »person« and »member of *homo sapiens*«. Simply said, only living beings that are conscious about themselves may have the privilege of being preferred. Because only these can experience the joy or pain and so obtain their own preferences by themselves. In Singer's theory the preferences of persons are particularly important because they can impress more on the future than impersonal preferences. The preferences of persons are, in confrontation with the non-person, equally important for each individual, for example such as the preference »of not wanting to experience any pain«, because the preferences in this sense are understood as something what predetermines being. (Schlegel 2007, 420)

Of course this theory dramatically raises the doctrine of the sanctity of human life. Schlegel thinks that the speciesism theory harms even the animals themselves as a race, especially when we recall many theories of moral status of human and animal and with this associated obligations and rights. (154) Singer is trying to show the unjustified favor and domination of man as a deformation based on

¹ The term »speciesism« (a Slovak »druhizmus«) used first psychologist Richard Ryder from Oxford and Singer used it in his critical work *Experiments on animals* (Schlegel 2007, 154).

² Finally, the protests of paraplegic organization in West Germany, which led to discontinuation Singer lecture tour in West Germany (23. 06. 1989), have a strong response to this way of thinking (Schockenhoff 1993, 46). And not to mention other protests and the need for personal protection as a professor at Princeton University (Schlegel 2007, 12).

³ Compare Jean-Francois Mattei, a geneticist and former Health Minister and Chairman of today's French Red Cross in his brilliant lecture at the 3rd Conference year's international days ethics in Strasbourg March 25, 2009 as professor of philosophy Dominique Folscheid from University of Marne-la-Valle, France, at the same conference (<http://www.ethique-alsace.com,videoconferencefromthebeginningin2009> (accessed 25. 3. 2009).

Christianity. He calls speciesism as a substantial part of unquestionable moral orthodoxy of European civilization. (Singer 1984, 122) In fact, his views seem as if in case when animals are used for experiments, also people who don't have a mind or do not realize themselves, could be used for the same purpose. So far, Singer has not come in his views. Nevertheless, he stresses that the pain in this world must be reduced, and so the pain of animals that do not note themselves (88) must be reduced, but on the other hand, he claims that membership of the human race, or to some other species cannot be a criterion for moral status of living beings. What makes the species different from each other or what is common in their moral status, are just some features which inherently belong to them. The Speciesism argument seems at first consideration, very attractive in a tolerant society. However, if the races or genders are used as a criterion for attribution, consideration or complete ignorance of the individual interests, through this approach social negotiation necessarily becomes racist or sexist. However, if the person has equal access to each species and acts the same way when he uses as a criterion the membership of species, he is speciesist. (Schlegel 2007, 154)

Eberhard Schockenhoff (professor of moral theology in Freiburg im Breisgau and Vice-President of the ethics committee of the German Government) notes that authors like Singer, stopped at the halfway because they extended the disputed demarcation line validity of moral rights only to animals and not also to the world of plants and wild. (Schockenhoff 1993, 74) Singer's theory is not new, but the way of its re-entry by utilitarian philosophers of the 20th century has become tenuous, to the extreme. Of course, each extreme is an answer to the previous extreme. Reason of these extreme views was the reaction for extremely inappropriate animal abuse that was realized in various scientific experiments. Only in the UK in 80s, at least 4.5 million animals were killed owing these experiments. (Weber 1999, 161) Therefore, according to Singer to the preference of consumption and hobbies in eating animal meat and its cheap selling must not be given priority before the suffering and pain which these animals must experience for this human enjoyment. (Schlegel 2007, 422)

The highest extreme of this theory was Singer's provoking argument that handicapped children gain the right for life only several weeks after their birth when it is possible to surely presuppose their further development. As a result of this theory during these weeks, for example: parents of hemophilia child could have the right to abort the child, or even to kill, »exchange« for another healthy individual even if they just do not want to exceed the number of their wanted children, or alternatively, just want to make place for healthy children to the exclusion of a child with disabilities. According to the theory also by this they could adequately contribute to the final total amount of happiness. (Schockenhoff 1993, 46; 2009, 209; Singer 1984, 168; 183–4)

Killing such a man can be according to Singer compared with breaking the stone, because such an entity cannot get preference because it misses the ability to sentiment. (Schlegel 2007, 421) Also, abortion and *infanticidium* (thus ending the child's life through own parents) are *prima facie* morally equally considerable.

Head of the Institute of Medical Ethics at the 3rd Medical Faculty of Charles University, Marek Orko Vácha argues commenting on such speciesism by note that according to this theory, if you stood up for severely mentally disabled child at the expense of a dog (or chimpanzee – authors note), you would be a racist, who favors one creature at expense of the other species only on the basis of species competence. (Nezbeda and Uhlíř 2010)

Schockenhoff adds that subtle variations of this advocacy strategy are based on the fact that the human individual owns himself various values depending on how he is happy or successful, or how long and fruitful life is waiting for him. His moral evaluation also depends on the degree of his own satisfaction, on the intensity of his experience of happiness and on the expected duration of his existence. From this came his valuation in the society, which decides worthy would be the rejection to kill him. (Schockenhoff 1993, 209) Singer, however, according to Schockenhoff, before his arrival at Princeton University, substantially modified his own statements of this type in the book *Life and death*. (Singer 1998)

Schockenhoff continues, that is necessary to realize how such formulated ethics scares. If a human individual is not more human bearer of the inseparable rights, but it is solely assessed by the contribution to the total common good and a good future of society, we come to a helpless protest situation. But only until we illuminate the philosophical background which allows such a theory. (Schockenhoff 1993, 47) At the same time Schockenhoff adds that the same background also can be traced surprisingly well in many bioethics, based on completely opposite theories.

In the question whether human embryos, newborn or severely handicapped children own their inalienable right to life; there probably lies the fact that all ethics is based on deontological moral principle, such as: respect for autonomy or as a utilitarian consideration of interests with the goal of the highest possible escalation of luck does not play any role. Potentiality is not a novelty for Singer, and therefore, as an independent moral argument is irrelevant. This is, according to him shown on the potentiality in vitro. Thus, the experiments on human embryos, which don't have the ability of feelings are just the experiments realized for the benefit of persons who do have these skills. Singer takes temporarily negative opinion about cloning considering the risk of physical abnormalities. But still he requires global discussion and not the current political situation called *laissez-faire*. (Schlegel 2007, 154)

Singer, according to Schockenhoff, assigns the less importance to the respect of autonomy of human individual in confrontation with an utilitarian assessment of their »miserable« life or with the results of impact of their killing on others. Crucial assumptions, which may lead the human embryo or fetus, but also infants and young children in case of doubt to non-recognition of their right to life, remains in today's ethical theory of justification claiming these rights, still equally valid. Although it is not clearly justifiable, through already given moral principle, but it thanks for its acceptability, according to Schockenhoff, to far-reaching accep-

tances, which, even though intensive efforts *are not only denouncing and resisting of additional philosophical examination*. (Schockenhoff 1993, 53)

Right Singer's speciesism objection tries to patch this gap. Suggestive title of speciesism serves to such a goal, which has to condemn acts of exclusive status of man in space as racist prejudice against non-human world. Thus, it is still repeated the basic moral error of a partial set-aside, for which members of foreign nations or ethnic minorities in their own country are victims. Such speciesism is considered as an extension of racism and sexism, which extends the arrogance of white people and their dominion over the female tribe and non-human world. This vision requires the solution of non-discrimination theory, which changes a person's attitude to non-human world and it forces him to say goodbye to the illusion of his strengths and all clear forms of nature will recognize principally equally. Belonging to the human race (*homo sapiens*) is therefore not in any way the recognition of specific life chances of people (Singer 1982, 26), but Singer sees it in the freedom which needs to be given to animals as a continuation of the liberation process from racism and sexism, which started by the French revolution. Speciesism defends its completion made on the inhuman beings. (Schockenhoff 1993, 578)

This basic argument of nature philosophy inflames even more when we understand human persons as *the actual existence of empirically determined concept of personality*. This understanding of person follows that the recognition of the right to life, it is not affiliation to certain biological species, but the degree of consciousness, using of mind and ability to plan the future reached through the certain living species is only relevant. (Singer 1998, 135) Thus, for Singer the killing monkeys is much more serious transgression than the killing severely mentally handicapped person whom according to the following criteria we must take away the status of person. The practical implications of such theories subsequently lead to an improper procedure, which rejects all attempts at higher developed mammals, and vice versa they recognize the rights to carry out the experiments in some way disturbed man, irresponsible young children or mentally disabled people. (76) In these arguments, however, Sýkora does not mention and he speaks only about non-recognizing the word murder for the targeted killing healthy of an adult chimpanzee. (Sýkora 2008, 806)

Even in our country especially in the Czech translation known Helmut Weber, emeritus professor of moral theology from Trier, as well as Schockenhoff, vehemently protests against Singer's understanding of person and man. According to Weber there is an important objection that this way it affects the image of man, against all human reason, for the actual possession of mental faculties. (Weber 1999, 97) Weber adds that, according to, an almost unanimous view in philosophy as well as in theology, an actual possession of reason (mind) and freedom does not create the person but just the ability (talent) to have this possession. Otherwise those sleeping and people who have lost their consciousness, could not even be called man (this is getting somewhere to the Volek and Damschen-Schönecker argument). Weber acknowledges that the human race is both a person and man

through membership to the human race. At the same time the author adds that, according to Günter Virt from Vienna, Singer confuses person and personality. (Weber 1999, 97; Virt 1991, 95; 102)

Another well-known in Czech-Slovak area is an Austrian moralist Peschke. He adds: »Maybe for Peter Singer a healthy adult man has a greater value than the mouse (moreover, it is possible to add to his considerations – an education and study of individual person cost much more) certainly ›there exist some inhumane living beings, whose life is by all measures more valuable than the life of some people.« Singer does not want to make life of pigs and dogs so sacred that it will be impossible to redeem from the hopeless misery. However, this is also related to people in the same condition. It means that, according to the principle, substantially the same value of animal and human life can or may for both take a life for the same reason, for example: in case of heavy imbecility or senility. It is logical, but extremely grave consequence of the denial of a substantial difference between man and animal. These are open doors to very dangerous calculus: where should the boundary be between human life worthy and unworthy of living?« (Peschke 1999, 661)

On the following arguments Schockenhoff reacts by saying that if a person means to define that the various forms of life are independent to which family they belong, this option is undeniable. Thus, if this premise is true, we can consider a being of person and man as two human qualities, which do in fact agree in the majority of cases, but which we do not have to necessarily consider as simultaneously presentable, we will not have any convincing argument against Singer's shocking thesis.

Being a person in a moral sense and a man in a biological sense, on the basis of looking at man in such a way, will mean that two independent variables, which, in a random, common, intersecting area show on both sides the overlapping boundary areas, will now be defined in their mutual relations as a provocative equation: not all persons are people and not all people are persons. (Schockenhoff 1993, 49; Engelhardt 1986, 107) This is the result of Singer's thought process, who unlike the classic concept of people (»all people are born of the people«), in which being human and a person merges in identity, defines a new theory which can be by science called separation of being human and being of person.

Schockenhoff recognizes that the first argument of this equation is not new at all. Historical investigation of philosophical dictionary shows that we already had known the notion of person from the ancient art of acting (as a »task-role« or »mask«). But the Christian theological understanding of ideas about God and the Christological confession, have given to this concept further momentum. His transfer to the anthropology provides secondary access for the first time in which we can see the important contribution of Christian faith to the philosophical clarification of human being. Nevertheless neither demonstration of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the speculative theory of Christian dogma about angels, both presupposing the existence of persons who are not of the human race, prove gro-

undebatable conclusion that follows from the second part of the equation: *that to some members of the human race who, like we have a human image, is denied the right to be a person.*

Would it be possible to deny the right to be a person to human embryos, newborns, children, mentally handicapped patients or patients in coma in an irreversible state of loss of consciousness, and thus exempt them from the protection zone of human dignity? According to Schockenhoff this is the main question of bioethics affected by Singer, which necessarily necessitates a clarification of its natural-implicit philosophical assumptions. (49)

Professor of philosophy Armin G. Wildfeuer from Cologne forfeits in the face of Singer's arguments to skepticism, and he intends to address the question whether it is really possible to define what the person is by not arbitrary and value-neutral way with the help of description. Experimental definition of the moral-practical concept, as a person or personal dignity, in such arguments put forward gets into believing that it is based on a theoretical means of reason and only secondly receive moral relevance. It has been previously expressed either in one of the famous counterargument against the Hume's is-ought problem said G.E Moore in 1903. (96)⁴

The final proof of the anti-border recognition of being the person may, according to Weber sound like this: »This argument (that a person is not constituted by the existence, but by the ability of understanding and consciousness) stands outside the general acceptance and in the basis it is superfluous for any further discussion. Nevertheless there can be the decisive objection to mention that it is not the actual possession of any ability which decides who is the person, but a biological belonging to humankind. Any other determining a person leads to the boundless wickedness.«⁵

Schockenhoff again stresses that there are many objections against the respect of human dignity in today's bioethical debate saying that it is just an empty formula, which can be filled up by any philosophical content and therefore cannot be entitled to have any general connection. As well as Peter Singer, also the philosopher of law, Norbert Hörster shows the proximity of the ideas of human dignity to the Jewish-Christian tradition. Both see in this concept only hidden Christian doctrine of man as God's image, which gives a special quasi legitimacy to the Christian image of man.

To this objection we mention the view of the Director of the Vienna Institute IMABE, which has been trying to establish a dialogue between medicine and ethics for 21 years, Prof. Johannes Bonelli and who evaluates Vatican instruction of Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Dignitas Personae* as an important contribution to the culture of life. On the philosophical-anthropological perspective of human dignity, therefore the position of the inviolability of human dignity, which

⁴ »Of the many phrases about being clean is not possible to draw any sentence of duties, unless previously unnoticed here put the sentence on the obligation. It is a criticism of 'naturalistic fallacy'.« (Moore 1970) This argument refers to invalid direct conclusion.

⁵ This reasoning indicates Weber in arguing against euthanasia in general. (Weber 1999, 221)

is received by each individual as a person from the moment of fertilization to death, says: »Often such argument glues as religiously motivated and thus disqualified for civil debate. This criticism is all but not real and honest«. (Bonelli 2010)

Schockenhoff concluded that all the socio-philosophical and bioethical debate show us that the knowledge about unaccountability with human life is not to secure the heritage of the human ethos, but in every age must be regained and maintained. Social Darwinism and utilitarianism of the 20th century which has just finished, deny arguments that everyone is by himself an inalienable value. Singer's other similar arguments for euthanasia propaganda on social-Darwinist background in the interwar period are carefully analyzed by Schockenhoff in one of his previous works. (Schockenhoff 1991, 62–6)

Wildfeuer adds that such discussions about a person and human dignity as are presented by the modern utilitarians point to a particularly disturbing dependence of ethics on the current status of science, which raises unfounded impression that there »must be made permanent amputation for not to miss 'ethically' compliance with technological advances.«⁶

Wildfeuer further notes that the issue of human dignity and being a person is not primarily theoretical, but practical problems, therefore, is less a question of metaphysics than of ethics. Prejudice of speciesism forgets why in the traditional non-utilitarian ethics we attribute the person or human dignity to all members of the human race, because, as correctly noted already J. Simon and W. Kluxen between 1986 and 1989 »not belonging to the biological family gives rise to a moral recognition, but this belonging is criterion which we must recognize if we want to remain in accordance with universality of respect for human beings, similarly as we don't make moral recognition of a subject depending on certain qualifications, but assigning them as man to man«. (Schockenhoff 2005, 92)

It remains problematic owing the fact that the consequences of such treatment of human life resulting from the current-made quality of a person are contrary to the fundamental moral experience. Explanation and not refutation is not a critical problem of philosophical ethics. Submitted speciesism theory, especially in their utilitarian variant, based on assumptions that are at least philosophically problematic and therefore recall for caution in handling issues with life and death.

Ludger Honnefelder, a philosophy professor from Bonn, says: »If you do not consider a person the essence (substance), but only a bundle of attributes, as it happens from Hume to Singer, we must consider their existence as dependent on the timeliness of these attributes and the potentiality development of such attributes must only be regarded as fiction. Nothing, however, compels us to hold such metaphysics. Let the identity in time be manifested in psychological continuity, but still permit also good reasons to confirm this identity in continuity as Lock and his followers think. The potentiality is not the evidence for the personality only if we assume is in actual continuity and nothing else«. (92; Honnefelder 1994)

⁶ Thus presents Wildfeuer's view Jean-Pierre Wils, professor of ethics and philosophy from Nijmegen, Holland. (Wildfeuer 1992, 201–11)

As Wildfeuer again adds doubt if expected basis of ethics which seems appropriate as the solution of border issues of life and death, can be really achieved with the help of a qualitative concept of a person and through the introduction or preference of some allegedly proven characteristics of man, since the basic concepts and differences have been based on multiple thetically (selfdefining, self-governing, dogmatically) and they miss conclusive argumentative evidence. Altogether, there is a reassessment of the ethical perspective, but only if it is valid that the moral subject is determined for a given value in relation to each other, but the values themselves are identified by their aims or goods in relation to assessing the moral entity. Strategy of distinction between man and the person is, moreover, correctly labeled as »uneconomic«, whereas »personality is a sufficient criterion for the protection of life, but the lack of personality is not sufficient reason to repeal the commandment – thou shall not kill«.

With Kant's theory of persons as a reason in themselves, Wildfeuer concludes that the belonging to the species *Homo sapiens* (the genus finite rational beings), is not the reason for the recognition and attribution of personality, but only an indication for empirical methods of non-researchable place of unconditional recognition. For this reason, the logic of reasoning proceeds as follows: embryos, fetuses, patients in coma and disability of any kind are necessarily included in the concept of person. (Schockenhoff 2005, 94)

On December 13, 2008 Schockenhoff, during his lecture *Ausverkauf der Menschenwürde?* (Sale of human dignity?), at the symposium *Leben am Prüfstand* (Life in test) at the Theological faculty of the University of Karl Franzens in Graz, on the question whether one can distinguish between man and the person within the meaning of J. Locke answered, that in any way. Otherwise, a university professor was more a person than a manual worker. In his re-processed book »Ethics of life« he tries to criticize the personal status of animals given by Singer. In this context, the note of Jürgen Koller sounds interesting: he adds that despite Singer's attempts to reject so-called »speciestic« special position of man in a nature, he uses exclusively human characteristics to determine the concept of persons to animals and he does it without any critical verification mainly on the cognitive-theoretical possibility and admissibility of such extrapolation. (Koller 2008, 343; Schockenhoff 1991, 565.)

To Sýkora's rejection of moral appeal from Volek to protect every human zygote, we could go back in another contribution and from the moral and philosophical perspective. Protecting each zygote even from that which the development of an embryo is evolutionary impossible is not only Volek's view, but also the opinion of most people who see life as sacred from its beginning to its end. From the beginning it needs to be reckoned with as a personal, individual life. (Weber 1999, 101) This philosophical direction has recently been called the ontological personalism and its most important argument is potentiality (»if there is something of which there may be a free adult being, then I have to behave as if it really was live creature«).⁷ At the same time it is also the unanimous opinion of the new instruc-

⁷ Vácha says: »For all parties would simply be good if the human fetus in the wombat one point the sat

tion *Dignitas personae* expressed also in the message of Pope Benedict XVI. during the celebration of World Peace Day, January 1, 2009.⁸

Also Sýkora's opinion that those cases in which we try to save a huge amount of zygotes, not nested in the uterus yet and which die, requires the other form of debate, this time more from the perspective of the natural moral law. Vácha answers the question: »How then looking at the possibility of using frozen embryos for scientific research?« Answers: »I think it cannot be destroyed or used for research. We do not know ethically clear solutions how to dispose with frozen embryos. It might finally actually be better to destroy them, because there is not the same end like the other end. This is exactly the argument of people working with embryonic stem cells: Indeed, we already have the germ, so why not use it for research? But the first fault was that the embryos were created at all. One precludes the other.« (Nezbeda and Uhlíř 2010)

3. What is a human zygote – biologic material, animal or Man?

Although we are not in a position to precisely prove whether the human zygote is a human being, a person, or a man (just because of ex. inability of making an agreement about the meaning of these terms), we are not at a disadvantage over those who also do not know with certainty the contrary and cannot prove that this organism is not human, person or human being.

The question is could (should?) be read as follows: If someone wants to make experiments on embryos and embryonic cells, is not him who should convince others and give proofs that they are not human? For whom is the burden of proof? Legal clarification on the consequences of actual qualitative concepts of a person requires such a response.

Positive attitude towards a human zygote or how Sýkora and Volek say, ethical care attitude appears to be less fatal and more meaningful. Although Sýkora sees this attitude as a whole tutiorism and a whole argumentation evaluates as tautological. (Sýkora 2006, 562–8) Maybe it is really a »far-reaching implications for scientific research on embryonic stem cells«. (Sýkora 2008, 804) All these moral concerns in negotiations is really bringing us to the conclusion that if we are not sure whether this is an evolving human being, or not, so we can act with full responsibility.

Singer's view on the concept of the human person after the birth of man, can be cited from his sources: »A being who is aware of herself as a distant entity with past and future ... Just being who you aware this is able to have desires in relation

down, wiped sweat from his forehead, began to think cognitive, felt pain and was capable of moral decisions. But it is all continuous.« On the ontological personalism again says: »here reflects in part the Christian philosophy an his concept of an immortal soul, which is inherent in man only, and thus catapulting him to a qualitatively higher planeth like an animals. When lime tree is undercut, will be chopped down and dies, or the dog dies so thus it ends. But not so for humans.« (Nezbeda and Uhlíř 2010)

⁸ Pope called the destruction of unborn children the elimination of the poorest.

to their own future ... If such a man without his consent take life as it is crossing its wishes with regard to the future. But if we kill a slug, or child day, so we wish not cross any kind such as snails, or newborns are not able to have such a desire ...» (Singer 1984, 109) Also one of his critics and followers continued in part: »Interest in the survival of such living entity that has an explicit desire to continue in your life.« (Hörster 2002, 74)

4. Conclusion

The problem of understanding the human person and the dignity of belonging is also extremely important to many philosophers and theologians from the ranks of the Catholic Church. The Proof of this is one of the main statements which resonated in public in autumn of 2010: »The embryo does not develop to the man, but as a man«. (Algermissen 2010) Schlegel called Singer's preferential utilitarianism »view from nowhere« (*Blick von der Nirgendwo*). This view, seen as a moral method for universality is already in substance logically problematic. Utilitarian focusing on the good to be useful makes it impossible to guarantee universal rights such as human rights and at the same time satisfying the descriptive or moral anachronism. Especially when misusing preferential utilitarianism, as well as any other theory, there is a danger that fundamental limits (such as ethos of human rights) will not be recognized, therefore, that in this calculation is everything possible. (Schlegel 2007, 423) Human rights law in a globalized world is gaining importance as a common consensus. (427)

In this chapter, we wanted to show views of many prominent European philosophers and theologians in assessing Singer's utilitarian speciesism. Without trying to guide mathematically our philosophical and ethical thinking, we came to the important understanding of the human interface itself. We got right to the same limit of philosophical thought that the conference »Religions – the threat, or hope for our society?«, on the occasion of 83rd Social week of France, signaled a philosopher, a moral theologian and member of the national consultative ethics committee of France, Professor Xavier Lacroix in his contribution »Religion and society in the face of science and ethical dilemmas.«, as a threshold at which we have no philosophical wonder does not help, he identified right to a true understanding of the importance of man. Only if we face up to the unknown, we can exceed the threshold of understanding of the meaning of man, concluded Lacroix. (Szaniszló 2009, 100–5)

With this chapter we have tried to highlight the continuing problem of assessing attitudes and respect for human life, in the sequence of Singer's ideas of preference utilitarianism and understanding of the human person. Of course we will try to continue to be open to different arguments because the world's scientific forums are before our Slovak Christian ethics and philosophers at least couple years (especially in discussions and analysis). It will also be emphasized enough, and incorporated the arguments of other philosophers and theologians (e.g. Marian Machinek from Olsztyn, Robert Spaemann from Munich, Alexander Fridrich

Lohner from Regensburg and especially Alexander Schlegel and others). In fact the game is nothing less than finding answers to questions about the meaning of human creation, the universe.

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