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Thinking along Integrative and Pluri-Perspective Lines

Integrative Bioethics as a Forward-Looking Approach

Abstract

The article discusses two basic concepts of integrative bioethics: firstly, what is meant by “pluri-perspectivity”, and secondly, in what sense it is “integrative”. Against this background, the question of possible weaknesses of integrative bioethics is also considered.

Keywords

integrative bioethics, pluri-perspectivity, integrative thinking, relativism

Integrative bioethics is about dealing, in innovative and orientation-providing ways, with those challenges that result from the multiple processes of life, particularly against the background of modern biotechnologies, so that a self-realisation of human existence may be achieved. Other than classical biomedical approaches, it also takes nonhuman life and nature into account. Integrative bioethics is about a happy life and about answering the challenges that come along with the process of life.

Integrative bioethics deals with the fact that usual patterns become unstable, that there are different answers to the question of what to do or not to do. Furthermore, it deals with the fact that certainties are non-existent, and that progress in the sciences results in more uncertainty, which requires ethical reflection.

Bioethics is not like an ancient, heavy book full of codes of conduct waiting to be applied. Rather, bioethical decision-making is about life itself, and it searches for validity and reason. Integrative bioethics assumes that bioethical issues cannot easily be dealt with by way of generally valid rules. Instead of presenting a catalogue or a basic framework, from which it might be possible to derive bioethical issues, integrative bioethics follows a different path. It considers its task to be able to react to morally challenging questions and conflicts and to reflect on these, in order to solve conflicts. Integrative bioethics is about working out norms for dealing with practical life.

Integrative bioethics works with the awareness that today’s bioethical issues have a global dimension, that sometimes the world seems to become a “village”, and that the various cultural conditions should be appropriately taken into consideration. Doing so, they strive for evading the Scylla and Charybdis of both a blind kind of universalism and a deaf kind of culturalism. What is also circumnavigated is an abstract theory on the one hand and sheer casuistry on the other.

Now, I would like use the twentieth anniversary of integrative bioethics as an opportunity to reflect on two key concepts of integrative bioethics. First, I would like to discuss what is meant by “pluri-perspectivity” (I). Second, I would like to ask what integrative bioethics claims to integrate and what the task of philosophy is in this context (II). Thirdly, I would like to have a short look at possible criticisms of integrative bioethics (III).

I. Integrative Bioethics as a Pluri-Perspective Approach

A parable from South Asia which also, with some variations, is found in the traditions of Jainism, Buddhism and Sufism, tells about a group of young men who are blind or live in complete darkness. A wise man leads them into a room where there is an elephant. Each of the men feels a different part of the animal: one feels the trunk, another one feels the tusks, yet another one feels the belly. These humans who are here in a dark tent and grasp one part each of the elephant perceive it in different respects. For each, the elephant is grasped under different aspects. What they perceive in each case is vague. Accordingly, they give very different answers to the question of what is to be encountered in this room. All participants are able to name correct aspects, indeed those which are in line with their respective experience in each case. Neither the various perceptions nor the respective method can be standardised.

Now, the wise man is not just standing in the tent without movement and unchanged. He is mobile and may approach both the elephant and each participant, or he may take a distance again. He assists the participants with their orientation in the dark room and also with their thinking, and is thus able to break up premature assumptions of certainty. The wise man is able to perceive the elephant from different angles. He is capable of organising and bringing together each way of perceiving it: *sapientis est ordinare*.

In some fashion, today’s scientists are in the same situation as the men in the old parable: inasmuch as the DNA of an elephant is decoded by help of modern biotechnological procedures, that its bone density is measured, that the metabolic processes within its brain can be displayed in colour on a screen: none of this, taken by itself, gives us an understanding of the elephant “as a whole”. What is required are different approaches, which will contribute to a better understanding of what an elephant is. He who carries out a chemical analysis, e. g. of the elephant’s blood or of its excretions, pursues a certain goal. He cannot also consider the economic significance of an elephant, for example, for a wildlife park. His chemical analyses also will not allow for reconstructing the economic aspect or any artistic dimension.¹

Bioethical issues, which concern death or life in the truest sense, should be about overcoming the particularisations of the disciplines. Such issues cannot be solved from just one, natural-scientific, point of view. Here the individual points of view reach their limits.

Apart from scientific knowledge, there are other kinds of knowledge which it would be wise to include. Thus, knowledge should not be restricted to scientific methods. Any anti-scientific attitude, on the other hand, which does not appreciate the achievements of the modern sciences and is only ready to perceive the bad aspects is as unhelpful as any scientific position which positively overestimates everything and has no appropriate awareness of the limitations of scientific insight. A bioethical way of reflecting must not be one-sided but should allow for different kinds of knowledge.

To avoid any orientation deficit, integrative bioethics attempts to extend the (academic) view. Different estimations and needs prioritizing different intelligibilities must be taken into consideration.² Accordingly, pluri-perspectivism is required. This means that beyond any subject-related particularisation a trans-disciplinary view should be attempted which appreciates and includes also non-academic voices and perspectives. In other words: integrative bioethics is not about a “top-down approach” according to which there are different rules or also academic positions which would be imposed on each respective, concrete bioethical issue or action situation. Rather, experiential knowledge from other fields, from other approaches and methods, should be taken up and contextualised. Man himself is multi-dimensional. He is a unity of different things, a body-soul unity. Insofar as he has both physical and spiritual dimensions, different approaches are important to understand him, his life and actions.

There is no doubt that integrative bioethics appreciates the works and insights from the field of the natural sciences. However, at the same time it includes other cultural interpretations of nature. For example, the fine arts or music may evoke a dimension of nature which, for reasons of systematics, is non-existent in the laboratory: such nature-aesthetic experiences may be of a cross-cultural nature. Also, the voice of literature should be heard: for example, stories and chants might give expression to ancient knowledge and potentials of meaning, normativity might indeed be culturally incarnated. Practical reason may be present in various cultural actions and pre-reflective ways of expression. Poetic approaches to nature may point out topical aspects and important connections. To put it in Nussbaum’s words:

“[N]arrative imagination is an essential preparation form of oral interaction. Habits of empathy and conjecture conduce to a certain type of citizenship and a certain form of community: one that cultivates a sympathetic responsiveness to another’s needs, and understands the way circumstances shape those needs, while respecting separateness and privacy.”³

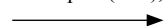
This may easily be illustrated by some examples: e. g., folk tales may raise our awareness of issues of animal ethics.⁴ What the world might look like from the point of view of other living beings, for example, is a question stimulated

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“It is obvious (or at least should be) that there is no simple, standardised and perfectly appropriate conceptual frame ‘for a description of the world’. [...] it is just a myth to believe that the ‘natural phenomena’ can only be understood by way of applying just one correct method of descriptive and explanatory conceptualisation. There is certainly no ‘ideal scientific language’ which is privileged when it comes to a description of reality. [...] Did we insist in a final standardisation of the sciences, we would thus succumb to the ‘myth of the divine point of view’.” – Nicholas Rescher, *Die Grenzen der Wissenschaft*, Reclam Verlag, Stuttgart 1985, p. 292 f.

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This is where the interwovenness of university and society becomes obvious, as well as, within the universities, an indispensable interplay of different disciplines.

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Martha C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity. A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge – London 2003, p. 90.

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For further reading in this context we may recommend a compilation of texts from Blumenberg’s literary remains which deal with lions: Hans Blumenberg, *Löwen*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt/M. 2001. The following booklet collects personal observations by Elias Canetti, philosophical considerations as well as fairy tales: Elias Canetti, *Über Tiere, mit einem Nachwort von B. Kronauer*, S. Fischer Verlag, München – Wien 2002. From a cultural and religion-historical perspective, the following anthology discusses issues of the man-animal relation and of keeping animals as they are to be found with the world religions: Dietmar Gottschnigg, Beatrix Müller-Kampel (eds.),



by some fairy tales of the Grimm brothers, as when boys turn into ravens or ravens turn into girls or a woman turns into a rosebush. We might consider the Grimm brothers' tale of the *Town Musicians of Bremen* from the 19th century. A donkey is old and unable to do his work anymore, which is why his owner considers getting rid of him. He runs away and decides to become a town musician. During his wanderings he meets a dog, a cat, and a rooster, who join him and who finally succeed by mastering several challenges and with defeating evil, personified by some bandits. The status of these animal fairy-tale characters is similar to that of the donkey: they are old and thus of no great use to their owners anymore. However, there are good reasons to suggest that the fates of these animals reflect the fates of the farm hands and maids of those days who have lost their working power. However, even when it comes to the animal characters, the question can be raised whether animals have a right to exist only if they can be exploited for human purposes. How do we treat them after they have lost their working power and are no longer capable of meeting human interests? And how could animal-man relations be successful?

Bach's Sonata D major BWV 963 or also Beethoven's so-called *Pastorale*, that is his sixth symphony F major op. 68, as well as works by Messiaen, who understood bird song to be a particular kind of music, might open up a musical access to the life of animals and the aesthetics of their song, which might stimulate our compassion and care. They might enable nature to speak. Issues of animal and nature protection do not only concern a specific discipline; a variety of different fields of society is challenged. Also, in the context of animal- and environment-ethical considerations it is helpful to also consider both social and economic aspects apart from ecologic dimensions. Political aspects must be taken into consideration, in addition to cultural factors and actors.

Integrative bioethics is not religious but is aware of the significance of the religious even in modern democratic societies; an attempt is made to include religious perspectives, to do justice to the complexity of modern ways of life. Religiosity has a deep influence on humans and is part of their lives. Religion may be understood to provide meaning to a fundamental kind of human experience.⁵ For example, religious practices may provide hints of how dealing with oneself and with others might be successful. Contrary to the social trend, that everything must run ever faster and more smoothly, here "other ways of relating to life"⁶ may be found, such as perspectives where it is not necessary to always accelerate life. Religious ways of life might also be insightful and helpful in view coping with contingency and questions of meaning.

Whereas in some West European countries religious ties are becoming less important, from a worldwide perspective religion is still one of the most important sources of human orientational knowledge. Thus, religion may appear as a way of perceiving individual freedom. Furthermore, by including religious-spiritual dimensions an important cross-cultural task is executed which has been neglected since Enlightenment. Given the challenges a complex, liberal community of rights is confronted with, pluri-perspectivism is appropriate for a modern knowledge society.

Each individual perspective has its own importance, and none may be reduced to itself. To illustrate this, may I ask you to once again remember the elephant of our parable? If e. g., a child sees an elephant it would like to ride, or if there is an artist who would like to paint it or who perhaps would like to imitate it

musically, by way of a symphony, or if it is considered in view of its metabolism or purely according to the monetary value it has for a wildlife park, all this makes a difference, although the elephant is and will remain the same. This one elephant allows for completely different perspectives, and it really demands to be discussed under multi-perspectival aspects. The perspectives we have addressed in our example – the social, the chemical, the aesthetic-artistic, as well as the economic – can be made compatible to each other. Also, they must not be reduced to a single perspective: the point of view of childhood education is different from that of the biochemist, from that of the artist and musician it is not possible to derive that of an animal rights activist or a child. The kind of action resulting in each case is tied to different incommensurable perspectives.

Pluri-perspectivism does not mean that all perspectives must be made congruent, come hell or high water. “Many perspectives as such do not *eo ipso* allow for thinking and dialogue”,⁷ as Borut Ošljaj remarks splendidly. Pluri-perspectivism, he says, must not be confused with “just a muddle of perspectives”.⁸ To achieve this, the different perspectives must be conciliated. Pluri-perspectivism does not mean some kind of “bad eternity”, it does not mean just the chaining together of different voices, but it is an intellectual performance for organising and structuring the different perspectives.⁹ Integrative efforts mean interpreting the single case within the context of the entirety of what is encountered. After all, it is not that one single act of insight allows for concluding on the entirety. An integrative way of proceeding must separate, classify, put together and keep together. Each individual way of interpreting is organised in one standardised way.

“The concept of Integrative Bioethics does not only mean that we have to include all relevant positions. It also means that we have to exclude positions that cannot contribute to the ideas of Integrative Bioethics.”¹⁰

Die Katze des Propheten. Kulturen der Tierhaltung, Passagen Verlag, Wien 2001.

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Whitehead gives an appropriate description: “Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, and yet waiting to be realized; something which is a remote possibility, and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all the passes, and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate ideal, and the hopeless quest.” – Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, The Macmillan Company, New York 1925, p. 268.

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Hartmut Rosa, *Demokratie braucht Religion. Über ein eigentümliches Resonanzverhältnis. Mit einem Vorwort von Gregor Gysi*, Kösel-Verlag, München 2022, p. 27.

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Borut Ošljaj, “Integrative Bioethik und Pluri-perspektivismus. Zur bioethischen Hinter-

fragung der Postmoderne”, in: Walter Schweidler, Borut Ošljaj, *Natürliche Verantwortung. Beiträge zur integrativen Bioethik*, Academia Verlag, Sankt Augustin 2014, pp. 123–134, here p. 125.

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Ibid.

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See Günther Pöltner, “Pluralität als Herausforderung einer Integrativen Bioethik”, in: Ante Čović (ed.), *Integrative Bioethik und Pluriperspektivismus / Integrative Bioethics and Pluri-Perspectivism. Beiträge des 4. Südosteuropäischen Bioethik-Forums, Opatija 2008 / Proceedings of the 4th Southeast European Bioethics Forum, Opatija 2008*, Academia Verlag, Sankt Augustin 2010, pp. 17–24, here p. 18.

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Jos Schaefer-Rolffs, “Integrative Bioethics as a Chance”, *Synthesis philosophica* 27 (2012) 1, pp. 107–122, here p. 113–114.

As I understand it, among the circle of those locating their studies within the context of integrative bioethics there is no unanimity concerning the status to be attributed to philosophy in this context. For example, there is the position that it is one equally valid voice among others. Thus, according to this position it does not have any particular function which would make it stand out from other disciplines. On the other hand, other representatives of integrative bioethics emphasize the particular task of philosophy, insofar as it is philosophy, they say, which “allows for weighing and determining in which ways the other perspectives are related to each other”.¹¹ According to this position, it has the task to provide orientation for reason-giving.

I would like to argue in favour of the latter position: philosophy is not just an addition to other views. It is more fundamental, it may make itself a topic, and it is also capable of taking a distance from itself.

It is philosophy which asks questions and, by way of dialogues with others, leads to insight. With its help, by way of Socratic “midwifery”, insight may be born. It helps creating important aspects which are present yet hidden in the morality discourse. Similar to the wise man of the parable, it is the task of philosophy to encompass the individual scientific perspectives, to spell out each respective precondition and presupposition, and finally to integrate them to form one unity. Also, it is not merely descriptive and empirical like the different men of the parable or the different modern disciplines of science. If it finally brings order to a dark room, this cannot happen while ignoring appropriate expertise. Orientational knowledge without expertise is hardly worth its salt and empty; on the other hand, expertise without orientational knowledge is blind.¹²

It is the task of philosophy to integrate different perspectives. We may as well say that it merges the different views in itself: it becomes obvious that it is indeed this or that point of view. And philosophy maintains the perspectives and takes them to another level. In this context, the insight that the whole is more than the sum of its parts is an insight of integrative bioethics that goes as far back as to Aristotle.¹³ Furthermore, at the level of totalities, qualities may develop which did not exist this way at the level of single aspects and which could furthermore not be foreseen.

Philosophy helps with disambiguation as well as with clarifying the criteria of different challenges. It contributes to understanding whether a certain argument or position is coherent. One important task of philosophy consists of exposing limited views and making clear where a position overreaches its claim when presenting an explanation. For example, let us consider a claim from the neurosciences that they alone are capable of explaining what man is. Like all other positive sciences, they “only” analyse one clearly determined section. In this sense, even Aristotle in *Metaphysics* IV 1, 1003 a says that positive science “delimits a part of what has being for itself and [analyses] the rules resulting for it”. It is this delimitation of research fields that leads to success. This process cannot be open to all possible spheres of life, this would make all things unmanageable. Now, it would be a mistake to negate all that has been overlooked for methodical reasons. Thus, the correcting and integrative power of philosophy is demanded precisely when individual views come to overstated claims which are not appropriate. Philosophy helps by pointing to exaggerated interpretations by rejecting such. The goal is about presenting the whole, and representing open-mindedness towards the different voices.

It is the task of integrative thinking to point out manifold (life) experiences. Insofar as this task can not be fulfilled by any individual discipline, philosophy is demanded here. For a naturalist, only a third-person-perspective could claim validity. Questions about the meaning of suffering and pain, questions about what makes life a good life and enlightens it, do not exist there. Philosophy keeps the view of a common lifeworld open.

II. Integrative Thinking

To do justice to the wealth of life, other disciplines have also developed integrative approaches, such as the considerations on integrative economic ethics in Peter Ulrich and Peter Koslowski, who attempt to point out to perspectives beyond approaches of economic dualism and economic monism;¹⁴ however we should also be reminded of the model of integrative ethics in Hans Krämer,

¹¹ G. Pöltner, “Pluralität als Herausforderung einer Integrativen Bioethik”, p. 18.

¹² On this see also: Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B75.

¹³ See Aristoteles, *Metaphysics* VII 17, 1041 b.

¹⁴ See Peter Ulrich, *Integrative Wirtschaftsethik. Grundlagen einer lebensdienlichen Ökonomie*, Haupt Verlag, Bern – Stuttgart – Wien 1997; Peter Koslowski, *Prinzipien der Ethischen Ökonomie. Grundlegung der Wirtschaftsethik und der auf die Ökonomie bezogenen Ethik*, J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1988. Ulrich argues against simply increasing economic efficiency and in favour of a “life-practical comprehensiveness of the orientational sense” (Peter Ulrich, *Die zivilisierte Marktwirtschaft. Eine wirtschaftsethische Orientierung*, Haupt Verlag, Bern – Stuttgart – Wien 2020, p. 21). For this, he employs both Aristotelian and Kantian philosophy, which he attempts to combine: “The question of meaning is congruent with the Aristotelian perspective of teleological ethic (the doctrine of the desirable, of the good life). It refers our economic system to the value orientation of a cultural life design we are familiar with and believe to be desirable. It provides the orientational horizon for those possibilities of life we believe to be reasonable and desirable. The ‘will to meaning’ [...] is based on man’s particular capability to be the reasonable subject of autonomous acting (instead of just being subject to natural laws, instincts and drives). The cultivated unfolding of the quality of being a subject makes man’s dignity and his successful, meaningful and thus happy life. [...] The issue of legitimation results from Kant’s dimension of deontological ethic

(the doctrine of the moral rights and duties, that is from the inter-human responsibilities, in particular from a just coexistence). It makes both our economic system and the actions of the individual subject to the *political-ethical guideline* of a well-ordered society of free and equal citizens.” (Ibid., p. 29). According to Koslowski, it is about maintaining an environment which is as intact as possible and also about increasing the quality and opportunities of the lives of humans. Accordingly, a Homo faber and Homo oeconomicus mentality of striving for technological and economic gain must be extended to become a comprehensive way of understanding both technological and economic processes. “This development does not mean that progress comes to an end but that another and inclusive concept of progress must be found which takes the culture of economy as well as the anthropological grounding of science and technology more into account, which understands economy and technology themselves as culture.” (Peter Koslowski, *Die Kulturen der Welt als Experimente richtigen Lebens. Entwurf für eine Weltausstellung*, Passagen Verlag, Wien 1990, p. 14.) And he argues furthermore: “The idea of the dissolution of the boundaries of the power of man [...] must be replaced by the guiding principle of the balancing of limitation and the dissolution of boundaries, by a theory of growth under conditions of limited natural and intellectual resources. [...] The human self as well as the human culture have a desire for the dissolution of boundaries, for freedom and expansion as well as a desire for limitation, organisation and contraction. The organism is determined by limited outside and inside growth, not by boundless expansion. Organic growth must serve as the model of economic growth. Organic growth is outside and inside growth and thus remains to be possible for the individual and for society, even under conditions of limited resources.” (Ibid., p. 25.)

who attempts to extend a duty ethics approach by the perspective of an ethics of the pursuit of happiness.¹⁵ Use of the term ‘integrative’ indicates integrativity highlighting this particular concern. In this context, we may speak of integrativity in more than one sense. Here we are going to keep the following meanings separate from each other:

1. Integrative bioethics combines *normative* and *descriptive* aspects, to do justice to the complexity of reality. Accordingly, on the one hand it asks the question of which norms shall be accepted. On the other hand, it rests on the analysis of how humans act, it analyses speech and ways of arguing. The separation of different philosophical domains can be undermined by integrative bioethics.
2. What is intended is that *different kinds of knowledge and possibilities of achieving knowledge* are taken into account. These are not just listed but are kept in constructive tension and are related to each other in view of a successful practice.¹⁶
3. This means that *different dimensions of the meaning of life* are included in one’s considerations. Limits of feasibility are intended to be implemented into one’s own rhythm of life.
4. Apart from statements from the *third-person-perspective*, the *internal perspective of the living* is taken into account, in order to understand life. Consciousness, self-consciousness and liberty, which appear only at higher levels of life, are accounted for in distinction from darker and brighter pre-stages of these phenomena in the history of life. Thus, while starting out from the more complex structures, simpler ones are taken into account and explained.
5. Contrary to various reductionisms, the approach of integrative bioethics is about constructing an *unity* and then considering bioethical issues under this horizon. Among their tasks are included: creating a reasonable interplay of moral feelings, judgements covering descriptive, predicative and prescriptive assumptions, as well as personal experience. To understand current challenges, integrative bioethics also reaches back to the tradition of philosophy, in order to combine judgements and experiences from different times and cultures. The whole range of human experience should be included. And it is integrative inasmuch as animal and plant life is taken into account to the same extent.
6. One basic type of bioethical project focuses –generally– on identifying norms that determine living. The central guideline of this type of bioethics may be (a) individual liberty; however, it may also be (b) utilitarian, the focus being on the greatest efficiency of means when it comes to the living. Finally, it may also appear (c) in deliberative ways, and it may refer particularly to the opportunities and risks of the overall-societal context. For another type of bioethics not the self-preservation of subjectivity is in the fore, but the focus is rather on nature, into which man is himself embedded and which is both the foundation and the limit of his actions. There, the integral nature of life is particularly emphasized.¹⁷ – Integrative bioethics is integrative insofar as it does justice to both a *grammar of the living* and a *grammar of freedom*, i.e. it does not simply prefer one of these two dimensions when it comes to bioethical matters, as is typical for several other bioethical positions. Nature and life are discussed as the foundation and precondition for freedom and reason, reason and freedom are focused on emphasizing the reality of life.

7. It is integrative insofar as it includes both *individuals* and *entire systems* (eco-system, species, society) into its considerations and attributes an intrinsic value to them. In this fashion, as one single linguistic sign is part of a system of signs, or an organ is part of an organismic whole, *bioethical issues must be understood from their relations*. Integrative bioethics has the task to combine the individual's liberty and pursuit of self-fulfilment and the individual's responsibility and obligation towards others. In this context, arguments must be weighed which sufficiently take man's connections to community and his relation to nature into account. There is the attempt to link the needs of the individual and the welfare of the community, both in the present and the future.

III. What, however, Is Not Meant by Pluri-Perspective Thinking

Finally, in a third step I would like to briefly address possible criticism of the approach and objectives of integrative bioethics. Speaking of pluri-perspectivism in the sense of integrative bioethics does not mean, as might be assumed, supporting a kind of relativism according to which all positions and perspectives are of equal value. Other than relativistic positions, integrative bioethics wants to discuss reasonable criteria for values. Apart from dogmatic scepticism, it assumes that it is very possible to contribute positively to this problem area and to consider it reasonably. Insofar as it attempts to provide

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See Hans Krämer, *Integrative Ethik*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt/M. 2018; Hans Krämer, "Integrative Ethik", in: Joachim Schummer (ed.), *Glück und Ethik*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 1998, pp. 93–107. Also helpful in this respect, from a both (concept-)historical and systematic point of view: Martin Endreß (ed.), *Zur Grundlegung einer integrativen Ethik. Für Hans Krämer*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt/M. 1995. The considerations presented by Krämer are innovative. Ethics before Kant, he says, were most of all ethics of happiness and desire, whereas after Kant ethics were understood to be ethics of duties and obligation. Krämer pursues the question of how these days, given a variety of possible ways of life and starting out from a differentiated grounding in anthropology, duty ethics might be extended by a doctrine of the art of life/happiness ethics. Both types of ethics, he states, are equal, complementary, and cannot be reduced to each other. The following longer quotation summarises his programme very well: it is, he says, primarily "about re-establishing and contemporarily renewing the type of desire, self- and happiness ethics, however not without and also not in contradiction to moral philosophy, but as a necessary complement, pendant. [...] from this there results a mutual problem stimulation and self-increasing of understanding one's self in view of each respective partiality and need for complement. [...] in this context there may be casuistry and, in cases of conflict,

there may happen a discourse between those advocating the way of life and morality who, like advocates in a legal dispute, present pro and con arguments, present their points of view and claims to validity by way of pleading and apologies. Practical decision-making is at first with the concerned himself and his two conflicting kinds of conscience (the moral and the desire-ethical conscience), in the final analysis, however, it is with society by its concentric graduation according to overarching horizons of judgement." (H. Krämer, *Integrative Ethik*, p. 122 f.) Krämer also addresses bioethical issues. However, unfortunately his understanding of nature remains inexpressive, insofar as it is considered primarily as providing man's sphere of action according to his needs.

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"Bioethics is *integrative* because it does not simply add up the various substantiated perspectives but attempt to reasonably relate them to each other and in this sense combine a plurality of relevant perspectives." – G. Pöltner, "Pluralität als Herausforderung einer Integrativen Bioethik", p. 17.

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On this see also: Thomas Sören Hoffmann, "Integrative Bioethik", in: Michael Fuchs, Max Gottschlich (eds.), *Ansätze der Bioethik*, Verlag Karl Alber, Freiburg – München 2019, pp. 161–191.

an adequate orientation, it asks what might function as a guideline for good practice. Thus, integrative bioethics is about creating a structured hierarchy of estimations, attempts and views. These are taken up, related to each other, weighed against each other. This includes the idea of human dignity, which is fundamental for integrative bioethics, so that all positions that intend to pursue all technological possibilities without adequate ethical consideration are ruled out of order.

Conclusion

Integrative bioethics is not just purely theoretical, but real-life praxis. What belongs to life must be included into all considerations. To this extent its concern for reality argues for it. It is open to questions and is capable of recovering treasures from the philosophical tradition without becoming entangled in traditional systematic preferences. Its arguments do not ignore life-world phenomena and actual problems. What speaks in its favour is both its methodological openness and its broad topical range, in particular in view of including and reflecting on life in all its forms. Integrative bioethics is about how it might be possible to live a successful life in liberty.

There will not be any lack of tasks for integrative bioethics. On the contrary: given the extension of biotechnological options, the question of how we are supposed to act and how we are supposed to treat the living become rather more than less. Further normative demands will come. Also, the interplay of technological innovation with humans, other life forms and the environment will have to be considered. In this sense, there is no need for integrative bioethics to worry about its own future. Integrative bioethics can and should be further unfolded. In this sense, I love saying: *ad multos annos!*

Marcus Knaup

Razmišljanje duž integrativne i pluriperspektivne linije

Integrativna bioetika kao dalekosežni pristup

Sažetak

U članku se raspravlja o dvama ključnim konceptima integrativne bioetike: prvo, što se misli pod »pluriperspektivnošću«, te drugo, u kojem je smislu ona »integrativna«. Na ovoj se podlozi razmatra i pitanje mogućih slabosti integrativne bioetike.

Ključne riječi

integrativna bioetika, pluriperspektivnost, integrativno mišljenje, relativizam

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Integrativ und pluriperspektivisch denken

Integrative Bioethik als weitreichender Ansatz

Zusammenfassung

Der Artikel erörtert zwei Grundbegriffe der Integrativen Bioethik, nämlich erstens, was mit „Pluriperspektivität“ gemeint ist, und zweitens, in welchem Sinne sie „integrativ“ ist.

Vor diesem Hintergrund wird schließlich auch die Frage nach möglichen Schwächen der Integrativen Bioethik aufgegriffen.

Schlüsselwörter

Integrative Bioethik, Pluriperspektivität, integratives Denken, Relativismus

Marcus Knaup

Penser selon une ligne intégrative et pluriperspective

La bioéthique intégrative comme approche prospective

Résumé

L'article discute de deux concepts fondamentaux de la bioéthique intégrative : premièrement, ce que l'on entend par « pluriperspectivité », et deuxièmement, en quoi est-elle « intégrative ». Dans ce contexte, la question des éventuelles faiblesses de la bioéthique intégrative est également soulevée.

Mots-clés

Bioéthique intégrative, pluriperspectivité, pensée intégrative, relativisme