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## Summary

### **"Person in Face of a Bioethical Dilemma. Theistic Existentialist Perspective"**

The subject of my doctoral dissertation is the situation of a person who faced a bioethical dilemma. It is a consideration based on the perspective of theistic existentialism, in particular three philosophers: Karl Jaspers, Viktor Frankl and Gabriel Marcel. The aim of this doctoral thesis is to reflect on how the thought of this philosophical current can contribute to a deeper understanding of the situation of a person who has to resolve a bioethical dilemma. It is also an attempt to answer the question: What are the implications of the ethics proposed by theistic existentialists for bioethics?

I used the following methods in my dissertation: a report and analysis of the views of theistic existentialists, an analysis of bioethical cases, a comparative analysis of ideas and philosophical and ethical positions, a phenomenological description of the bioethical situations of the cited cases and a synthesis. I used 140 bibliographic sources, including source texts of representatives of theistic existentialism, literature mentioning bioethical cases, scientific monographs, various articles collected in anthologies and published in magazines, as well as Internet sources.

The doctoral thesis consists of three parts. In the first chapter I analyze the existential thought of Jaspers, Frankl and Marcel. I also describe such existential categories as: existence and the meaning of life, freedom and transcendence, suffering and hope. Next, I present the concept of a person proposed by theistic existentialists. The last part of the first chapter highlights the "traces" of ethical thinking in their philosophy.

The second chapter is an analysis of selected bioethical cases in the field of bioethics of the beginning of life, its duration and bioethics of the end of human life. The dilemmas of particular people presented in this part of the dissertation concern the following issues: genetic counseling, in vitro fertilization, selective abortion, designing babies, organ donation, rehabilitation, assisted suicide, euthanasia and futile medical care. Each case is provided with a description, bioethical commentary and summary.

The third chapter is the culmination of the dissertation. It is – basing on the analysis of the theistic existentialists' thoughts and description of selected bioethical dilemmas of modern man – an attempt to respond to the issues posed in the introduction. How the adopted life goals and experiencing the meaning of life, suffering and death influence the process of solving the bioethical dilemma and making the final decision? What is the role of freedom, responsibility and values in bioethics? Can we talk about a certain pool of bioethical dilemmas that cannot be

solved within themselves, because a broader perspective is necessary, referring not only to a specific vision of a person, but also to the meaning of life, values and worldview?

In the conclusions of my doctoral thesis, I summarize in thirteen points the concept of the person emerging from the thoughts of Karl Jaspers, Viktor Frankl and Gabriel Marcel. The vision of a person proposed by theistic existentialists is holistic (it includes biological, psychological and spiritual dimensions). Taking into account existentialist ethics in bioethics and the situation of a person in face of a bioethical dilemma implies interesting conclusions. Firstly, the experience of suffering in bioethical matters is a call to discover its existential meaning. In this sense, accepting it with the help of will and with even minimal consciousness is an ethical act. Secondly, the person who is the "deciding" being is called to give meaning to his or her bioethical situation. Taking into account the meaning of life and death in the process of experiencing a dilemma may influence the final way of resolving it, which will be individual in each case. Thirdly, theistic existentialists' understanding of freedom as being a gift to others (ethics of encounter, Marcel) and freedom from drives (Frankl) implies the need to abandon reductionist visions of the person. This experience of freedom causes responsibility, which is a moral obligation and a normative criterion of act. At the end of my doctoral thesis, I emphasize a postulate to expand the understanding of bioethics – from a narrow meaning (as establishing only norms of conduct) to one that refers to a deeper, holistic understanding of a person and also to his existential experience of "always being in a situation". Such a vision allows us to understand a person in a wider sense, "freeing" him from schematic theoretical concepts. Existentialist ethics does not create a separate ethical system. Therefore, the existentialist approach in bioethics may play a supporting (not conclusive) role. The developed concept of the person and the postulate of his or her irreducibility can undoubtedly be an inspiration for bioethicists.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. G. M.' or similar, written in a cursive style.