

rechts- und sozialetische Ebene» (222). Schliesslich widmen sich die Beiträge im letzten Abschnitt dem Arzt-Patient-Verhältnis und dem Selbstverständnis der Heilberufe. Kommunikationstheoretische und professionssoziologische Reflexionen, die um Fragen der Asymmetrie, der Macht und der Nichtdirektivität der Beratung kreisen, schliessen den Band ab. Die gut lesbaren und wissenschaftlich fundierten Beiträge stecken einen Horizont ab, der gerade die in der klinischen Ethik Tätigen unterstützen kann, ihr eigenes Wirken in einem grösseren Rahmen zu reflektieren.

Settimio Monteverde, Zürich

**Georg Pfleiderer, Gabriela Brahier,
Klaus Lindpaintner (Eds.) (2010)
GenEthics and Religion.**

**Karger, Basel, 154 pages
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As there are many theologians or people coming from specific religious backgrounds among bioethicists, it is certainly attractive to ask about possible functions and influences of theological insights, arguments or religious views on the ethical discussions of gene technology. Beside direct borrowings like the expression «to play God» or «the sacredness of DNA», there are many hidden impacts of theological views on ethical debates. To learn more about these effects, a conference was held in Basel in 2008 on «GenEthics and Religion: Advancing the public dialogue on human gene technology and bioethics as reflected in religious thought». The publication of the conference papers, edited by two theologians and a representative of a biotechnology company, consists of an introduction with a helpful overview and twelve articles written by philosophers, theologians and human geneticists. The contributions are structured in four parts: 1. Foundations with hermeneutical and conceptional reflections, 2. Analysis of the function of religious aspects in the ethical debates on gene technology, 3. Christian theological aspects and 4. Jewish, Islamic and Buddhist approaches. As these titles – and authors like James F. Childress, Tristram Engelhardt Jr., Friedrich W. Graf or Dietmar

Mieth – already reveal, there are foundational ethical and theological insights to be found here, but this book also contains deeply controversial approaches and many exciting details on various traditions.

In the first part, entitled «Genes – Cells – Interpretations» (12–27) the philosopher and biologist Christoph Rehmann-Sutter asks about understandings and metaphors of the DNA (e.g. «the book of life», «blueprint» or «program») and their ethical implications. He stresses the fact that genes are multifunctional and can no longer be considered as independent factors in a chain of events (20). In the second part, the German philosopher Petra Gehring levels serious reproaches at churches and their authorities. In her paper entitled «Children – Bodies – Life: Ethics as the Churches' Biopolitics» (60–73) she criticises the bioethicisation of the churches' positions (65) and blames the arbitrariness of their positions (70). One special highlight offers the article in the third part written by the American theologian Ted Peters. Asking «Is the Human Genome sacred?» (108–117) he criticises what he describes as a form of bio-idolatry: God alone is sacred and nothing within his created order, even DNA, ought to be deemed sacred (114f). In his illuminating article within the fourth part of the book, «The Jewish Perspective on GenEthics» (118–128), the American theologian Ronald M. Green mentions as three important principles of the Jewish tradition: the obligation to preserve human life through medicine and research, the developmental view that accords newborn human life greater moral weight than embryos, and the openness to technological interventions in nature (119). Regarding this foundation it is unsurprising that Jewish people are very liberal in using genetic testing and, as the author himself illustrates in his recent monograph «Babies by Design», open-minded about the idea of genetic enhancement.

Other interesting papers are written by Hansjakob Müller, Eberhard Schockenhoff, Siti N. M. Nor and Pinit Ratanakul. Reading of the book is not only strongly recommended for theologians but also for anyone interested in the interdependences of sciences and religious components of culture.

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