

# The dynamics of bioethical discussion in religious and philosophical doctrines about the living

**Oleksandr Horban** (ORCID 0000-0003-2321-5963)  
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University (Ukraine)

**Ruslana Martych** (ORCID 0000-0002-7755-4496)  
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University (Ukraine)

## ABSTRACT

The article presents a study of the formation and development of bioethical discourse based on the analysis of leading philosophical concepts, doctrines, and religious beliefs about the value of life in various manifestations of its being. The authors note that the beginning of axiological reflection on the problem of the living can be found in the works of ancient philosophers and the early Christian discourse as attempts to sacralise life. Moreover, the authors attribute a significant role in the development of bioethical discourse to the ethical doctrine of Kant and his opponents, representatives of the phenomenological direction of philosophical anthropology. Finally, the article notes that in modern conditions, bioethical discourse is concentrated around the axiological paradigm in the doctrine of the living. The various viewpoints are proposed to be grouped into two main approaches: the ethics of sacredness (sanctity) of life and the ethics of quality of life. These approaches have significant scientific potential, which allows for the development of bioethical doctrine, employing forming moral norms and imperatives of human behaviour, as well as establishing restrictions on human influence on the means and forms of existence of the living.

## KEYWORDS

*life, value, bioethics, discourse, ethics of sacredness of life, ethics of quality of life*

## Introduction

The current stage of human civilisation development is characterised by significant dynamics of global transformations that society undergoes as a result of scientific and technological progress. Dynamic transformation processes in the field of material production extend to the cultural and spiritual sphere of human existence, where the main characteristics of progress are destruction, "deconstruction", and "dehumanisation" of human consciousness, creation of a special humanitarian, scientific and philosophical discourse. While not denying the right of existence to the relevant areas of modern philosophy, the authors emphasise that due to the dominance of such approaches in the contemporary worldview, there is an apparent change in the fundamental value paradigms.

The urgency of changing value paradigms arises periodically in times of great social transformations when people need to find new answers to the global historical challenges they face. It can be concluded that the modern system of values, based on the post-non-classical scientific picture of the world and the permanent-transitive fluctuations of the postmodern era, includes such values as alternativeness, non-absolute rationality, competitiveness, de-ideologisation of public consciousness, social risk, pluralism of thoughts and social forms, cultural eclecticism. Meanwhile, the problem of human being, their life, and health as fundamental factors of the world and human existence in the world are still on the agenda of the modern value system.

The last months' tragic events in European history that have been taking place on the territory of Ukraine forced to take a fresh look and reassess the value of human life as the highest good granted to a living being on Earth. The phenomenon of life itself is a particular earthly phenomenon that deserves the highest respect, manifested through its inviolability or salvation in cases of security threats.

Life is a phenomenal manifestation of the existence of being. Therefore, the emergence of the living, its functioning, and subsequent transformation into living and non-living forms of expression of the material world have always been of interest to mankind throughout its existence. Since the establishment of science, the awareness of the fragmentation of knowledge about life has only strengthened the creative intentions of man, resulting in the formation of a complex cognitive situation that requires a comprehensive study of its multidimensionality and various forms of its implementation. Currently, it can be observed that a more profound understanding of life mysteries testifies to new horizons in the realm of the immense, reveals its diversity and complexity, requires the application of the purely scientific methodology in the process of cognition, and also appeal to the syncretic, including religious, foundations of human consciousness.

At present, religious and philosophical ideas of life, as a synthesis of proto-scientific and theological approaches with a common theoretical and methodological basis, are of scientific interest (Horban, Martych, 2018: 93-94). The relevance of the modern study of this issue is also due to



the significant influence of the ethical factor on the problem of life as the highest value and the ability of human consciousness to comprehend it by means of science (philosophy) and the synthesis of non-scientific (most often religious) forms of awareness of the uniqueness of human existence. Since its inception, bioethics has acted as the only integrative form of combining all doctrines and views on people, their lives, as well as any other expression of the living existence. Bioethical discourse combines scientific theories and religious and philosophical doctrines about the value of living. It forms a moral paradigm of a new type of human worldview capable of overcoming the inherent conflict between human spiritual values and the pragmatics of the civilisational development of human society (*Horban, Martych, 2018: 93-103*).

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to study the dynamics of the formation and development of bioethical discourse from the origins of religious and philosophical ideas in the study of the phenomenon of the living to scientific and ethical paradigms that shape the modern view of the importance of life as a unique way of living.

### Research methods

Bioethical discourse brings value characteristics to the reflection of the life phenomenon, indicating the moral component in understanding the unique phenomenon of existence. Bioethical discourse is characterised by issues related to the individual's duty to their life and others. Central to these issues is the problem of the criteria by which it is possible to determine the value of various manifestations of life in general and the value of the life of each individual in particular.

Bioethics is the most critical direction in implementing the value paradigm in studying the life phenomenon. According to the authors, it should be considered a particular branch of scientific knowledge that emerged in the last quarter of the twentieth century, which focused its cognition vector on the study and analysis of the morality of human actions, especially in the field of medical and biological measures. The main task of bioethics is to answer the question about the limits of the existence of the living and to determine the scope of moral influence on these limits based on the theory of values. In other words, it addresses the issue through moral norms and imperatives prism.

### Results and Discussion

Life is the only biologically possible way of human existence in the world. Its value lies not only in the peculiarities of existing biological forms and various manifestations, which are unique phenomena of existence. Life also consists of self-reflection, conscious experience of the phenomenon, and the ability to form symbolic pictures of the existential world. According to Heinrich Rickert, the philosophical reflection of "life" should be based on the fact that life is the centre of the world, and everything that philosophy has to discuss has to be correlated with it. Life is declared to be the world's own "essence" and, at the same time, the state and way of knowing it. Life itself must, based on itself, carry out philosophising, regardless of the existence of other categories and concepts, since such philosophy is an act of direct "experiencing" of life (*Rickert, 1998: 275*).

In the authors' opinion, analysis of the dynamics of bioethical discourse should begin with a reflection on the problem of living in the religious and philosophical teachings of the ancient world. We will pay attention to the

relevant Christian studies that originated and spread at the turn of the ancient world and the Middle Ages in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Minor.

First, it is worth noting that ancient philosophy had a significant ideological influence on the formation of religious and philosophical ideas of the doctrine of the living. The concept of living in ancient philosophy reveals the main approaches to understanding the essence of living in the ancient Greek tradition. In Antiquity, the question of the emergence and formation of all existing things unfolded as a search for the first principle. The origin of all things was considered to be various substances: water (Thales), air (Anaximenes), fire (Heraclitus), or the interaction of all elements (Empedocles). Subsequently, the qualitative substrate first principle was replaced by a more abstract understanding. The first examples of the latter are already found in the works of ancient Greek atomists. However, their reflections still bear the imprint of anthropomorphism because all the primary elements were endowed with human qualities and features. Thus, the ancient philosophy outlined the first of two approaches to understanding the essence of the living - materialistic, which was based on the idea that the living can arise from the inanimate, the organic, i.e., from the inorganic under the influence of natural factors (Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes). Ancient philosophers argued that the origin of man was similar to the origin of animals: both were formed as a result of the merger and transformation of the original elements into parts and organs, which under the influence of heat, were combined into a body (Democritus). This is how the concept of self-generation of the living from the inanimate was formed.

This idea acquired a new meaning in the philosophy of Aristotle. The ancient philosopher pointed out that along with the birth of living beings from their kind, there is and always has been their self-generation from inanimate matter. The philosopher considered entelechy - "vital force" - an influential factor affecting all manifestations of life as the criterion for distinguishing the living from the inanimate. However, Aristotle described the world of the living and laid the tradition of systematising its manifestations, particularly animal species. According to the scholar, integrity is a living organism's main feature. At the same time, man is also "endowed with spirit, reason, and the capacity for social life" (*Aristotle, 2000: 71*).

The statements according to which life was considered to be a consequence of the divine creative act and, therefore, all beings have a special force, independent of the material world, which directs all life processes, formed the basis of ideological views on the problem of searching for the fundamental principle. This concept is most clearly traced in the philosophy of Plato. The thinker presented it in the idea of the "demiurge" - the creator of the world and all living things, who orders the universe and all living beings in it. According to Plato, only those beings acquire the status of living with a soul, which becomes the cause of self-motion. According to Plato, a man gives life a unique, moral content (*Tykhola, 2002: 221-222*).

Evolving in the worldview emanations as a specific form of Neoplatonism, the early Christian discourse conceptualises the idea of the living through biblical reminiscences in the works of the fathers of the Church. The reflexive field of the early Christian doctrine of the essential nature of the living unfolds between two poles: on the one hand, the truths of Revelation, which cannot be deviated from. On the other hand, the need to cognise the Creator in his creation, to see a glimpse of its highest

wisdom. It is in the field of patristic philosophy that the guidelines change: the authority of the Holy Scripture surpasses the value of philosophical texts. These attitudes imprinted the early Christian teachings about the living, reflecting the priority of biblical interpretations. In particular, the idea of the origin of living in Eastern patristics was comprehended through its biblical interpretation - the first expressed idea of creation from "nothing". The creation of the living is now not a natural act but an act of will, which had its origin. Thus, the idea of creation in the Bible unfolds, in fact, on two semantic levels. On the one hand, it is included in the process of cosmogenesis as the emergence of a part of the Universe. However, on the other hand, it is included in a complex system of connections with other elements of the intelligently created world.

Moreover, due to its origin, a living being is endowed with the ability to change, to move from one state to another. The criterion for determining the living in the Bible is the so-called "spirit of life". As a methodological principle, the Bible proposes the definition of the living as the presence in the substance of the "spirit of life", allotted to it by God and as the main criterion - the ability to live and procreate. However, over time, Ignatius of Antioch drew attention to the fact that the division of the living into visible and invisible is identical to the dyad of "corporeal - spiritual" and can be represented in the concepts of "flesh" and "spirit", which contradicts the understanding of "living" and "divine".

The necessity to resolve this contradiction was forced in the second half of the IV century AD to intensify the process of defining the concepts of living in the Christian religious and philosophical tradition, each time directing it to greater conformity with the faith. In the context of describing the essence of the living, the most discussed problems in the works of representatives of Eastern patristics were justification of the importance of the truths of Revelation over sensory and rational cognition. In addition, the position on the origin of the living as a result of unconditionally arbitrary creation by God, clarification of the nature of the relationship between God and other living hypostases, justification of the non-identity of the concepts of "creation"- "birth", building a hierarchical structure of the living, the relationship between spiritual and material in living beings, pre-existence of the soul were also studied.

As a result of the spiritual and religious studies of the church fathers in the patristic tradition, the view of living as one of the stages of cosmogenesis was established. Moreover, the concept of "creation" acquired a conceptual meaning, as it outlined the *modus operandi* and God as Eternal Life was affirmed as the cause and creator of all living things. Also, the origin of living things was associated with the beginning, which implied the transition from non-being to being, i.e., changeability, fluidity, and motion; the hierarchy was based on gradualism, the hierarchy from lower to higher, from simpler to more complex.

Thus, the most characteristic features of religious doctrines were creationism, theocentrism as principles of hierarchical ordering, and subordinationism as the doctrine of the inequality of the components of the hierarchy depending on the degree of moral perfection (*Horban, Martych, 2020*).

The moral and ethical component of philosophical discourse in studying the value of living can be traced back to the works of I. Kant. The outstanding German philosopher justified the humanistic character and developed the

universal meaning of value. Kant's analysis of axiological problems is based on the categories of duty and goodwill, which form the basis of the moral imperative and ensure the rationality of people's actions (*Kant, 1991: 211-213*). Value, according to Kant, exists as a property of a rational person and his attitude to the world. The moral value of an act is determined not by its consequences or principles of behaviour but by the manifestation of goodwill. It is valuable in a person, regardless of whether it brings external benefits. An independently established moral law determines goodwill. A person can be forced to follow it only by themselves. Therefore, a human of goodwill is the only one who makes decisions solely based on moral values and willingly adopts moral attitudes to manage personal behaviour.

According to Kant, goodwill is so essential for the proper existence of man that its emergence is the true purpose of reason. The objective goal, according to Kant, can be the personality itself, which, unlike a substance, is a goal in itself, and its existence has an absolute value (*Kant, 1991: 268-269*).

In fact, according to Kant, the humanistic interpretation of the categorical imperative is that people see in each other the goal in the form of humanity as a set of properties manifested in their rational behaviour based on goodwill. In addition, Kant considered humanity to be the duty of human development. As a goal in itself, humanity requires respect, which corresponds to an absolute value.

Disputing with I. Kant and the Neo-Kantians, prominent representatives of philosophical anthropology H. Plesner and M. Scheler, made a significant contribution to the development of the value theory and, directly, to the study of the phenomenology of the living as the highest value of being.

Philosophical anthropology, represented by the ideas of H. Plesner and M. Scheler, substantiates the phenomenological approach to the study of the "living", aimed at clarifying the essential characteristics of life as a phenomenon in which spiritual and mental manifestations of the human being complement the physical existence of the organism. Based on the philosophical interpretation of the concept of life and specific ways of organising living existence, H. Plesner created his concept of "eccentricity of the human life form". According to H. Plesner, all living things are characterised by a radical conflict (contradiction) between the need to be closed as a physical body and the need to be an open system as an organism. The way of resolving this conflict depends on the way of life, the way of organising the existence of a living species. Specific ways of existence organisation include the specific open form of plant life organisation, the particular closed form of animal life organisation, and the eccentric form of human life organisation. The living asserts itself within the phenomenon that covers the boundaries of its existence. The "openness" of the plant life organisation is due to its biological niche and the determining influence of the external environment. "Centrality" of the animal world's existence, according to the scientist, is the ability of this phenomenon to "isolate" the world to its physiological needs. The "eccentricity" of the form of human life organisation, according to H. Plesner, is reflected in the person's perception of themselves as the centre of all actions and aspirations as an individual. Also, it includes the perception of themselves as a psychological subject and the way out of their own "centrality". Therefore, according to the idea of H. Plesner, the sphere of the living

life organisation concerning man is a triune essence: the physical body, the inner soul - the psyche, as well as the external component of the living - a mental act of a person who is aware of the first two forms of existence, human spirituality. "Spirit is the sphere through which we live as individuals," notes H. Plesner (*Horban, Martych, 2018: 95-96*).

The value of this approach lies in interpreting the phenomenon of living with a focus on integrity in understanding life. In other "non-human" forms of existence, it has a special organisational status and a self-sufficient status, an important condition and way of organising human existence. Meanwhile, man is also a holistic unity of their natural and spiritual being, manifested in culture, as well as an organic unity with flora and fauna as different levels of existence of the phenomenon of life.

M. Scheler's idea about man's unique position in the Universe is one of the most fundamental attempts to study the phenomenon of life and its value as an object of philosophical anthropology. He aimed to give the essential concept of man, going beyond natural definitions, as the fundamental spiritual component of human existence and identifying it with the sphere of human "living" in general. Therefore, M. Scheler substantiates the essential phenomenal properties of the living: "self-movement, self-formation, self-limitation in spatial and temporal terms" (*Scheler, 1973: 33-34*).

Speaking about the value of life, the philosopher developed levels of vital living organisation. These levels are manifested from the basis of "sensual impulse" (*Gefühlsdrang*), characteristic of the plant world, through the degree of instinct formation, to the emergence of associative memory, and finally to the presence of intelligence. Despite the unique features of each of these levels, only man unites all the essential stages of existence, especially life. All nature achieves the concentrated unity of its being (*Scheler, 1973: 200*). At the same time, what makes a person human is not reduced to one biological evolution of life. On the contrary, the scholar asserts the opposition of life to the very principle of humanity. Life and spirit are radical opposites in the concept of M. Scheler.

Along with the phenomenological approach, the naturalistic approach to the analysis of the concept of living has become especially popular in connection with theoretical and biological knowledge development. Natural philosophy, which has received new life due to the latest achievements of theoretical and evolutionary thought in biology, is represented in the modern scientific discourse by the evolutionary naturalism of M. Rewes (1995), the genetic theory of social behaviour of W. Hamilton (1964) and socio-biology of E. Wilson (1975).

Considering the supreme value of human life, modern naturalism extends the concept of value to all living nature. Therefore, it positively responds to the possibility of evolutionary and biological justification of human values.

One of the fundamental problems of modern bioethics is the problem of life as a value. Two main approaches to the analysis of this problem have been formed in the contemporary bioethical discourse. The first approach can be called the ethics of sanctity of life as the highest value, and the second is the ethics of quality of life.

According to the theology of sanctity, human life has exceptional value. The life of each person is unique and, therefore, equally valuable. The sacredness of life implies an attitude to the phenomenon of life as an object of exceptional significance and eternal value. On this basis, it

requires a respectful attitude to it. Based on this approach, the value of life is postulated as unchanging and irrelevant, which retains its value under any circumstances as a value dependent on external conditions. The value of life also depends on the characteristics or possibilities of its implementation, which it provides to a particular person. The followers of the concept of the sacredness of life consider its value absolute. That is, it cannot be conditioned by anything other than the reason that gave rise to it. They also believe the value of human life to be incomparable, in the sense that someone's life cannot be more or less valuable than another. At the same time, the phenomenon of life can be compared with other values, but it should be placed at the top of their hierarchy. This approach in bioethics is most clearly and fully represented by religious discourse (*Horban, Martych, 2020 b*).

According to the concept of "quality of life", human life is supposed to have certain "qualities", so not all states of organismic life should be maintained. It is assumed that there must be some criteria that can be used to decide where medical care should be provided and where it can be applied (or not initiated at all). Within the framework of this system of views, there is an attempt to introduce into modern bioethical discourse a special concept - "person's life". This concept coexists with the concept of "organism's life" and its synonyms "body life" and "biological life". In this approach, the concept of "body life" is only a fundamental condition for the highest qualitative level of a living being - "personality life". Thus, if a given human organism lacks certain qualities, it becomes possible to deny such a life as its moral status, that is, to refuse to treat it as a human person.

Among bioethical issues, the most controversial in religious discourse is the problem of facilitating human life, including physical suffering during illness. The doctrine determines whether or not to accept all the benefits of the civilization that provide a more comfortable life. Considering, in our case, only Christianity, we can state updated approaches to bioethical problems, which are especially radically expressed in Protestantism. Protestantism focuses on the individual's autonomy, and moral autonomy reduces these postulates to the fundamental principles of respect for the patient's autonomy. In this case, the ethics of life is reduced to the ethics of responsibility (*Horban et al., 2020*). Rooted in the philosophy of I. Kant, Protestant theologians, interpret the ethics of duty as a fundamental moral principle. In accordance with this principle, a person should be considered an ultimate end and treated as an end, not as a means to achieve some other goal, even the most benign one.

This Kantian approach had a serious impact on shaping modern ethical principles of European society, rooted in Protestant individualistic ideology. These principles are clearly reflected in the main manifestations of Europe's cultural and artistic life, particularly in literature and cinema.

It is in the matter of where the distinction line of the "ethics of life" is drawn - the "heart and soul" of each individual person or if it is an established principle of the existence of an ethnic group and even the whole civilization. That is why there is a profound contradiction, perhaps even a "rift", in the European Protestant and Eastern Slavic Orthodox religious and philosophical discourses.

These problematic contradictions have significantly intensified during the current Ukrainian-Russian war. Nevertheless, modern Ukrainian journalism has already ac-

tively responded to the ethics of life with its publications, in which there are elements of philosophical reflections based on antagonistic manifestations of moral principles of different ideas and ideologies.

The article by M. Dubyniansky with a review of the modern film adaptation of the world-famous novel by Erich Maria Remarque, "All Quiet on the Western Front", as well as the novel by the contemporary Spanish writer Arturo Perez-Reverte "The Italian" is of particular interest (Dubyniansky, 2022). The ideas of both works demonstrate the watershed that the reader/viewer has in relation to the experiences of their main characters. For the reader/viewer brought up in the Western European Protestant ethical paradigm, the protagonists' actions are aimed at revealing their inner world, doubts, and experiences. The hero's moral is individual, autonomous, and independent of the external political or military circumstances surrounding them. Instead, according to M. Dubyniansky, a completely different approach to assessing the moral behaviour of the protagonists is present in the modern Ukrainian reader/viewer, who not only empathises with the characters or events of the novel but by fate has witnessed and participated in the events described in novels or depicted in a film. In this case, the ethics of responsibility acquire collective forms. The ethics of the individual character does not matter when they are on the side of the common Evil, which manifests itself in the image of the aggressor. Acting on the side of Evil, all participants receive an exclusively negative moral assessment.

Consequently, there is an obvious statement about the collective sense of moral responsibility of life ethics. So, in this respect, the significant influence of the Orthodox religious and philosophical discourse on the worldview of modern Ukrainian, in particular, can be traced. In the context of external military aggression and numerous terrorist attacks against civilians, the dehumanisation of the ethics of life of a modern Ukrainian takes place along the principle of "Friend or Foe", where any representative of the Armed Forces of Ukraine or a soldier of territorial defence is definitely a representative of Good, and a representative of the military formations of the Russian Federation or a traitor or collaborator is the personification of total Evil. The latter is a wholly dehumanised, often demonised person, regardless of their individual qualities, worldview, or inner outlook. Of course, this is a moral reaction to the state of war, both external circumstances of life and internal emotional experiences. The deviation from such a state, the reintroduction of empathy to another literary or cinematic Paul Boehmer, will mean the renewal of a peaceful worldview and outlook. Furthermore, it is a more profound connection between the modern Ukrainians, their ideology, and moral and ethical views of the European ethics of life.

The issues of life and death are raised in the Christian bioethical discourse not only as the conscious agreement of the subject to the termination of life but also in cases of artificial termination of pregnancy, where the subject of murder is a child, even if it is still in the embryonic phase of development. An understanding of the human embryo characterises Christian bioethical discourse as a set of characteristics that determine its status in terms of being (ontological status), duty and responsibility (ethical status), and law (legal status) (Boyko, 2011: 218). Although euthanasia is associated with the ending of life

and abortion with its beginning, they raise a single ethical issue - the interruption of life and its value.

Contrary to some scientific interpretations that "the embryo is not a human being", the Catholic Vatican issued the Instruction "Donum Vitae", which allows artificial intervention only in the form of prenatal diagnosis, which is therapeutic and carried out for the sake of the embryo itself. The Instruction clearly states that any intervention that is not therapeutic in nature but due to regulation (domination) over the process of procreation is unacceptable to Catholicism. Any intervention exposes man to the temptation to "go beyond the limits of a reasonable dominion over nature". The Catholic Church declares non-intervention based on a particular competence in the field of experimental sciences. However, taking into account the data of these studies and technologies, it aims to put forward moral teaching consistent with human dignity and its integral vocation under its evangelical mission and apostolic duty. Catholic bioethical discourse generally recognises that science and technology can help human beings as a resource, but they cannot in themselves be the meaning of existence and human progress. Medical care has always been an integral part of Christian culture (according to resources, the Apostle Luke was a physician). However, medical, as well as any other scientific and technical activity, requires unconditional compliance with the criteria of the moral law: they must serve the human, inalienable rights, and actual and holistic good according to the plan and will of the Creator.

The peculiarity of modern Orthodox bioethical discourse is the shift of emphasis in the problem of understanding the phenomenon of the living from ontological and epistemological to axiological and ethical approaches.

Bioethical discourse is present in the views of Orthodox theologians on the problems of the "living" in the context of recognition of its human essence. Thus, the Orthodox Church recognises the human dignity of the embryo at any stage of its development, starting from the initial one. For example, St. Basil, in his first Canonical Epistle, included in the Book of Rules of the Orthodox Church, wrote, "A woman who deliberately destroys a fetus is answerable for murder. And any fine distinction between its being completely formed or unformed is not admissible among us." (Basil the Great, 2008: 240). On this basis, the Orthodox Church considers intentional abortion at any stage of pregnancy murder as a criminal attack on the sacred gift of human life. Similarly, Orthodox bioethical discourse interprets the attitude to any experiments involving destroying human embryos.

The unresolved ethical problem of transplanting organs within the Christian bioethical discourse is still the issue of moral principle. This phenomenon gives rise to the problem of the relationship between recipient and donor. At the same time, Christian bioethics warns against ignoring or taking this problem frivolously.

A number of unresolved problems in the modern bioethical discourse are represented by the so-called "ethics of quality of life". Among the attempts to define the qualities that can be a criterion for distinguishing between biological life and personal life, the opinion of the American bioethicist Mary E. Warren is of interest. She believes that in order to include someone in the moral community of individuals, such qualities as consciousness, reason, independent activity, self-awareness, and the ability to communicate are essential (Warren, 2001, 457-458).

The essence of the concept of "quality of life" is that along with objective criteria, it includes subjective criteria, which means physical, mental, and social well-being. The combination of these factors constitutes the discourse of health. Then "poor quality of life" must be considered as an illness. However, such identification has enormous difficulties, as such perception constitutes a "good quality of life"; for example, a certain type of treatment can vary significantly between patients and the medical community (Bowling, 2001: 12).

Hence, the concept of "quality of life" in contemporary bioethical discourse requires further reflection and research. Nevertheless, it has already become one of the fundamental categories of medicine and medical ethics, including when discussing such states of the "living" as "health", "disease", "pathology", and "norm". Moreover, the concept of "quality of life" in modern biomedical and medical ethical discourses is an important characteristic of clarifying the vision of "good" of the patient and the goals of medicine, as well as a way to evaluate medical interventions that take into account not only a purely clinical perspective but also the patient's perspective.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, it is worth highlighting that the dynamics of bioethical discourse are primarily caused by the presence of a wide range of opinions and views on the value of life as a particularly unique form of being alive. The growing anthropological crisis causes the current interest in the analysis of bioethical questions as a criticism of the ethical foundations of modern society. It is reflected in the changing value paradigms. Axiological issues are leading within the bioethical discourse. It causes discussions, the essence of which is grouped around two main approaches. These are the ethics of sacred or holiness of life and the ethics of quality of life. Being oppositional in their views, these approaches have significant scientific potential, which allows to development of bioethical doctrine by forming morality and imperatives of human behaviour. It also leads to the establishment of the limits of human influence on the ways and forms of the existence of living things.

Contemporary bioethical discourse, focusing on axiological reflection in philosophical and religious doctrines about living, demonstrates a value perception of change based on the study of the presence of hazards in the existence of living. Since life takes an important place in the hierarchy of human values, the attitude to it permeates the entire human existence, actualizing its moral meaning and the content of the essence of the concept. Bioethics, with the help of moral norms and imperatives, defines the limits of possible human influence on the ways and forms of existence of living. In addition, modern bioethical discourse forms a system of

categories and concepts that describe applied ethical conceptual constructs in order to develop a moral attitude of man toward all living things. The authors' analysis of the existing problem presented in the article allowed to identify the dynamics of axiological determinants of bioethical discourse in the doctrines of "living".

### REFERENCES

- Aristotle (2000). *Polityka [Politics]* [trans. from Ancient Greece]. Kyiv, Osnovy. (In Ukrainian)
- Basil the Great (2008). *Pravyla svyatoho Vasyliya Velykoho*. In: *Knyha pravyl svyatykh apostoliv vselenskykh i pomisnykh soboriv, i svyatykh ottziv*. Kyiv, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (In Ukrainian).
- Bowling, L. (2001). *Measuring disease a review of disease specific quality of life measurement scales*. Buckingham. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Boyko, I.Ye. (2011). Identychnist i status lyudskoho embriona u suchasnykh bioetychnykh dyskusiyakh. *Naukovi zapysky Natsionalnoho universytetu «Ostrozka akademiya»*. Seriya: *Filosofiya*. Issue 8, 217–229 (In Ukrainian).
- Dubynynsky, M. (2022, November 26). Proshchannya z Paulem Boymerom. *Ukrayinska Pravda*. <https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2022/11/26/7377948/>
- Hamilton, W.D. (1964). The genetical theory of Social behavior: 1 and 2. *Sourn of Theor. Biol*, № 7.
- Horban, O. & Martych, R. (2018). Axiological determinants of the doctrine of "living" in modern bioethics discourse. *Studia Warmińskie*. 55, 93–106. <https://doi.org/10.31648/sw.3064>.
- Horban, O.V. & Martych, R. (2020a). Fenomen zhyvoho v relihiyno-filosofskykh ideyakh skhidnoyi patrystyky. *Naukovy chasopys Natsionalnoho pedahohichnoho universytetu imeni M P. Drahomanova. Seriya 7: Relihiyehnavstvo. Kulturolohiya. Filosofiya*. 42 (55), 3–10 (In Ukrainian).
- Horban, O. & Martych, R. (2020b). The idea of living in religious-philosophical discourse. *Studia Warmińskie*. 57, 101–115. <https://doi.org/10.31648/sw.6008>.
- Horban, O., Havryliuk, T., Martych, R., Tymoshenko, T., Shapoval, A. (2020). Theological anthropology: Open questions of the Greek spiritual tradition. *ASTRA Salvensis*, Supplement no.1, 25–36. <https://clck.ru/32n7Pf>
- Kant, I. (1991). *The Metaphysics of Morals* [trans. by Mary Gregor]. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Rickert, Heinrich (1998). *Filosofiya zhyttya [Philosophy of life]*. Kyiv, Nika Center-Vist-S. (In Ukrainian)
- Ruse, M. (1995). *Evolutionary Naturalism*. Routledg.
- Scheler, M. (1973). *Formalism in Ethics and Non-formal Ethics of Values* [trans. by Manfred Frings and Roger Funk]. Evanston, Northwestern University Press.
- Tykhola, A. H. (2002). *Platon i platonizm v rosiyskiy relihiyniy filosofiyi druhoyi polovyny XIX – pochatku XX stolit*. Kyiv, PARAPAN. (In Ukrainian)
- Warren, M.A. (2001). On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion. In: *T.A. Mappes (ed.), D. Degrazia (ed.). Biomedical Ethics*. N.-Y.: McGraw-Hill.
- Wilson, E.O. (1975). *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. Cambridge et al.

## Динаміка біоетичного дискурсу в релігійно-філософських вченнях про живе

**Олександр Горбань** (ORCID 0000-0003-2321-5963)  
Київський університет імені Бориса Грінченка (Україна)

**Руслана Мартич** (ORCID 0000-0002-7755-4496)  
Київський університет імені Бориса Грінченка (Україна)

В статті пропонується дослідження становлення та розвитку біоетичного дискурсу на основі аналізу провідних філософських концепцій та доктрин, а також релігійних вчень щодо цінності життя у різноманітних проявах його буттєвості. Зазначається, що початки аксіологічної рефлексії проблеми живого ми знаходимо уже в розвідках античних філософів, а також в ранньохристиянському дискурсі в якості спроб сакралізації життя. Велику роль в розвитку біоетичного дискурсу автори відводять етичному вченню І.Канта та його опонентам, представникам феноменологічного напрямку філософської антропології. В статті відзначається, що в сучасних умовах біоетичний дискурс концентрується навколо аксіологічної парадигми у вченні про живе. Все різноманіття точок зору пропонується згрупувати в два основні підходи: етика сакральності (святості) життя та етика якості життя. Ці підходи мають значний науковий потенціал, який дозволяє розвивати біоетичне вчення засобами формування моральних норм та імперативів людської поведінки, а також встановленням обмежень впливу людини на способи та форми існування живого.

**Ключові слова:** життя; цінність; біоетика; дискурс; етика сакральності життя; етика якості життя.

---

Received (Надійшла до редакції): 02.10.2022,  
Accepted (Прийнята до друку): 30.10.2022  
Available online (Опубліковано онлайн) 25 December 2022