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Core Values: An European Perspective

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Abstract: Values are serving as orientation for a person, but as well for a society or for politics. The article discusses first some general epistomological and methodological problems we are faced with when defining or finding out relevant values. One of these problems is the question, whether values can be objective or whether they are necessarily subjective. Another problem is the question, what resources we have and can use to find out and define values—and who defines in the end the values, which are relevant in a society. Part of this problem then is the question, how we can distinguish core values from values, which are peripheral or secondary. After discussing the general problem the article presents an example from the European context: the definition of three core values (liberty, justice, solidarity) by the German Social Democratic Party, which are following the motto of the French revolution at the end of the 18th century. In a third part the article presents three further core values, which may be called the Christian values: love of the neighbor, compassion and mercy. The article argues, that these three core values are often missed in the daily live within modern societies, be it in East or West, and can help to make societies more human.

Key words: Values, Ethics, Christian faith, Europe, Humanity

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In Europe there is at present a lot of discussion about European values, because of the severe conflict in and about Ukraine. Some see the conflict as a kind of test case for how serious European societies and states, as well as the European Union, are concerned with European values. There is as well a lot of discussion about values in China—socialist values—and their actuality in Chinese society. Discussions about values and attempts to propose and promote social values are global phenomena, despite the factthat they are often quite different in their respective states and societies. In my country, Germany, as well as in many other countries in Europe and elsewhere, we have ongoing discussions about changes in values. Some people hope for such changes, others criticize and avoid them We have in many societies a lot of lamentations about the ignorance and disrespect of values—and therefore constant demands for education in values.

My subject in this paper is core values, but first I want to discuss some general methodological and epistemological problems with identifying and discussing core values and values in general. The obvious problem is how we can know and decidewhich values are in the core and which ones are not? Which values are central and which are peripheral? To answer that, we have to consider some philosophical problems with

the concept of values. Therefore, I'lldiscuss some of thephilosophical history, in order to prepare ground for justification of values, and gain a deeper understanding of the problems connected with their actual practice. I wont cover the whole history of the concept of values, only a few special elements which are fundamental for the understanding and justification of core values and values in general.

1. Epistemological and methodological considerations

1. "Value" is a central concept in current philosophical and political ethics, as well as Christian ethics. In the history of Western philosophy it is a rather new concept.[1] The term "value" became a central concept in 19th century Western philosophywith the German Hermann Lotze (1817—1881), in the followup of German idealism and Immanuel Kant. Lotze proposed a teleological idealism, in which the human mind with its needs is not satisfied with the causal and mechanistic observations of nature, but distinguishes the indifferent (what we can observe and research in nature) from the valuable. In a kind of religious anticipation, the mind forms the idea of an absolute value. Hermann Lotze finds absolute value in the idea of the good, which is the *telos*-the final goal and purpose-of all human striving and activity. This idea is not something we find in nature or human biology.

Before Lotze we can identify in history similar considerations, but without giving the concept of "value" a central position in philosophy. In fact, in modern times the term "value" came from the field of economy. There, "value" was and is used in the sense of "price," but also in the sense of worth, validity or quality of an item, activity or even a person. The relation of the term "value" to the price is still reflected in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, who said price can denote only the relative value of something. Of absolute value, which Kant denotes with the term "dignity", are only autonomous persons, who have their purpose only in themselves.[2] In this understanding we can say that my computer has a price, but is of not much value. Different from my computer my mother is of absolute value, but has no price.

In the 19th century Karl Marx, among others, critically reflected on the economic category of value, considering, too, its anthropological and political aspects. Marx was more or less critical of the category of value, because he reduced it to the exchange value of products, which in his understanding was an expression of a badly ordered society with a lack of respect to real work. It is interesting to notice, that at the same time in the 19th century the term "value" then became prominent in philosophy in general and is still prominent there till today. In a certain sense it represents in modern philosophy the "agathon" (the good) of ancient European philosophy, the Platonic idea of the good. In the ancient philosophical school of Stoa items, which were according nature, had value and items, which were not according but against nature, had no value.

In the philosophy of the Stoa, when we are confronted with opposing possibilities, our nature is to prefer for one side over the other: We are better alive than dead, better healthy than sick, better rich than poor. In Stoic philosophy these preferences for certain values follow from the general purpose of all creatures to live

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[1] For the following survey see among others: Art. Wert, in: Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie, Vol. 12, Darmstadt 2004, 556-583.

[2] Cf. I. Kant, Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, in: Kant's Gesammelte Schriften, ed. by Königlich Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Akademie-Ausgabe), Vol. 4, Berlin 1903, 434-436.

according nature. Then it is more valuable to live than to be dead, and more valuable to be healthy than to be sick-which, in fact, is of no value. The conclusion from such a consideration is, that some items in life by their very nature have a value and others have none.

But in the complexities of concrete life, it may be quite often the case that one can have value only by giving away or taking an itemof no value. Therefore it is necessary for human beings to learn to evaluate and make the right choices among the natural items. The educated human being then is like an experienced and professional examiner, who chooses only valuable items, in which the value is integral to the item, and not only awarded to it, because somebody judges it valuable. But the inexperienced person often does not know, what is really of value. Therefore he or she needs an expert. From the choices of an educated and experienced philosopher one can learn what is valuable and what is not.

2. According to Stoic philosophy, values were defined by their correspondence to nature, whether they were part of the natural reality of things, activities and persons. The prominence and centrality of values in modern 19th century philosophy and ethics originated in quite the opposite way: to preserve the realm of ethics and morals apart from the dominance of natural science.

The attractiveness of the concept of value in 19th century philosophy was not only a result of Immanuel Kant's work, with its distinction of theoretical and practical philosophy, but a reaction to the rising dominance of the natural sciences and their epistemological model of knowledge, with its focus on empirical and materialistic reality. It also testifies to the rising self-confidence of the people, who in the area of social and personal realities understood themselves more and more as the subjects and authors of their own histories, nolonger willing to accept those realities as unchangeable, be it by nature, the divine or fate. Consequently, humans conceived themselves as competent to decide what was valuable and generally to evaluate things and persons and even themselves.

So in the 19th century the difference between natural science and the humanities became important, with history being the central discipline within humanities. Humanities are about the human mind and what human beings produce in art and technique, including politics and sometimes science. So, in morals, ethics and politics, everything is about validity and enforcement, not, as in natural science, about facts and truth. In this model a concept is valuable for us, not generally, given only in the acts of appreciation. Then values do not have their origin in the world or in reality or in nature (like in Stoic philosophy), but within human beings, their emotions, their mind-sets and their practices. Value and real existence respective facts have to be distinguished not only epistemologically but as well ontologically. In the realm of real existence we have to deal with facts; in the realm of values we have to deal with validity and enforcement. By the 20th Century, this distinction became prominent as Neo-Kantianism.

The discussion on values derived from this concentration on validity and enforcement: If values originate in human subjectivity, how can they have objective validity? If they're contingent, how can they be objective and atemporal? Are they valid only in certain limited historical times and context, or at all times, in all contexts? And with respect to methodology, if values are subjective, is it proper to describe them empirically on the basis of research, according to the empirical methods of social science, or to give up all attempts at

their theoretical construction as prescriptive norms?

3. Friedrich Nietzsche's famous formula of a "transvaluation of all values" represents the peak of the subjective understanding of values: values grounded only in human subjectivity. In this formula Nietzsche articulated his critique of all previous and present highest values, which were used to give an overall interpretation of all life. With his critique of all previous values, Nietzsche wanted to show that they are strictly the result of people's own appreciations, be they individuals, groups or even whole societies, which are grounded in the end in their will to power. Therefore values are conceived as the result of human inventions or as the result of the process of reinterpreting and transvaluating traditional values.

The alternative to such an understanding of values is obvious: Values that direct the activities of human beings and orient their mind-sets and practices are not invented, but discovered. That is, they will be revealed to humans within the historical progress of a culture. *If values can be discovered, then it is presupposed that values are real and objective, independent oftheir appreciation by human beings.*

This last alternative was formulated paradigmatically in the first half of the 20th century by the German philosophers Max Scheler (1874—1928) and Nicolai Hartmann (1882—1950), who both represented a concept of a *material ethics of value*.[3] According to Scheler, a value is real, regardless of what human subjects appreciate to be valuable. Consequently values are not qualities resulting from their relations to objects or humans Instead, they are material qualities, something in and ofthemselves. They exist independent from the goods, in which values realise themselves. This implies, that values are given a priori. But then they can not be known empirically.

So how can values be known? According to Scheler, values disclose themselves in a kind of specific feeling of value, with its own evidence. Values are then ranked in a hierarchy, which can not be changed. The hierarchy shows itself (note: is grounded and justified) in the preferences of human beings. The hierarchy of values cannot be deduced from rankings, but must be reconstructed in respect to human preferences. For this reconstruction Scheler gave five criteria: 1) a value has a higher rank the endurable it is, 2) the less divisible it is, 3) the less grounded it is, 4) the deeper its feeling satisfies, 5) the less relative its feeling is to those who have the feeling. Surely these criteria can be disputed, but they offer a hint to the problem of core values, that we need criteria, if we want to identify core values among all the many possible values of human beings.

Nicolai Hartmann also wanted to go beyond formalised Kantian ethics and relate ethically responsible decisions and activities of human beings to the concrete fullness of life. The fullness of life is valuable and life is full of values. It is the purpose of philosophical ethics to bring these values with their commitment to clarity and to the awareness of human beings. But Hartmann understood values not as products of human subjectivity, but rather as results of human intellectual discovery. For Hartmann, values are not identical with human life. Human life is contingent, but values are given *a priori* and therefore are not part of the

[3] Cf. M. Scheler, Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik (1913—16), ed. by C. Bermens, Hamburg 2014; N. Hartmann, Ethik (1926), Berlin 41962.

contingency of life. Values have existence in and of themselves. They are part of an ethically ideal sphere of life, close to the sphere of mathematics and logic. Therefore, for example, love or veracity are values independent from the existence of people, who realise in their activities these values or not.[4] But in order to become relevant for the actions and behaviour of human beings, the values have to transcend the ideal sphere, in which they are in themselves what they are, and enter into the vivid and contingent world of moral actions. But then values are confronted with the traditional problem, that in their generality they have to be adapted to concrete singular constellations of life, when they are realised or actualised and become relevant for real life.

4. With the ethical realisation or actualisation of values a further problem is given: quite often not only one value but various values want to be realised or actualised in a real life situationbut they all can not be realised at the same time because of reality. So various values may coexist peacefully in the ideal sphere, although in reality they get into conflict, into a conflict of values. An often used example for this is the conflict between the value of veracity and the value of protecting the life of others, when I would hide somebody in my house from his persecutors and I am asked, if I hide him. In this example the conflict between values is not caused because they contradict each other, but because of the complexity of the situation. Within the complexity of life conflicts between values are caused as well by proponents of single values, who want to suppress other values. If there is a definitely ordered hierarchy of values-as Nicolai Hartmann was arguing for—then values can not be in conflict with each other within their ideal sphere. Conflicts between values can then only result from their realisation within the complexity of life and within that as well because of one-sided preferences for single values against others. Nicolai Hartmann called this a "tyranny of values": the attempt to suppress some values from the feeling and sense of values in favour of a single value or a few values.[5]

Against such a tyranny and the implied conflicts Nicolai Hartmann has developed his model of a material ethic of values with a fixed hierarchy of values given a priori. Because the alternative, to base values on a "subjectivism of valuation," as Hartmann called it, necessarily leads to conflicts and struggles about the final perspectives on life, which then can not be solved rationally because of a lack of adequate arguments. Therefore it becomes necessary to decide between the values in conflict and their respective perspectives on life on the basis of a priori arguments and the real order of values. If values are subjective, then, according to Hartmann, a clash of values is almost necessarily the consequencein the public space. This is because values, which are related to the common life of a society, are inherent and need to be actualised and enforced in public life.

5. The distinctions and alternativesthat we have developed so far and which have to be considered when discussing values, have been questioned in philosophy by modern pragmatism. A book of the American

[4] Cf. N. Hartmann, Ethik, 151

[5] Cf. Eberhard Jüngel Wertlose Wahrheit. Christlose Wahrheitserfahrung im Streit gegen die 'Tyrannei der Werte', in: ibid, Wertlose Wahrheit. Zur Identität und Relevanz des christlichen Glaubens. Theologische Erörterungen Ⅲ, ²2003, 90-109.

pragmatist philosopher Hilary Putnam has the title "The Collapse of the Fact / Value Dichotomy" (2002). In this book one essay has the title "Are Values Made or Discovered?".[6] It is typical for the pragmatist philosophy of Hilary Putnam, that he is not satisfied with traditional distinctions in philosophy. Like his metaphysical model of internal realism, in which he tries to reconcile realism and anti-realism, Putnam argues as well in moral philosophy for a model of "as well as" and not for an "either ... or". Therefore in his understanding, values are neither subjective nor objective. They are grounded in social interaction, which creates a kind of social objectivity for those involved in the interaction. The same is the case with respect to the ontological order of the world, which according Putnam is not given naturally in a simple way, but for which the social, lingual communities have a constitutive function. That values are constituted socially they share with all ontological entities. If this is the case, then the strict distinction between facts and values collapses. But for Putnam this is not a return to a subordination of the orientation of the social and personal life under the facts found out by natural science. Because what we conceive to be a fact is not only the result of a discovery, but also a result of virtues and language systems.

In short, pragmatist models like Putnam's connect virtues and values again with a given reality, discovered by science, but which is already formed by the virtues and values of a social community. One consequence of this model is that we have to accept a plurality of value systems which are closely linked to linguistic communities (speech communities). For example, levels of education or economical perspectives or religion are further parted into sub-cultural groups with specific arrangements of values or different interpretations of joint values. One implication of such an understanding could be that conflicts between values necessarily will lead to conflicts between groups. Such conflicts can then be decided with discussion or violence. Yet they can also be decided with legally ordered processes of communication within and between societies, with as much participation as possible of all people concerned. These can lead to binding agreements without suppressing values. In that case, one of the central values, perhaps the cental value, becomes compromise.

2. Core Values-A European Perspective

Since the French Revolution in 1789, freedom (respective liberty), justice and solidarity are globally considered to be the main ideas of modernity. From the programmatic slogan of the French Revolution," liberty, equality, fraternity," corresponding values were derived. Thus the first answer to the question, which values are core values from a European perspective, would point to the ideas of the French Revolution and give liberty, justice and solidarity the rank of core values.

In Germany we can find these three core values in all relevant political parties. Asan example, we can look at the Social Democratic Party of Germany, which in recent years has given a special emphasis on core values. In 2007, the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), one of the two major German political

[6] Cf. H. Putnam, The Collapse of the Fact / Value Dichotomy and other essays, Cambridge (Mass.) 2002; H. Putnam, Ethics without Ontology, Cambridge (Mass.) 2004.

parties, installed a permanent commission on core values in order to give more profile to the political program of the party. With reference to the core claims of the French Revolution this commission of the SPD declares, that in modern times the purpose of equal liberty has become the embodiment of justice, and that since then liberty, justice and solidarity are the core values of liberal-democratic socialism.[7] For the SPD these core values are the ongoing criteria for the evaluation of political reality, the norm for a better order of society and the orientation for all activities of Social Democrats.

Within the political discussions in Germany the SPD sees its role with regard tothese core values as preserving their unity. The SPD blames the other German political parties for disturbing the harmony between these three core values, because liberals and conservatives tend to promote freedom and weaken justice-or the other way round. In the model of the SPD these three core values are inseparable. They carry the same value, are mutually dependent, and support each other and limit each other. Therefore, Social Democrats avoid one-sided political concepts, when it comes to the practice of core values, like the reduction of freedom to the freedom of the market, of justice to an authoritarian state of law, or of solidarity only to the care for the poor.

The idea of a unity of core values already includes an answer to the question of why there are only three core values. This question may be raised from a Chinese perspective, as in the twelve core socialist values recently proposed: prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, the rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity and friendship). For the SPD, the limitation to three core values comes from their origin in the significance of the French Revolution as the starting point of modern Europe, as well as from the necessity to give a coherent understanding from the unity of the core values.

Therefore the commission on core values of the SPD defines the three core values of liberty (respective freedom), justice and solidarity in a way to show their coherent unity. The SPD[8] defines *liberty* as the possibility of every single citizen to live autonomous. This means, that every human being is called into freedom and is competent to live autonomously. But whether he or she can actually live free depends on society as well. Therefore society needs a certain order. Every human being has to be free from degrading dependencies, from misery and fear. But he or she as well must be given the possibility to develop one's qualities and to participate in society and politics in responsible ways. So the commission on core values of the SPD states that only those who are sufficiently safe in social respect are actually free.

The definition of justiceis based on the equal dignity of every human being. Justice is equal parts libertyand equal opportunities in life, independent of birth or gender. Justice mainly is defined via participation: equal participation in education, work, social security, culture and democracy, and equal access to public goods. Therefore unequal distribution of income and assets is unjust, if it implies that some can command others. And therefore justice requires to have more equality in the distribution of income, assets

[7] Cf. http://www.spd.de/spd_organisationen/Grundwertekommission/themen/ (1st June 2015): "Seit das Ziel der gleichen Freiheit in der Moderne zum Inbegriff der Gerechtigkeit wurde, waren und sind Freiheit, Gerechtigkeit und Solidarität die Grundwerte des freiheitlichen, demokratischen Sozialismus. Sie bleiben unser Kriterium für die Beurteilung der politischen Wirklichkeit, Maβstab für eine bessere Ordnung der Gesellschaft, Orientierung für das Handeln der Sozialdemokratinnen und Sozialdemokraten."

[8] The following definitions are taken from the (German) website of the SPD-commission on core values; cf. http://www.spd.de/spd_organisationen/Grundwertekommission/themen/ (1st June 2015).

and power. But, the commission of the German Social Democratic Party makes explicitly clear that equal opportunity in life is not the same as leveling everyone to the lowest common denominator. Rather, it means creating space for the unfolding of individuality. This is part of justice, because human beings are diverse and should remain so. At the same time, natural dissimilarities and social diversity should never define the fate of human beings.

The core value of *solidarity*, in the understanding of SPD mutual connectivity, means togetherness and help. It is the readiness of people to help each other and stand up for one another, be it among strong and weak people, generations or societies. Solidarity is lived out in spontaneous and individual help, but also within a society with joint rules and organisations and in the form of a social state, as organised and politically guaranteed solidarity.

In summary the SPD sees these three core values realised in the idea of Democratic Socialism with a society of free and equal people.

The definitions of the core values given by the SPD are, first, an example of a European list of core values, and second, characteristic forms of argument in the discussion on core values, in general.[9]

The French Revolutionis already significant as the origin of the three core values. These core values are given at a certain point in history and made plausible by historical experience. If history teaches us something, then this is contextual and contingent. So, these three core values are plausible under certain historical and contextual conditions. Nowadays these conditions have changed totally in Europe, but the same core values still apply. This could be interpreted as a hint that these three core values are not only contingent and contextual, but the result of deep insights into the human condition. Then the idea would be that at a certain point in history something about the reality of values was revealed to the human mind, which from then on was true and valid. That would very much support the concept of Nicolai Hartmann and Max Scheler about the objectivity of values.

Of further significance is that a unity of the three core values is claimed with no hierarchies or preferences or dominance. It is proposed, that disturbances in this unity create problematic political alternatives. But why only three core values? Could there not be more? On the other hand, could there not be just one core value which dominates the others? What is the argumentfor limiting the core valuesand excluding a hierarchy? The limitation in numbers surely comes from the programmatic claim of the French Revolution, which is not by chance, but the result of a long history of discussion in political theory and a long history of struggle for more liberties and participation of citizens within former aristocratic societies.

We can then further see, that these three core values need to be defined. They are obviously ambiguous concepts. For each of these core values a variety of interpretations and definitions is possible and even

[9] For further reading (in English) on the SPD's understanding of core values cf.; Hamburg Programme. Principal guidelines of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, adopted at the Federal Party Conference of the SPD in Hamburg on October 28, 2007 (see: http://www.spd.de/linkableblob/5056/data/hamburger_programm_englisch.pdf). For comparison see the party manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union from the same year 2007, which proposes as well the three core values liberty, justice and solidarity, but gives much more emphasis than the SPD on the significance of families; cf. Freedom and Security-Principles for Germany. Party Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU), agreed during the 21st Party Congress in Hanover 3rd-4th December 2007; (see: http://www.kas.de/wf/en/33.13533).

plausible. Obviously it is not enough, nor is it self-evident, to proclaim some general terms as core values of a society. In order to become concrete in practice, the core values need not only to be named, but interpreted, as well. However, with a diversity of interpretations, we are facing the same problems as before, that the core values can not function as the central orientation of people in a society because their interpretations become more real than the values in itself. Therefore the discussion will be about the true interpretation of these core values, but there will be no argument to decide. It will be up to those in power to decide about the implementation of these core values. Given that scenario, the practical procedure would consider values to be subjective.

The needto interpretcore values relatesback to the alternative discussed in the first part of this paper: are values subjective or objective? In fact, the answer now has to be: are values are subjective and objective? In a certain sense, the aforementioned three core values seem to have a permanent presence in the human mind since they have been proposed once within the history of the (European) human mind. Since then they function as basic orientation for people in their personal life, as well in their ideas of public life and political order. So, to use a pragmatist perspective, the widespread inter-subjective agreement on these core values witness their objectivity. Yet, because of the necessity to interpret them, they seem to be subjective. Their meaning is not given in and of themselves. They are expressed in conceptual terms, in general concepts which integrate many possible realisations and interpretations. The general conceptsevoke very diverse resonances within people, which depend very much from their personal experiences within their cultural, economical and political contexts. To limit such a plurality and diversity of interpretations by prescribing a single accepted interpretation would in fact, confirm their subjective character of. In order to correspond to the objective character of the core values, the process of interpretation has to be kept open and the discussion between diverse interpretations has to go on. But then one further core value in a society becomes important: the value to come to joint decisions and activities in a society by means of clear rules and transparent procedures, which all people agree on. And then the value which I have mentioned earlier becomes important in a harmonious society: the value of compromise.

3. Core Values-in the tradition of Christianity

Quite often the core values of liberty, justice and solidarity are identified with the Christian heritage in Europe. Outside of Europe sometimes Christianity is seen as a promoter of the Western core values stemming from the French Revolution. Especially in Protestant Christianity, this historical narrative has been supported, starting with Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, the well known German philosopher, who first had studied Lutheran theology and who stated that Christianity, especially Protestant Christianity, is the religion of freedom. In a certain sense, in the following decades the theological discussion concentrated on the question of whether Christianity can adapt to the core values promoted by the French Revolution. Unfortunately, with this discussion traditional values of Christianity in Europe became less important, at least in the public discussion on values.

Often within modern European discourses, "Europe" is seen as a counterpart to the "Christian Occident" or "Christian West".[10] Then "Europe" is seen above all as a secular concept of the political and cultural shaping of the European continent, whereas the "Christian Occident" is the concept that the politics and culture of the European continent should be shaped in the spirit of the Christian faith. Occasionally, "Europe" and "Christian Occident" are distinguished only chronologically: the term "Occident" is then "reserved for the history of Europe before 1500", whereas "Europe" is said to designate the relationship between the peoples and states of Europe from this point on.[11] In this distinction, "Europe" denotes a modern phenomenon that should be understood in deliberate distinction from the "Occident", but also from non-European states and peoples. Accordingly, talk of the "Occident" is also a product of modern times.[12] "'Europe' is a humanist word. The name … is a polemical alternative to the 'Christian Occident' … 'Europe' stands for the modern, post-Christian humanism of human dignity, human rights, tolerance, the secular state neutral to religion, just as the 'Occident' stood for the Christian values of life, love of neighbour, compassion and mercy."[13] But Jürgen Moltmann, a prominent German Protestant theologian, is concerned to interpret humanistic Europe as "a historical form of the Christian future hope"[14] and so to relate the modern Europe to the old Christian Occident. According to Jürgen Moltmann the European spirit is stamped by grappling with the divine mystery of hope: "Hope is happiness and torment, and in good and bad the fate of this continent. From the spirit of this hope Europe will be born anew and find its form for the world."[15]

Hope is a virtue, actually a theological virtue. A virtue is a permanent structure of a person's emotions and personality. Being a theological virtue hope is part of Christian's personality and emotions as a result of his or her faith in the triune God. So his or her personality and mind-set generally is characterised by optimism with respect to the future and confidence that life both generally and personally is proceeding in a good and safe direction.

Living in hopeis based on trust in the triune God. It sheds a new light on core values and influences their formation. In fact, core values are rather abstract and complex intellectual criteria for the orientation of people in life in general and in their decisions between good and bad. The discussion on core values in the last decades concentrated very much on core values for a society as a whole. In this respect, liberty, justice and solidarity are important core values of a society. Unfortunately, the old values of Christianity—love of

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〔10〕 Cf. H. -P. Grosshans, Making the Gospel Attractive. The German-language Protestant Churches and their Contribution to the Unity and Freedom of Europe, in: Theology for Europe. Perspektives of Protestant Churches, ed. by M. Friedrich / H. J. Luibl / Chr. -R. Müller, Frankfurt 2006, 280-290.

〔11〕 W. Schweitzer, Art. Europa, TRE, Vol. 10, Berlin 1982, 528-537, 528.

〔12〕 The word is used for the first time in 1529 by Kaspar Hedio and designates the half of Europe which lies geographically to the west from the perspective of Italy-in other words Europe without its eastern parts. Cf. J. Mehlhausen, Abendland, RGG4, Vol. 1, Tübingen 1998, 9f.

〔13〕 J. Moltmann, Göttliches Geheimnis. Die Wiedergeburt Europas aus dem Geist der Hoffnung und der weite Raum der Zukunft, Zeitzeichen 6, Berlin 7/2005, 20-22, 20f.

〔14〕 J. Moltmann, Göttliches Geheimnis, 21.

〔15〕 J. Moltmann, Göttliches Geheimnis, 22.

neighbour, compassion and mercy—have at the same time not had the necessary attention in Europe or elsewhere. . Often the relation of people in a society have become formalised and the cohesion in the society suffered. In respect to these problems the Christian values of love of neighbour, compassion and mercy could be helpful and attractive for modern societies.

In a full system of values, the concept of Charles Taylor[16], who distinguishes wishes of first and second order, has some plausibility. With wishes of second order we wish to have certain wishes of first order, evaluating them in using binary language like "good or bad", "higher and lower", etc. Corresponding judgements Taylor calls powerful evaluations that contrast with weak evaluations, in which we express only preferences. Powerful evaluations refer to the question, what "kind of beings we ... want to be."[17] Valuesused for such powerful evaluations are "articulations of our sense of what is worthy, or higher, or more integrated, or more fulfilling, and so on".[18] According to Taylor, such values are not only expressions of our individual preferences and choices. A horizon of values already exists in the context of a given culture, society and language. They have an objective reality transcending individuals. The question is, then, how do we conceive the horizon of the values, with which we evaluate our wishes of first order? In Taylor's model, this horizon is given with the lingual community of a natural language (like Chinese or German). Often then such a community formed by a joint language is identified with a given society and the dominating culture in that society. Although one may have deep sympathy with such an understanding of language and culture, we still have to ask if there is not a more fundamental horizon in which we have to define our core values? Such a more fundamental and wider horizon would be the idea of a human humanity.[19] As one can learn in the history of European cultures, it was quite often Christianity which upheld specific core values in order to preserve a human humanity within the European people, opposing them with values that reflected only the sense of a specific ethnicity, culture, lingual community orsocial class. That violated the idea of a human humanity. The core values of love of neighbour, compassion and mercy are relevant for the concrete community of human beings. They must be realised and actualised in every single encounter with other human beings. They have a different direction than the modern European core values of liberty, justice and solidarity, which are directed to the general structures and orders of societies. The core values of old Europe, formed in the spirit of Christianity, are directed to the concrete of people in society and beyond. In my diagnosis many modern societies lack these old core values. Their people would be better off in following the values of love of the neighbour, compassion and mercy.

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[16] Cf. Ch. Taylor, What is human agency? Philosophical Papers 1: Human Agency and Language, 1985; idem, Sources of the Self. The making of modern identity, 1989.

[17] Ch. Taylor, What is human agency, 26.

[18] Ch. Taylor: What is human agency: 38.

[19] Cf. H. -P. Grosshans: Paul's Anthropology and Its Contribution to the Formation of Humanity in the Perspective of Reformation Theology: in: The Quest for a Common Humanity. Human Dignity and Otherness in the Religious Traditions of the Mediterranean, ed. by K. Berthelot and M. Morgenstern, Leiden/Boston 2011: 83-99.

中文题目：

核心价值：一个欧洲的视角

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提要：价值不但是人的，而且是社会和政治的出发点。本文首先讨论一些我们在定义或发现相关价值时所遇到的普遍的认识论和方法论问题。这类问题之一是价值是否可能为客观的或它们是否必须是主观的。另一个问题是我们发现和定义价值时必须和可能使用什么资源——而且谁最终将来定义那些在一个社会里的相关性价值。这个问题的一部分然后就是，我们怎么能够从那些外围的或第二位的价值中区分出核心价值来。在讨论了普遍问题之后，本问展示了一个来源于欧洲语境的事例：德国社会民主党所定义的三个核心价值（自由、公正、团结），它们是对 18 世纪末期法国大革命口号的跟随。在本文的第三个部分，涉及的是三个更进一步的可以被成为基督教的核心价值：爱邻舍、同情和怜悯。本文坚持认为，这三个核心价值在现代社会的日常生活中经常被消失掉了，无论是在东方还是在西方，而且这三个核心价值可以使社会更富于人性。

关键词：价值；伦理；基督教信仰；欧洲；人性