

Standpoints in Bioethics

written down in original form on Ascension day 2016 in German language by Dr. rer. nat. Andreas Ernst, Heidelberg-Handschuhsheim; translated into the English language in August 2017.

1. When all humans puke, they will notice that genetic engineering is not the right thing after all.
2. You biotechnologists want to heal a disease with genetic and biotechnological methods and techniques and create with your manipulations a new disease which may be even worse.
3. Research with human embryos: If one lets grow something, one says “Yes” to it. A human being is not a leaf of salad.
4. If an error is being made while cloning cattle, it may be that we cannot eat steaks any longer in the future. This is like if one accidentally changes one line in the initialization routine of a complex computer program. Erroneous cloning may lead to a degenerative illness in later generations, similar to a crash of the computer program. Well, a computer program is not a steak. But the analogy seems to make sense to me.
5. If genetic engineering is applied on a large scale, it may be, that the whole life on earth gets broken. I call this, in analogy to environmental pollution “genetic pollution” or “genetic contamination”. If one changes a few genes it is like changing a few letters in a text. It sounds then like an idiom or dialect.
6. I think that the application of genetic engineering and biotechnology is justified for the treatment of deadly diseases, in particular of young people, who have their whole life still before them, but not for nasal sprays against a cold.