

Abstract

Many authors of ethical texts take human existence automatically as a "benefit" (e.g. Aristotle in the history of philosophy). They see its value as positive, regardless of the quality of the person's life. In the vast majority of cases, they do not support this assumption in any way. It is a question whether this is a trivial claim that does not need to be supported by argumentation. Some contemporary authors show that this claim is not trivial, or even claim that there is no positive value of human existence as such (Benatar). In my work, I want to explore this issue more deeply and deal with what consequences it can have for ethical theories if we accept that human existence does not automatically have to be a positive value. In particular, I want to focus on David Benatar and Derek Parfit. Derek Parfit does not mention Benatar by name anywhere in his texts, however there are passages that could be considered criticism of Benatar. In the first phase of the work, I will explain David Benatar's argumentation and his concept of antinatalism. In the second part, I will present Parfit's defense of the inherent goods of human existence itself. At the end of the work, I will present a possible dialogue between Parfit and Benatar.

Key words

Existence, antinatalism, Benatar, Parfit, value, benefit, harm, Non-Identity Problem, population ethics