

## TO LIVE OR TO SELL

When was the last time that you thought about values? Speaking from own experience, people mostly do that on occasions and events that dramatically affect our living pattern, our living habits. We often resort to contemplation about values when things go very wrong, like in the case of personal tragedies or tragedies, which affect a wider or even global community.

Each person has an own, different, and unique way of perceiving and adopting values. Values are then accordingly internalized. Despite being constant, internalized values are not always realized in everyday life, neither are they realized in the same way each and every time. The right to own personal assets, for example, may be an important value to us, but it does not mean, that we will always advocate this right and experience it the same way, nor that all people will share the same attitude towards it. In other words, we will always find our right to own personal assets more important or merely more relevant to us, than the same right of someone else – which is perfectly understandable. However, it is possible that someone else is going to advocate an opposite opinion concerning the same right. The problem thus is that in this way, values become relative, or that they are at least at the mercy of each individual's subjectivity. A possible interpretation would be that such values are rather questionable regarding their sense or applicability, if their existence as such is not questionable already. For how can something be considered a value and at the same time not be considered a value?

The challenge is therefore, to find a way, a mechanism by which we would achieve that all people would perceive and adopt a certain thing as a value - constantly and in the same way. This is of course utopia, unless we mean manipulating the brain functions, which in turn would transform us into robot-like creatures. But perhaps it isn't that hopeless after all - if we make an effort and try to find a common ground of all things that influence our lives the most. This common ground is definitely money. Money is something, which most people cannot or will not ignore. Money could become the basis, the means to try to annul the subjective moment, which governs the choice of values, the attitude towards them and especially their valuation.

Here the question about the actual worth of values (in money, of course) comes up. Values are an abstract notion and as such, it is difficult to evaluate them the same way we can evaluate things that take on a concrete, material form, like detergent for instance. The price of detergent can be easily set and once it is set, the value of the same detergent is the same for all. The subjective moment does not influence the value of the detergent. If we are lucky, the value of the detergent will be low or at least agreeable to us. However, the opposite may happen as well, but despite of this the value of the detergent will not change. Accordingly, values should be transformed into something that would make us relate to them in the same way we relate to detergent – into a commercial product that is.

Let's take human life as a value; it ranks high for the majority of people, if it not even topping the value scale. So, how much is a concrete human life really worth? This naturally

depends on the individual and the way he sees life. But it is absolutely most valuable to its owner. Considering that we have previously figured out, that it doesn't make a lot of sense to give in to subjective factors, it is necessary to settle the matter in a different way- by trying to create the most objective, practically supported and relevant criteria, by which to efficiently calculate the value of each human life separately. Every human life would hereby be granted a value, although in today's world the lives of some are practically worthless. Additionally, every human life would become a value, which would be completely independent of individual's subjective evaluations and thus constant like the detergent price. These criteria would very likely encompass categories such as gender, age, racial and national affiliation, education, professional expertise, worldview, psychological and physical predispositions, health condition, physical characteristics like height, weight, hairiness, breast size, penis size, criminal record, bad habits such as smoking, drinking, drug abuse, physical activity, personal assets, marital status, number of children, and much more, not even mentioning supply and demand. Yes, this is an interesting idea, but I believe that it is too provocative for the majority and therefore unacceptable. My personal opinion is that it makes a lot of sense from a simple and practical reason. This way we would be forced to stop pretending that each and every human life is indeed valuable. And even if it really was, we must come clean and honestly admit that not every human life as a value is worth the same, which would become quite clear if every person would walk around carrying a label with the price of their own life. This would put an end to our denying the truth. We would solve yet another "problem" by doing so; people much too often tend to evaluate other people based on their appearances and looks, which may prove to be quite misleading. But now, we would perhaps be able to see that the value of a "homeless" person may in fact surpass a "gentleman's".

Fact is that people give in to illusions and by this, one way or another try to simplify their existence, get a good sleep and have a clean conscious. The illusion of life as a value and the worth of life is definitely one of the most blatant. We are daily reminded of this by news from all over the world. But perhaps the point is that an individual alone can give his own life a certain value. This is why I've decided to sell my life.