

## INTRODUCTION

We open this year 2022 and volume XXXIII of our magazine with the sad news of the death of Dr. Justo Aznar, which occurred in November 2021. We deeply regret the loss of Dr. Aznar, a member of our Scientific Council, who leaves a very valuable legacy for Bioethics and who, with his example and efforts as founder of the Bioethics Observatory of the Catholic University of Valencia, always taught that the values defended by Bioethics are peremptory and that they must be constantly watched over. Rest in Peace Dr. Justo Aznar Lucea.

The crisis caused by the pandemic created by COVID-19 has revealed the urgent need to expand the horizons of Bioethics, to bring it to the reflection and solution of problems that concern all human beings and are intrinsically connected to each other.

Today, more than ever, it is necessary to think about human relations and the environment we inhabit, addressing particular and local circumstances from a global horizon, methodology, principles and proposals. Problems are no longer individual; they are now collective and shared, global in scale, persistent over time and require collective efforts to mitigate and eradicate them. These are the slogans with which global bioethics emerged from that first article by Van Ranssaeler Potter, *Bioethics: The Science of survival*, in 1970, which a year later became a book under the title *Bioethics: A bridge to the future*, which proposed that bioethics, concerned about the future of humanity, should act as a bridge connecting science and its advances with ethical reflection and human values, so that all those problems that arise in specific contexts, but which in turn have repercussions on the life and health of individuals and communities, should be the subject of bioethics studies.

For years, this original intention was distorted, to the point of cornering bioethics only in the medical field and framing it in the doctor-patient relationship. But more and more frequently, and now even more so with the evidence of the pandemic that afflicts us, it is urgent and not only necessary to think about the world, blurring borders and considering the problems as multiple and complex in their repercussions.

For this reason, in this issue we make an effort to take a global look at the social, political, geographical and cultural problems that affect life and health from the perspective of global bioethics.

In the first article, «COVID-19 and global bioethics», Henk ten Have, a great scholar of global bioethics, starts from the premise that this pandemic has generated not only a multiplication of publications on bioethics, but has also highlighted the interconnectivity of realities, differentiated human vulnerability, lack of preparation and improvisation, which, in turn, has generated different responses among nations in their attempts to contain contagions and reduce deaths from the SARS-COV-2 coronavirus.

The author proposes three approaches used at this time to respond to the pandemic: a) *exceptionality*, where actions are assumed to be normal and legitimate that in another context of less urgency and ignorance would not be; b) *controllability*, which is based on the belief that the virus can and should be controlled and, for this, the metaphor of war is used, which justifies control actions, even when they seem to be excessive and, c) *the binary approach*, which highlights the differences and generates dichotomies regarding the ways in which the virus affects each person, and generates different positions on action protocols against each one.

Global bioethics, the author concludes, helps to recover *the relationality* between people, as well as *solidarity*, fundamental principles to recover dignity and protect the health of all human beings.

In the second article, «Bioethics and global justice. Critical analysis of the global COVID-19 vaccination strategy», Cristina de la Cruz raises the ethical problem of the criteria for the distribu-

tion of vaccines from global justice, and makes an analysis of the Plan of the International Monetary Fund for the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic-2, which has a double objective: achieve vaccination equity and thus achieve the defeat of the virus.

The author recalls that global justice dilemmas must address two concerns: recognizing that there are cross-border obligations and elucidating a normative framework in terms of distributive justice that executes these obligations.

Thus, the global justice problem in the case of COVID vaccines moves between world governance and global markets, also becoming a geopolitical problem.

The article discusses some proposals for a fair distribution of vaccines, under the assumption that all countries should have the right to access them, since health is a common good and health is an international human right. From the «fair priority» approach to that of preference for the most vulnerable, passing through utilitarian criteria, global justice faces the problem of classifying inequalities and prioritizing them.

The third article, «Global Bioethics: New arguments on animal rights?», By Gómez Álvarez, allows a renewed discussion around the original problem of whether animals have rights or not and, after analyzing the existing bibliography, discovers that the arguments used are almost always the same, with the exception of some new ones.

The arguments that Gómez Álvarez discovers almost always have a common basis, which is the affirmation that there are no qualitative leaps between animals and humans, in such a way that there is no justification for a superiority of species that can dominate and use the other considered inferior. This basis is proven at the moment when this supposed superiority collapses in the face of the verification of the evolutionary line

A novel argument mentioned by the author is Latin constitutionalism, which affirms the interdependence of all living beings, by recognizing human nature as Mother Earth.

Despite these findings, Gómez Álvarez proposes that, in effect, there is a qualitative difference between animals and human beings, which lies in their capacities. This debate remains the cornerstone of the dilemma over animal rights.

The fourth article, «Bioethical implications in the “contagion effect” of suicide», by Érika Benítez, looks at a painful reality that has become more acute in this time of pandemic, which is suicide.

The perspective from which the author addresses this problem is from the role and responsibility of the media in the “contagion effect” of suicide. She argues that, by reproducing images and news of suicides, the media contributes to increasing risk factors for suicidal behavior. In the same way, it highlights other elements, such as the place in which the news is placed in the printed media, the time of coverage, the statement on the media used, which can further increase exposure and contribute to the contagion effect; hence, they must have an ethical and bioethical responsibility in their work.

From a bioethical perspective, it is important to strengthen this responsibility based on the principles of respect for human dignity, vulnerability, sociability and subsidiarity, mainly, although the others should also be considered and incorporated in the regulations.

The following article, «Comparison of NaProTechnology with Assisted Reproductive Techniques», by Pasquale Gallo and Joseph Tham, presents an interesting approach to NaProTechnology in comparison with assisted reproductive techniques.

The NaProTechnology proposal, for these authors, represents a more ethical alternative with fewer risks and implications than human reproduction techniques, in that it analyzes and detects the internal and physiological factors and conditions, as well as the external and environmental ones that affect fertility and prevent the conception of a child. It also focuses on providing a solution, and not only on the process of assisted procreation as the rest of the techniques do, which is why they propose that it should be financed by governments and recommended by medical societies.

Thus, they affirm that NaProTechnology even complies with religious considerations that are important from the Church's magisterium, such as preserving the unitive and procreative function of sexuality and respect for human life from conception to natural death. Likewise, it entails fewer medical risks and has fewer social and legal implications, since it presents problems yet to be resolved regarding the right to filiation. For all these reasons, they present NaProTechnology as a more ethical alternative.

Finally, in the sixth article of this issue, «Self-assessment of the knowledge and application of the code of conduct by public health care workers in Tlaxcala», Óscar Castañeda and Rosalba Jaramillo make an interesting analysis of the adherence to the codes of conduct of public servants in a hospital in Tlaxcala, the objective is to prove that the greater the adherence to the code, the higher the level of user satisfaction and the better the quality of the services provided, concluding that the majority of public servants do adhere to principles such as responsibility, honesty, service and honesty.

Finally, the review presented on the book «Bioethics» by Guerrero Martínez, offers a novel literature in the field of bioethics, since it analyzes topics that are not limited to the field of clinical bioethics, but range from the use of biotechnologies to, once again, the debate on animal rights and, also, in that they are addressed and reflected from the philosophical viewpoint of great thinkers such as Kierkegaard, Gadamer, Derridá and Nussbaum.

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