

## "Bioethics – Sign of a New Era: Bioethics, Media, Law and Medicine" (21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2011, Ohrid, Macedonia)

As a modern science which leaves its mark with an increasing indicator of interest almost 20 years backwards, the organizers of this event, assoc.prof. Ph.D.Dejan Donev and ass.master Marija Todorovska, with the help from the Institute for Journalism, Media and Communications, Faculty of Law "Justinianus I" – Skopje and the Centre for Integrative Bioethics – Kumanovo, on 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2011, introduced the First International Conference of Bioethical character in the Republic of Macedonia.

Under the name "Bioethics – Sign of a new era: Bioethics, Media, Law and Medicine", around 30 participants (professors, scientists, journalists, social workers) exchanged thoughts and ideas on the bioethics represented in multiple sectors. From the very beginning, with the arrivals of the participants, on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011 in the Congress centre of "St. Cyril and Methodius" University in Ohrid, came the first informal discussion in positive vibrations and positive atmosphere, about the idea for this event, first of its kind in our country. On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2011, the organizer, assoc.prof. Ph.D. Dejan Donev officially opened the conference emphasizing that it is about "a concept of integrative bioethics trying to unite knowledge, ideas, tendencies and problems of life in general, with its integration and pluri-perspectivity through the inalienable and infallible role that media has in this effort... sharing ideas in terms of bioethics and journalism, law and medicine, especially the explored results from the participants", at the same time undeniably correct justifying the intention for organizing an international conference of this type in the region, especially in Republic of Macedonia.

After the introduction, as well as the greetings letter from the President of Macedonia, prof. Ph.D. Gjorge Ivanov, the working part begun with the presentation "Bioethics: Problems of its Defining and Scope" from prof. Ph.D. Amir Muzur (Croatia). Analyzing the departing enthusiasm with bioethics as an imported discipline, using the example of the spreading paths of bioethics in Croatia in the 1990s, the author explained the implications of the discovery of the work of Fritz Jahr, who in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century already conceived bioethics more widely than its present

overwhelming ranges would suggest. In conclusion, Mr. Muzur made an attempt to objectively estimate bioethics as well as its place and importance in modern society. The next presentation belonged to Iva Rincic (Croatia), working on the theme "Rijeka declaration for the future of bioethics" through the original and undoubtedly valuable ideas of the two "fathers" of bioethics – Fritz Jahr and Van Rensselaer Potter, placing the thesis that "via the enlargement of the content and the employment of methodology of pluriperspectivism, this new *integrative* bioethics can mediate between the legitimate requests for spreading disciplines, respecting cultural diversity, and the capability to turn into legislation." After her, father (fra) Luka Tomasevic's from Croatia delivered the next presentation. He worked on the theme "Human Life and Dignity" emphasizing that F. Bacon's main goal – overwhelming nature in favor of the men, means opening Pandora's box and suffering from its consequences. Hence, using the words of professor Ph.D. Ante Covic, father (fra) Tomasevic confirms the thesis that "the men passed the anthropological frame of responsibility and *de facto* entered in the theological dimension of responsibility."

"Are you bioconservative, transhumanist, or something in between? Take the test and find out" was the theme of the presentation that Marija Selak (Croatia) gave. In this text, on questions concerning human dignity and possibilities of moral choice, the transhumanism argumentation with an accent on Bostrom's work on one side, and the bioconservatism thinking (F. Fukuyama, J. Habermas) on the other were presented. The elaboration of the Sloterdijk – Habermas case, is just one of the analyzed events for explaining the debates between transhumanists and bioconservativists. Right after her, professor Ph.D. Denko Skalovski (Macedonia) presented his material, who, beginning with the ontological, the epistemological, and ethical premises through the legal and political spheres, tries to reach the educational and cultural forms. Thus, he formed a wholesomeness of a new, ecological social order. In forms of thesis he presented the theme "Bioethics as One of the Abundance of Ecological Terms". Zeljko Kaludzerovic (Serbia) discussed on "Transgenic organisms – pro et contra". Taking into consideration opinions from both proponents and opponents of this "revolutionary" method, the author attitude is that we should not *a priori* reject, but cautiously explore these new, insufficiently studied technologies. The author is also of the opinion that this region and Europe as a whole is not in any need of transgenic organisms, either in agricultural production or in the food chain at this moment. As one of the main problems that might occur as a motive, says the author, is the intentional breeding of GMO's.

Session number 2, was planned for the collaborative work by Silvana Karacic (Croatia) and Elena Shataeva (Russia) which was related to "Children Observers in the Circle of Violence and Social Support". The aim of this research was to examine to

what extent the children, observers of violence, sympathize with the victim, and how many of them would join the acts of violence, as well as to determine the degree of social support among children at schools. In the research that both authors conducted, 150 children from "Ostrog" school in Kasteli participated. After this presentation, Agima Ljaljevic (Montenegro) had her materials presenting on the theme "The Incidence of Variococele in the Population of 7-26 years of Age and the Importance of Early Ligatures of Spermatic Veins" thus analyzing the significance of varicoceles one of the most frequent causes for male infertility. The aim is to establish the frequency of varicocele in male population aged 7 to 26 years and pointing out to the significance of timely spermatic vein ligation as means of preventing male infertility.

The text and presentation on theme "Placebo in Drug Development and Medical Practice: Pros and Cons" were prepared by three authors: Zoran Todorovic (Serbia), Branislava Medic (Serbia) and Milica Prostran (Serbia), and in it, the history of use of the placebo was elaborated. Why – placebo and the uncertainty with this notion. In conclusion, the question of placebo use is still far from being resolved. Then, professor Ph.D. Bardhyl Chipi (Albania) presented "Ethics in the Osteological Studies" emphasizing that ethics concerns the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment in osteological studies from different fields, for example forensic medicine, anatomy, anthropology, archaeology etc. In his presentation Mr. Chipi discussed many of the ethical questions that come up in practice of forensic medicine and the real help for reaching efficiency in the work of the people that belong to those professions. Before the break, after this session, there was a discussion panel opened, which lasted approximately 15 minutes, with both questions and answers from participants.

After the break, "The Bioethical Syllabus" was presented by professor Ph.D. Nada Gotic (Croatia) as a syllabus that has two tasks: to serve as an aid for the professors in their attempts to transmit the material to their students, and to point out outcomes from the corresponding bioethical education. Zaklina Trajkovska – Ancevska (Macedonia) presented the theme "Bioethical Aspects of Doctor-Patient Relation", at the same time taking into consideration the problem with the communication, from an ethical aspect, on resolving and improving the relation, and as a result, the medicinal treatments.

After this presentation and the discussion, a meeting was planned for the Regional coordination group for bioethical education. The rest of the day was free for making friendship, out of the sessions and presentations, and for walks and guides through Ohrid's sights and natural (bioethical) beauty.

Session number 3 was held the next day. The opening of session 3 started on Sunday morning. Marko Trajkovic (Serbia) and father (fra) Niko Josic (Serbia) were discuss-

ing on "The Axiological Approach to the Legal Norm" understanding the legal norm as a logical and obligatory formulation of value. Marija Todorovska (Macedonia) was presenting on the theme "Natural Law vs. Legal Positivism in Bioethical Disputes". In the text, author was elaborating the connection between the theory of moral law in frames of ethics and the legal theory of natural law, analyzing its contrariety with legal positivism, through short examples referring to the problems of bios – such as the basic notions of respecting life and dignity, the right for property, the functioning of natural and acquired human rights and the implications of the intensification of the importance of these issues in the contemporary development of bioethical discourse. The last presentation in Session 3 was assigned for "Medical criminal law – a challenge of the new era" from the authors prof. Ph.D. Nikola Tupancevski (Macedonia) and ass.master Dragana Kiprijanovska (Macedonia). The paper elaborates a few conceptual issues regarding the development and status of the medical criminal law in the new categorical system of values, which is substantially influenced by the so-called modern, technocratic or aggressive medicine. Another 15 minutes pause followed after finishing Session 3, with questions and answers resolved for the themes that were presented.

The opening of Session number 4 belonged to Sonja Antonic (Serbia) elaborating the mass media (TV, print media) as the most interesting emitters of bioethical themes. "What kind of responsibility is in question?", "How is this responsibility distributed among participants in media system?" and "Are media workers, and if they are, to what extent are they aware of their own responsibility regarding bioethical themes?", were just a part from the key questions Antonic asked. The next presentation belonged to one of the most renowned Macedonian journalists from *the health* sector, Menche Atanasova – Tochi (Macedonia) with the theme "The Healthcare in Macedonia Viewed from Journalistic Perspective". Her presentation was emotionally perceived by the others because of the case in Macedonian healthcare with the little Boshko. As a journalist from that (health) field, and motivated from the weaknesses in that sector, Atanasova – Tochi finished the presentation with a key question "How to get a better healthcare?"

At the very end of this two-day conference, an exchange of productive and useful information and incentive for productive discussions as initiators for further conferences, the organizer of the conference Dejan Donev (Macedonia) himself also had his presentation. With these last words from the author of the theme "Bioethics and Journalism – Appendix to the Bioethical Education of Journalists", session 4 was closed. In his presentation Donev wrapped up the dilemma "How to Give a Bioethical Education to Journalists". Describing the mass media's big influence in general, the author says "what we need, is the creation and training of generation of journal-

ists with developed bioethical sensibility in their reporting, which can be formed through its bioethical education, i.e. establishing and implementing a syllabus for bioethical education of journalists".

With this last presentation, The First Conference of bioethical character in Republic of Macedonia was officially closed. The informal discussions from the very beginning to the very end, in positive vibrations and atmosphere, as well as the exchanged contacts for further collaboration, are just part of the positive factors that bring hope for this event becoming a tradition, and a lot more participants from other sectors, fields, spheres would strive to exchange ideas and thoughts on the table where a lot of questions are getting their answers, and a lot of problems are getting their solutions, for Bioethics or science in general.

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