Abstract

In this paper I intend to put forward some criticism of the purely procedural model of bioethics, which, in fact, leads to delegating to biopolitics and biolaw the finding of a purely pragmatic solution to the issues for which bioethics was “invented” over forty years ago. This delegating takes place after the transition from the thesis, dear to modernity, whereby in ethics reasoning should avoid any discussion regarding its foundation or ultimate justification (Etsi Deus non daretur) to the contemporary affirmation of a substantial ethical agnosticism, which, in the name of the incommensurability of morals, should construct procedures as if no sole substantial moral were possible (Etsi ethos non daretur) and act as a guarantor of ethical pluralism. These theses will be discussed and an attempt will be made to demonstrate why it is necessary to establish a link between true and good, and how this is possible only by referring to ontology. The conclusion points to the need to propose bioethics explicitly in terms of content that satisfies the presumed axiological neutrality of procedural bioethics, which however, turns out to be theoretically weak and practically unable to protect the ethical pluralism for which it would like to be the guarantor. The conclusion is that only by referring to ontology can bioethics, which is a fully fledged form of moral philosophy, act as a guarantor of pluralism within the truth and oppose the authoritarian tendencies concealed under the liberal guise of ethical agnosticism.

Keywords

Bioethics, moral philosophy, pluralism.