

Conference Abstract

13th WORLD CONGRESS OF BIOETHICS

„INDIVIDUALS, PUBLIC INTERESTS AND PUBLIC GOODS:

WHAT IS THE CONTRIBUTION OF BIOETHICS?”

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Title: **Is Bioethics a Side Effect of Global Biopolitics? Biocapital and the Recent Critique of Bioethics**

Abstract text: Bioethics, as a discipline, has been repeatedly criticized on the ground of social sciences (Turner, 2009). In recent years, this criticism was joined by sociologists and anthropologists involved in the theory of biopolitics, who have been exploring the world of modern medicine and global pharmaceutical industry. As Nikolas Rose wrote: “Bioethics (...) has indeed become an essential part of the machinery for governing the bioeconomy; for facilitating the circuits of biological material required for the generation of biocapital” (Rose, 2008, p. 47). The main research question is whether such criticism concerning bioethics is justified - in other words, do sociologists understand the global medicine better than bioethicists? Or, perhaps, could the theory of biopolitics be a refreshing source of inspiration in the field of bioethics?

During the presentation, the various aspects of contemporary critique of bioethics will be discussed, including those related to the sociological and anthropological interpretation of such phenomena as clinical trials in developing countries (Waldby & Cooper, 2014) and personalized medicine (Sunder Rajan, 2012). Research findings will be based on conceptual analysis supported by literature on the subject.

In conclusion, it will be shown that the critique of bioethics is partly justified. However, bioethics as a discipline cannot be reduced to a side effect of global biopolitics. Some hopes of raising awareness about biopolitical dimension of bioethical discussions can be associated with such categories as vulnerability or justice.

The presentation will have an original character because, so far, no attempts were made to integrate bioethical and biopolitical perspectives.

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