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EDITORIAL**The philosophy's legacy to *our time*: Aristotle, Rawls and Bioethics**

Bioethics training has become increasingly necessary in the current challenging circumstances of our future as a species. It is no coincidence that national and international institutions and organizations emphasize; today more than in the recent past, the idea of preserving human life as we know it, including life in general and everything that fosters it. Great humanistic scaffolding has been rebuilt globally to carry forward the idea of maintaining the human lifeworld as we know it, precisely because the human foundations are increasingly compromised by virtue of the scientific and technological developments that have brought about the current state of technoknowledge. And when we speak of human foundations, we are referring to the core issue that makes our nature precisely human nature. Human life is the life of the species, and this is so, thanks to the sociality that characterizes us precisely because we are endowed with reason, language, and something that is essential to both, our spirit of life.

There cannot be human life without the rationality that characterizes it; nor can there be human life without the materiality proper to every entity that possesses extension. However, an element that is present in the idea of human being is precisely the one that shows it in the three-dimensionality by which Aristotle characterizes it: matter, form, and soul. Inert matter has no soul, according to the philosopher; but every entity that possesses movement has one, distinguishing, as we know, three stages of the essence of human life: the vegetative soul, the sensitive soul and the rational soul; the first two are in the rank of the irrational. It should be noted that inanimate beings do not possess a soul; this is only proper to animate beings. Of the living beings, called animate, at least the human being possesses these three “Aristotelian” souls. The others possess them alternately.

In this way, Aristotelian rationality is highly related, or better, consubstantiated with the emotionality of life; that is, the problem of emotions is interrelated with rationality. However, what I want to emphasize here is the fact that the soul is a vital part of the philosopher's conception of the shaping of the material world in which the human being finds himself contextualizing his existence. The irrationality of the soul really has to do with the vitality of life; that is, the sensitive soul and the vegetative soul are two essential moments of the existence of human life. However, it is emphasized in his conception that the vegetative soul

is proper to every living being to procure nourishment, or even, its deployment as such a living being. The other, the sensitive soul, is proper to living beings by which they deploy their appetites (their "desire" for action), fulfillment of their desires or their existential will, and even, as mentioned before, emotions: it is proper to all animals, including non-rational ones.

Thus, those two souls are unified in the human being together with the third category of the classification shown by Aristotle: the rational soul. In reality, what we are dealing with here is that the so-called "instincts" of survival, if we understand well the three-dimensionality of the soul, are present in all living beings. It is the reason why we see, for example, the beaver building a dam to feed and procreate, or birds constructing, by intricate designs, their nests to nest and procreate their chicks. However, we see humans building bombs to destroy cities and lives (their niches), or designing industries that are highly harmful to the planetary ecosystem. Truly, in the light of Aristotelian essentialist philosophy, this human reason is not very understandable. If the rational soul is the one that allows us to know, in Aristotelian terms, the eternal, the perfect and the immutable, we do not understand how it is that the instrumental reason that characterizes scientific thought proposes to develop knowledge that is capable of deconfiguring existence; that is, of destroying it.

However, what I want to highlight here is the idea of the ontological question that is present in Aristotelian philosophy in order to understand a little of the underlying problem that is unfolding like gas in the environment about the dimensions of human living matter. Its materiality, being constituted by that three-dimensionality mentioned, places us on a safe path to be able to deploy life without further ado. But, in spite of this, we think of the transformations that are taking place in the context of the existence of inert matter and also in living matter. From this perspective, we see a rather steep road ahead due to the speed with which the present technique is modifying living matter, even seeking the fusion of matter, form and rationality from the new matter created. This fusion, which operates within the principles that inform life (described by biology as the science of life) is really a problem that is about to present its own dilemmas, in the light of the Aristotelian logic of life.

All of the above makes us think about a core issue from the current ethics of science that bioethics has become, even present since its

origins with Fritz Jahr (MARTIN SASS, 2011): the relationship between technology, nature and life. This relationship, which in modern science was clear, in the current context of technical deployment is increasingly blurred. The creation of matter that is not in the printed program in the genetics of life in general, but also the fusion of matter and thought that is occurring in the so-called artificial intelligence technologies, are just two examples of the challenges that arise from the development of new technologies (which at other times we have categorized as digital technologies, or as disruptive technologies). But the most important thing that is happening within the human structure is the one that goes in the way of modification and alteration of human nature itself, through genetic engineering, despite the prohibitions, for example, of cloning and genetic modification at the germ level.

Interpreting Aristotle's philosophy in the light of these changes in the panorama of technical deployment implies observing the question of science from the ontological point of view of bioethics, precisely because it deals with the modification of the environment by means of human action, something that the philosopher did not contemplate; firstly, because it deals with the modification and creation of entities; and secondly, because it deals with the application of a logic of intervention that threatens the niche itself and the very existence of humans and the ecosystem. As for the first, if we consider genetic modification, what would we be talking about, whether of new matter or of the creation of souls; and as for the second, because what has been said goes against any logic of survival, which Aristotle could not have thought of, as indeed he did not think. These questions are not clear, not even at the propositional level as a problem; that is, we do not understand the problem yet. Therefore, what we are thinking about is that it is not an ethical problem, but an ethical- ontological problem.

As can be seen from the above comments, we are witnessing the transit of what human empiricism would be incapable of thinking; or even of conceiving: to transit from the statements of being to those of ought to be, but in the sphere not of thought but of action. That is, to cross the lines that mark the territory of ontology with those of ethics. In this way, a new line of thought is being created that is conceived from this onto/ethos relationship. Bioethics, from Aristotelian ontology, is visualized as an ontological-practical but also theoretical-practical discipline, from which human action is reflected upon in the sense of its "essence" as such, to use the Aristotelian terminology that describes action. The current transformation of existence, referred to in the

previous paragraphs, is conceived as a challenging phenomenon of philosophical intelligence, for which we must begin by outlining the lines that allow us to travel along these eventful paths of the transformation of life. This is what bioethics is called to do.

And it is precisely for this reason that we take a leap in time from those moments lived by society in Aristotle's time, to interpret our reality and thereby define, or at least attempt to do so, our research problem, a matter that escapes these thick lines of my own thinking (at least, it is an attempt). Aristotelian philosophy is being the object of new readings from these lines of reflection, as attested by the Chilean master Alfonso Gómez-Lobo (2006), who reinterprets the metaphysics of this classical philosopher from the perspective of the essential unity that constitutes the human embryo and the adult that unfolds from this essential nature of life. And precisely what it is about, as the Chilean states, is to find interpretative solutions to the ontological questions arising from the transformation of the human genome, and its essential manifestation as life as such, a question that bioethics deals with precisely as a philosophical discipline, rather than as an ethical discipline, although also as such.

From all of the above I want to bring back the idea of the reinterpretation of philosophy in general as a product of what I have indicated at the beginning, the problem of the transformation of nature and of human nature. And in this connection, another essential aspect derives that is of vital importance to understand, namely that of human sociability and the discussions on the rules for a better life, if this is possible, judging by the socio-political events of the last forty years. The subject of human sociability would not seem to be a subject for bioethics, but for ethics as such a primordial or original discipline. But it is precisely there where the change takes place. That is to say, we enter into a new way of living from the very moment in which we are considered as part of the complexity of life. Life and human life as a whole are integrating elements of the individuality of each one of us. Our genetics is in the same sense socially complex.

The above reasons lead us to think about how to establish balance and harmony within the framework of techno-scientific processes which, due to adverse consequences, imply a certain destabilization of social networks, and of which classical ethics is already beginning to show signs of theoretical wear and tear in the face of the brittle nature in which conflicts arise; especially social conflicts, such as health care, education,

basic infrastructure for a dignified life such as roads, bridges, but also technological endowment and reform of education programs for a new citizenship, which arises hand in hand with the processes of socio-technical transformation.

We find ourselves living in what RAWLS (1995) would say an original moment, in such a way that it propitiates the emergence of a new social contract. Rawls' ethics is a neo-contractualist ethics, because beyond the classical contractualists such as Hobbes and Rousseau, he affirms that the society in course (he speaks of the society of the middle and last third of the twentieth century), was formed by a contract carried out by individuals who were covered with a certain veil of ignorance, and of an original position to negotiate the rights and resources of the individuals that make up society, but also those of society itself as a whole. However, in these circumstances as described above, the question focuses not only on the available resources and economic rights, but also on how we want to preserve the classical values of society as such.

Beyond the issues of psychological manipulation of individuals, current liberalism is characterized by constantly keeping society as a whole prey to technological developments; and that is what I am getting at. Freedom in terms of techno-scientific development requires that society as a whole enters into a socio-political process such as the one described by Rawls in the original position: a series of individuals representing the interests of humanity (no longer of society), to project life into the future, notwithstanding the imbalances caused by the possession of knowledge, in the power of those who by the work of the dynamics that conforms it is also held, which transforms in all its instances the social life of the human being, but also this one. In this, science fiction makes us think of the misfortunes that could befall us in the event of surviving alongside beings unimaginably of a nature other than the traditional human one. Transhumanism shakes our foundations.

From the above, it follows that human life, being social, depends greatly on the way in which we can negotiate the society of the future, understanding by "negotiate", the discussions that must be held, and are being held, regarding the use of knowledge for noble purposes, as is to be expected. Perhaps Rawls' ethics is not the most appropriate to interpret this aspect of knowledge and its social effects, but we must recognize that we are facing a change of social and human paradigm, which is why we can also interpret that we are facing a new "original position", although no longer of economic and social rights, as in the case of Rawls,

but of the rights to live in a natural context as it is known today; that is, without technoscience transforming the human nature of humanity, nor the natural nature of nature itself.

Thus, from these editorial lines, we outline some of the core issues that bioethics will have to face in all its splendor as a discipline that deals with the critique of techno-scientific development, which is how we think it should be seen, especially since the first developments when it emerged as a philosophical discipline concerned with the actions of science in environmental contexts and the dignified treatment of animals; although it was not until Potter that it began to be seen as a discipline concerned with bridging the gap between the natural sciences and the humanities, thus aspiring to respect for human dignity. We think rather that dignity is towards life rather than towards human life. Thus, the relationship between Aristotelian metaphysics and Rawlsian socio-legal ethics, appear as interpretative resources through which we could find answers to the questions we have not yet asked ourselves.

In this way, that is, by reinterpreting the classics of ethics and philosophy, we could find answers to these great questions, which are derived from the current techno-scientific turn and its consequences in the socio-political, anthropological and ethical-legal spheres, in addition to the socio-technical questions that always arise from scientific revolutions, such as the one we are currently going through as a society. However, we are only at the threshold of the radical transformations that will come in all areas, so that the society of the future, and the future of human nature, are in full redesign despite the fact that, in the view of some interpreters, they are only mere discourses without foundations or empirical evidence. I believe that we are going through a change of nature, both socially and humanly, as a result of technoscience and techno-knowledge.

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