

## Bioethical Philosophical Dialogue under the Hegemony of Scientific Progress

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### Abstract

Bioethics is considered one of the new fields of knowledge concerning ethical issues arising from the outcomes of biological and medical research involving human beings. It does so by establishing a set of moral values intended to guide the work and research of physicians and scientists and by determining their ethical parameters to preserve human life and dignity. This has led philosophers to direct their attention toward bioethics, regarding it as a fundamental point of reference for discussing and raising their questions through the diagnosis of lived reality and its treatment from a critical perspective. Such a perspective seeks to establish a new space for philosophising, aiming to understand, interpret, and analyse the reality of human life. This, in turn, has given rise to a bioethical philosophical dialogue that examines the transgressions imposed by scientific progress and seeks to establish new ethics specific to the sciences. These ethics contribute to the continuation of philosophical discourse concerning the legitimacy of science and represent the future of philosophical inquiry in the ethical domain.

**Keywords:** Bioethics; philosophy; scientific progress; ethics of science; medicine; biology; ethics.

### INTRODUCTION

Bioethics is regarded as a new field of knowledge concerned with investigating the future of human nature, which has come to exist in a state of crisis as a result of immense scientific development and progress that threatens human existence, particularly since the human being has become a slave to his own inventions and innovations in the biological and medical sciences. These issues have led to the emergence of risks and crises that threaten the future and dignity of the human being, prompting bioethics to ally itself with philosophy to establish a new ethical project aimed at putting an end to the transgressions produced by scientism and its repercussions for the human being's destiny. Through its questions and its critical, holistic vision, philosophy has thus sought to reconsider and investigate the legitimacy of science and technology and to determine their ethics on the basis of the scientific, biological, and medical

findings and research that have constituted a source of concern for the human being. This has made bioethics a fundamental reference point for philosophers in discussing and posing their questions through the diagnosis of human reality and its treatment according to a new vision that ensures the continuity of philosophical discourse by moving from the theoretical domain to the domain of action and practice, proceeding from bioethics to establish new ethics specific to the sciences and serving as a meeting point between science and morality. This is what has made bioethics, as a new field of knowledge, concerned with the study of ethical issues related to the results of biological and medical research concerning human beings through the establishment of a set of moral values whose aim is to guide the work and research of physicians and scientists and to determine their ethics to preserve human life and dignity. This leads us to pose a series of questions that serve as keys to revealing the role of philosophy in consolidating bioethics as a new field of knowledge. Hence, we ask the following: What is bioethics? What is the significance of bioethical philosophical dialogue under the hegemony of scientism? How has bioethics contributed to the continuation of philosophical discourse? What is the role of philosophy in establishing bioethics as a new ethical thought? Has bioethics been able to accompany human reality and put an end to the transgressions arising from scientific and technological progress?

### **Bioethics and Scientific Progress**

Contemporary human beings live in perplexity and astonishment because of the dangers posed by science and its applications, which threaten humanity as a whole. This has led to reactions on the part of philosophers and scientists who have sought to analyse the causes of this state of crisis and to find the necessary solutions for narrowing the gap between human thought and scientific and technological progress, attempting to move toward an ethical philosophical discourse that grants legitimacy to ethical questions to preserve human beings and their dignity from the biological and medical practices that have sought to alter the features of human nature. For “the immense scientific progress in the field of biology and genetic engineering, as in the field of informatics, in addition to the effects of industry and technology on the natural environment on the one hand, and the danger posed by weapons of mass destruction to all humanity on the other, the progress of science in these fields, as in others, has led, or is liable to lead, to consequences that are entirely at odds with the ethical values that have been consecrated since the dawn of human history, in all societies, and among the various religions and philosophies, as an essential element in the humanity of the human being, if not its sole essential element.”<sup>1</sup>

The truth is that there is an insistence on the necessity of adhering to ethics as the essential element in directing the work and research of physicians and scientists in a manner that serves humanity, especially since contemporary human beings have come to lack the ethical awareness that could help them overcome those fears and awaken their sense of values, “so that they may once again look anew at the world of things and persons with a penetrating eye that sees values and grasps meanings, and thus that spiritual world which they themselves have closed against themselves may be opened before them.”<sup>2</sup> This is what Van Rensselaer Potter sought to emphasise in his book *Bioethics: Bridge to the future*, by addressing the future of the human being

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Abed Al-Jabri, *Issues in Contemporary Thought*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1997), 36.

<sup>2</sup> Zakaria Ibrahim, *The Moral Problem* (Dar Misr for Printing, n.d.), 13.

under the hegemony of science and technology, to establish a bioethical philosophical discourse for engaging with issues about the reality of human life. He sought to concern himself “with the paradox existing between the immense development of biology and biotechnological applications on the one hand and the consideration of these applications from the perspective of their ethical outcome on the other. Here, Van Rensselaer Potter called for reflection on practices and applications. The term bioethics, therefore, made possible a connection between science and its applications on the one hand and the critical approach imposed by philosophy on the other.”<sup>3</sup>

This was to reflect on biotechnological practices and applications and their relationship to ethics to preserve human existence amid the hegemony of scientific and technological development, which has come to raise many fears and dangers that threaten humanity. This has led to the necessity of establishing a set of ethical rules specific to medical and biological practice, as a new ethical thought that regulates and directs the outcomes of scientific and technological development; that is, the establishment of ethics specific to the medical and biological sciences, which have contributed to the emergence of a philosophical discourse whose aim is to reveal those problems that threaten the human being and his future because of the hegemony of scientism. For “we cannot deny that developments in the fields of medicine and biology have led to the revival of philosophy, such that it has come to play an effective role in society like the other sciences. Indeed, the coming century may perhaps become the century of applied ethics because every problem confronting the human being raises ethical questions that make him search for an answer, which he finds only through philosophical thought.”<sup>4</sup>

In reality, philosophy seeks to disclose the truths of things by employing its methodological tools to arrive at a rational understanding and interpretation of the dangers posed by scientific progress in biology. It should be noted that the twentieth century witnessed a series of developments in the medical and biological sciences, represented by scientific discoveries that helped the human being solve his health problems on the one hand, while threatening him on the other, such that he became a slave to technology because of the misuse of scientific knowledge. For “the revolution that occurred in the science of life is regarded in the view of many as more important than any other scientific event known to the human being in this century, and as bearing within it the seeds of astonishing changes for the future. What we mean, however, are those discoveries made in recent years in the field of human heredity and the unceasing attempts made by biologists to uncover the secrets of the human brain.”<sup>5</sup>

This confirms the achievements of the biological sciences in the second half of the twentieth century, which led to crises resulting from scientific and technical progress that threaten humanity. Thus, “the worst threat and the greatest promise occur simultaneously in this century. On the one hand, we see scientific and technical progress, creating opportunities for advancement that people did not know until today, despite material constraints, machines, and bureaucracies and despite the vital constraints constituted by illness and death. On the other

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<sup>3</sup> Noura Bouhnach, “Applied Ethics: The Debate of Values and the Current Contexts of Science,” in *Applied Ethics: The Debate of Values and the Current Contexts of Science*, by a group of Arab researchers and academics, 1st ed. (Algeria: Al-Ikhtilaf Publications, 2015), 31.

<sup>4</sup> Nahida Al-Baksami, *Genetic Engineering and Ethics* (Kuwait: National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters, 1993), 57–58.

<sup>5</sup> Fouad Zakaria, *Scientific Thinking* (United Kingdom: Hindaoui Foundation, 2017), 171.

hand, we see mass death by atomic, chemical, and biological weapons, casting its shadow over humanity. The golden age and the age of terror together confront our future. "<sup>6</sup>

For this reason, we may say that the human being at present is required to find solutions and to adapt to scientific and technological development by using his rational and cognitive capacities to examine those transgressions brought about by technology in our contemporary age to diagnose and understand reality, "especially since modern mechanical life has rendered the existence of the human creature a destabilised existence, devoid of tranquillity and contemplation, and reduced instead to mere movement, speed, and haste. The life of modern man may not be devoid of effort and activity. However, it is an effort without purpose and an activity without aim. ... It appears that modern man has come constantly to seek the newest and most novel things; he finds himself continually governed by the strikingly new. ... Modern man is no longer merely an anxious, reckless, and obtuse being; he has also become a superficial being, inspired by nothing, touched by nothing, and moved by nothing in the depths of his inner existence. "<sup>7</sup>

Humans have come to recognise the need to return to ethics to address the crisis resulting from scientific and technological development, which has necessitated the existence of specific ethics. Philosophers affirm that what human beings lack at present is ethical awareness, and this is what bioethics has sought to study to emerge from the crisis caused by technology by establishing a balance between scientific knowledge and ethical values. What biotechnological applications and practices lack is ethical values, which have come to play an effective role at present as the optimal solution for engaging with the results and applications of the sciences, especially since there is a consensus on the part of international public opinion that seeks to find a remedy for dealing with the present state of crisis. Thus, "a meeting was held in Bled in October 2001, at the initiative of the President of Slovenia, following which, on 20 February 2002, an "International Ethical, Political, and Scientific Collegium" was founded, undertaking the task of drawing attention to the major risks threatening humanity to confront them through a civilisational and ethical response. "<sup>8</sup> In addition, the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights in 2005 called for by UNESCO, which "obliged all signatory states to respect and apply the principles of bioethics. This declaration dealt in particular with the ethical issues raised by scientific progress in the field of medicine and the related life sciences when applied to human beings, taking into account social, legal, and environmental dimensions."<sup>9</sup> Therefore, we may say that there is a consensus on returning to ethics in order to address the results of scientific progress and its repercussions for human behaviour by reconsidering the legitimacy of science and its applications through the issuance of legislation in the field of the ethics of scientific research, which has come to constitute the future of philosophical inquiry at present. Thus, "the world today, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, is living through an entirely new situation, not to say a unique and strange one, represented by this embarrassment, indeed the growing challenge, that science and its applications pose to ethics and to the ethical conscience, and which has provoked, and continues to provoke, reactions that may be

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<sup>6</sup> Edgar Morin, *Are We Heading towards the Abyss?*, trans. Abdel Rahim Hazal (Morocco: Africa East, 2012), 86.

<sup>7</sup> Zakaria Ibrahim, *The Moral Problem* (Dar Misr for Printing, n.d.), 11.

<sup>8</sup> Morin, *Are We Heading towards the Abyss?*, 71.

<sup>9</sup> Mustafa Al-Nashar, *Philosophical Therapy*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Egyptian-Saudi House for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 2010), 15.

described as a return of ethics: reactions demanding that science and its products be subjected to ethical values and standards.”<sup>10</sup>

In reality, bioethics, as a new field of knowledge, aspires to establish a balance between values and new scientific forms of knowledge because bioethics, as a new ethical thought, aims to regulate practice within the fields of science and technology and to exploit the results of scientific discoveries in the service of the interests of humanity. This is the desired aim of bioethical philosophical discourse, which seeks to consecrate a set of ethical values under contemporary scientism, because bioethical philosophical discourse requires the disclosure of those unethical practices that threaten human existence and its future, owing to the immense scientific development that humanity has witnessed in the fields of medicine and biology, whose repercussions have been negative. Evidence of this is the coronavirus pandemic, which has come to threaten human health and social and economic domains. Therefore, through its cross-fertilisation with bioethics, we may say that philosophy seeks to establish a new ethical thought whose aim is to regulate practice within all fields of science and technology; that is, the necessity of the existence of ethics specific to the sciences and their applications, which contributes to directing scientific and technological progress towards the service of humanity.

### **From Medical Ethics to Bioethics**

Bioethics, as a new concept, aims to restore the balance between the system of values and scientific development. This term was first used in 1970 by the physician Van Rensselaer Potter and denotes “the set of ethical issues concerning life and the living being. Its meaning then expanded to include the questions raised within the framework of the relationship between the human being as psyche, as spirit, as living being, and his natural and social environment. When biology made its new leap in the field of genes, and entirely new medical applications appeared concerning control over reproduction and progeny in particular, the term bioethics began to refer to these applications and the problems they raise from an ethical standpoint,”<sup>11</sup> Bioethics, as a new ethical thought, seeks to regulate practice within the domains of science and its applications to preserve the future of the human being. The desired aim of bioethics is the interest of humanity: “bioethics indicates responsibility towards future and distant humanity entrusted to our guardianship, and the search for forms of respect owing to the person, whether the other or oneself, a search conducted especially by considering the biomedical sector and its applications.”<sup>12</sup>

There is no doubt that concern with medical ethics has existed since antiquity, especially in the Greek era, which witnessed a major intellectual, philosophical, and scientific renaissance. Greek philosophers and physicians sought to link medicine and ethics through the works of Hippocrates, the founder of Greek medicine, who laid the first foundation for the ethics of the medical profession, as manifested in his famous oath, the Hippocratic Oath, and Galen, who revived Hippocratic medicine and contributed greatly to its explanation, seeking to present his vision to the physicians of the future as being obliged to consider ethics. He “presented a number of studies that created an important current in ethical studies linking

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<sup>10</sup> Al-Jabri, *Issues in Contemporary Thought*, 37.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Jabri, *Issues in Contemporary Thought*, 65.

<sup>12</sup> Jacqueline Russ, *Contemporary Ethical Thought*, trans. Adel Al-Awwa, 1st ed. (Beirut, Lebanon: Oueidat Publishing and Printing, 2001), 111.

medicine the science of bodies and ethics the science of souls.”<sup>13</sup> This finding indicates and confirms the relationship that links medicine and ethics in Galen, who sought to present his vision of the physician’s ethics, according to which the physician should be “... just and in control of himself, immune to the temptations of money or desires, and should embody all the various characteristics of the ethical life, each of which is connected to the others by nature.”<sup>14</sup> Hence, we may say that Galen presents a set of principles and values that constitute the fundamental reference point for medical ethics because he is considered one of the physicians who combined medicine and ethics. What confirms what we say is the testimony of the physician Ali ibn Ridwan al-Misri, who is regarded as one of the most important figures to have drawn attention to the ethics of the physician in the Arab-Islamic heritage and who relied heavily on Galen, saying, “Nothing is more ugly or more heinous than being able to do good and failing to do it. ... The virtuous physician must be a philosopher. ... He then says that the art of medicine is the doing of good and condemns whoever knows this and does not practice it, citing the sayings of the Greeks, foremost among them Galen.”<sup>15</sup>

Studies conducted on Hippocrates and Galen confirm their contributions to the medical sciences through the establishment of the general foundations of medicine and its ethics, the affirmation of the importance of ethics in the practice of the medical profession, and the formulation of ethical rules intended to guide physicians. This is especially the case since the linking of medicine and ethics is regarded as the point of departure through which medical ethics was established among the Greeks, particularly as “since the Hippocratic Oath and perhaps from a period even earlier than this, in ancient Egypt, medicine has possessed traditions established by a set of ethical values, such as devotion to the profession, refraining from performing a surgical operation whose consequences are unsafe, prohibiting abortion or prescribing a lethal drug to satisfy someone, respecting the sanctity of the patient’s home, and not disclosing his secrets.”<sup>16</sup> These values are considered the fundamental reference point for physicians in practising their medical profession, which requires a set of ethical values. This is what the philosopher and physician Abu Bakr al-Razi sought to address in his book *The Ethics of the Physician*, which serves as a study that attempts to elucidate medical ethics as the fundamental reference point of medicine. It confirms that al-Razi was among the first to establish a set of ethical values that ground professional ethics, which address the critical perspective directed toward the results of scientific and technological research in the field of medicine and the ethical problems that may arise from it, which will remain “one of the important philosophical problems that troubles the philosopher as a historical human living in society, undergoing many moral experiences, and finding himself obliged to realise his destiny.”<sup>17</sup>

Medical ethics among ancient physicians such as Hippocrates, Galen, and al-Razi is ethical in character and aims to serve humanity. However, the transformations imposed by scientific progress in the biological sciences have led to the emergence of risks and crises that threaten humans and their dignity and that bear within them the seeds of astonishing changes for the

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<sup>13</sup> Ahmad Abd al-Halim Atiya, *Galen in Ancient and Contemporary Thought* (Cairo: Dar Anba’ for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, 1999), 16.

<sup>14</sup> Atiya, *Galen in Ancient and Contemporary Thought*, 139.

<sup>15</sup> Atiya, *Galen in Ancient and Contemporary Thought*, 37.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmad Mahmoud Sobhi and Mahmoud Fahmi Zaydan, *On the Philosophy of Medicine* (Beirut: Dar al-Nahda al-Arabiyya for Printing and Publishing, 1993), 159.

<sup>17</sup> Ibrahim, *The Moral Problem*, 9.

future. This has prompted philosophers and physicians to raise a series of questions about the future of humanity amid the immense development of the medical and biological sciences by reconsidering the values upon which Western modernity was founded and which have come to pose a danger to contemporary human beings. For “these Western values, the values of progress are precisely the values that must be reconsidered in order to find a solution to the problems of the contemporary world.”<sup>18</sup>

This is especially the case since scientific progress in the biotechnological domain, and the discoveries made in the fields of human heredity, cloning, organ transplantation, surrogacy, and artificial reproduction have led philosophy to impose its rational critical vision, represented by the re-establishment of a new ethical thought compatible with the reality of human life. This is achieved by returning to ethics to engage with the various fields of science and its applications, starting from a set of questions of philosophical and ethical character that bioethics attempts to answer by reconciling the medical and biological sciences with ethics; that is, by subjecting science and its products to ethical values, the goal is to establish a philosophical and ethical project whose purpose is to preserve human existence under the hegemony of scientific development. For this reason, “we find that applied philosophers can continue their work through the rational attempt to re-establish the ethical principles and theories that replace those which have been rejected.”<sup>19</sup>

Philosophers and physicians seek to affirm the ethics of medical practice by reconsidering the issues and questions that have come to arouse human anxiety in the present age because the health crisis experienced by human beings today confirms the urgency of setting limits to science and its products in the fields of medicine and biology, especially since the human being is the cause of the crisis that has intensified as a result of scientific and technological development, which has placed him in a state of perplexity and astonishment as he attempts to find solutions to the human crisis by returning to ethical values. “Medical ethics does not object to the moral values advocated by philosophers, such as truthfulness, honesty, patience, and so forth; rather, it embraces them all. However, physicians also embrace moral values suited to their profession. Examples of these values include the advancement of medical science, experimentation on patients, health care, equality among all people in terms of rights and duties, and learning to discover what is new. These are all values to which the physician must adhere, but the highest value with which he is concerned is respect for the human self as an absolute value, the recognition that the human being is not a commodity to be bought and sold, and the sanctity of human life, its preservation, and respect for it. ...”<sup>20</sup>

The philosophical question connected with the medical and biological sciences seeks to establish bioethics as a new field of knowledge that emphasises an ethical approach, with the aim of extricating the human being from crisis and seeking a better world for humanity because ethical teachings support and strengthen human responsibility. For this reason, bioethics is regarded as one of the ethical fields of knowledge that has brought about a turning point in contemporary philosophical thought concerning the future of human nature because bioethical discourse aims to consecrate a set of ethical values under contemporary scientism. Bioethics helps us understand and interpret those transgressions in the biological and medical sciences

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<sup>18</sup> Morin, *Are We Heading towards the Abyss?*, 75.

<sup>19</sup> Oliver Leaman, *The Future of Philosophy in the Twenty-First Century*, trans. Mustafa Mahmoud Muhammad (Kuwait: National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters, 2004), 178.

<sup>20</sup> Sobhi and Zaydan, *On the Philosophy of Medicine*, 142.

that have come to constitute the future of philosophical inquiry in the ethical domain. This has led philosophy to establish a dialogue with bioethics, as seen in its engagement with the immense development in the medical and biological sciences and in its attempts to reconcile them with ethics. Here lies the originality of the American philosopher and physician Van Potter, who was concerned with the safety, dignity, and future of the human being by addressing the paradox between immense progress in the medical and biological fields and the delay in the ethical domain. He sought to create a balance between human values and developments in science and their applications to preserve the interests of the human being. Thus, we may say that the physician Potter's coinage of the term bioethics contributed greatly to shaping a philosophical discourse aimed at renewing our relationship with ethical values and led philosophy to involve itself in the field of the medical and biological sciences through its questions and its rational critical vision to establish a new space for philosophising on questions of human destiny and its relationship to the results of science and technology, with which bioethics is concerned and which constitute the future of philosophical inquiry in the ethical domain.<sup>21</sup>

### **Bioethical Philosophical Dialogue**

At present, philosophy aims to address issues related to contemporary human beings, whose life is threatened by the immense scientific advances revealed by research in medicine and biology. "Philosophers, therefore, had to enter into these problems through new applied branches of philosophy, such as environmental philosophy, the philosophy of biological ethics, and the philosophy of information. Contemporary writings addressed the deception of technology and the necessity of directing scientific progress towards the benefit of the human being, the development of his creativity, and the release of his capacities, rather than their destruction and the destruction of the environment conducive to them."<sup>22</sup> This is because progress in the medical and biological sciences has led to the emergence of ethical problems that require examination, diagnosis, evaluation, and critique by philosophy, which seeks to establish bioethics as a new field of knowledge through which it can pose its questions concerning the transgressions of the medical and biological sciences by way of ethics, one of the fundamental domains of philosophy, since it is the science of values and investigates what ought to be. "Hence, philosophical analysis is necessary so that we may establish a kind of balance between ethical values and new scientific developments to change our system of values and analyse the ethical problems that confront us because of the wide gap between human thought and technology."<sup>23</sup>

The task of philosophy is to take up the results of science and study them according to its critical and contemplative vision to diagnose and understand human reality. It does so by discussing new subjects related to one of its fundamental domains, namely, values, which concern ethical studies, including medical ethics, the ethics of genetic engineering, the ethics of the life sciences, and so forth, all of which are closely connected to the human being. Consequently, we may say that "the ethics of scientific research and the activation of the ethical charter have become a vital matter in this age, in which scientific capacities are increasing to

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<sup>21</sup>Ahmed Boughoufal, *Applied Philosophy and Contemporary Human Issues*. Al-Anwar Series, 13(2), 244-253. <https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/220853>.

<sup>22</sup> Al-Nashar, *Philosophical Therapy*, 44.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Baksami, *Genetic Engineering and Ethics*, 23.

such a degree that they threaten the annihilation of humanity and the corruption of life on the face of the earth.”<sup>24</sup> This is especially true since the twentieth century witnessed a series of developments in the medical and biological sciences, represented by scientific discoveries that helped the human being solve his health problems on the one hand, while threatening him on the other, such that he became a slave to his innovations because of the misuse of scientific knowledge. This has led philosophy to establish a new space based on inquiry, contemplation, thought, and practice to offer realistic conceptions for building a better reality grounded in ethical teachings across all medical and scientific fields. "Thus, we find that philosophy, by virtue of its critical and analytical capacity, has been able to enter into the very heart of contemporary practical life and to offer assistance in understanding and solving many practical problems, thereby once again proving its existence and importance as one of the fundamental studies in the humanities. "<sup>25</sup>

Philosophy has thus come to concern itself with the study of ethical issues specific to immense scientific progress in the fields of medicine and biology and to move toward understanding many questions specific to bioethics by employing its methodological tools to recover its place through its questions concerning the crisis that threatens human existence as a result of immense development in the medical and biological sciences. Notably, “these applied ethical issues relating to the immense scientific progress that has occurred in the various branches of science and technology, particularly those that are directly reflected upon the human being, have become the fundamental subject of writings in moral philosophy in this age and, without doubt, at the same time represent the future of philosophical inquiry in the ethical domain. ”<sup>26</sup> In its relationship with bioethics, philosophy seeks to move beyond the stage of admiration and acceptance of the scientific progress achieved by the human being to the stage of questioning, reflection, and discussion to engage with scientific discoveries that pose a threat to the future of the human being. Bioethical philosophical discourse aims to establish a set of ethical values to regulate practice in medicine and biology. Philosophy has contributed greatly to establishing bioethics and granting legitimacy to ethical questions and issues to find new ethics that impose their authority upon immense scientific progress whose repercussions have become negative for human beings. This has led philosophers to affirm the alliance and dialogue between philosophy and bioethics to address the outcomes of scientific research affecting contemporary human beings, especially since philosophical studies have demonstrated and confirmed the relationships among philosophy, medicine, and ethics. This is what we observe in the works of Hippocrates, Galen, and al-Razi, who emphasised medical ethics and the role of philosophy in medical studies such that “philosophy became a lamp illuminating the path for a journey fraught with many dangers and pitfalls, lest medicine descend into an abyss in which it is stripped of all nobility and sanctity, when the value of profit and money rises above the value of the human being whom God has favoured over all His other creatures on earth. ”<sup>27</sup> For this reason, we may say that philosophy has been able to engage with the dangers caused by the biological and medical sciences because philosophers adhered to, and are concerned with, bioethics as a new field of knowledge that offers philosophy new subjects that have constituted a turning point in philosophical studies and have

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<sup>24</sup> Al-Nashar, *Philosophical Therapy*, 10.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Baksami, *Genetic Engineering and Ethics*, 28.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Nashar, *Philosophical Therapy*, 15–16.

<sup>27</sup> Sobhi and Zaydan, *On the Philosophy of Medicine*, 160.

contributed to opening up a horizon of discussion, dialogue, and questioning concerning the possibility of establishing and achieving a balance between scientific knowledge and ethical values, which have come to constitute the future of philosophical inquiry in the ethical domain. Bioethical philosophical dialogue aims to set limits on those transgressions imposed by scientific progress and to establish new ethics specific to the sciences, contributing to the continuation of philosophical discourse that investigates the legitimacy of science and preserves human life. In this context, Nietzsche says, "I am still awaiting the coming of a physician-philosopher in the exceptional sense of the phrase, whose task will be to study the problem of the social health of a society, of an epoch, of a race, of humanity, and who will one day dare to carry my suspicion to its utmost limit and to develop the hypothesis that, in all philosophical activity, the matter has never hitherto been the discovery of truth at all, but something entirely different let us say health, the future, growth, strength, life."<sup>28</sup> This confirms the major role of philosophy in engaging with the intractable problems that threaten contemporary human beings living in an age of scientific and technological development. The task of philosophy consists of diagnosing reality and treating it on the basis of its critical vision to understand, interpret, and analyse health, psychological, and social problems. For "philosophy and philosophers are the torchbearers of progress and enlightenment in every society that has risen in the past, and they are likewise those whose existence every nation that seeks to create glory or add something new dreams of and calls for. Philosophers are the mirror of every age, and they are also the makers of the new visions along which, and on whose path, all who wish to create goodness and progress for humanity ought to proceed."<sup>29</sup>

Philosophy has come to concern itself with issues of everyday life relating to human beings, such as health, treatment, and medical ethics, and to link them to the ethical domain of bioethics to establish a harmony between scientific progress and ethics. For "... the powers of science, the powers of technology, and the powers of industry ought to be subject to the control of ethics, and this control can be imposed only through politics."<sup>30</sup> Political figures, therefore, play a major and effective role in limiting medical and biological practices in order to ensure a better future for the human being by adopting all the necessary legal measures that contribute to limiting the experiments conducted by physicians and biologists in the fields of genetic engineering and organ transplantation, which have come to threaten human existence. For this reason, we find philosophers calling for ethics for medicine and biology that take into account the interests of the human being within a set of ethical values intended to limit the application of these biological practices, which requires the intervention of political figures in directing such scientific research to preserve human dignity and create harmony between medicine and ethics. This led to the establishment of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights in 2005, which "aimed to provide the basis upon which states wishing to issue legislation or policies in the field of bioethics could rely. It also aimed to bring scientific decisions and practices within this framework and to ensure respect for a certain number of general principles shared by all. It further aimed to support dialogue among groups concerning

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<sup>28</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Hassan Bourqiba, 1st ed. (Casablanca, Morocco: Africa East, 1993), 45–46.

<sup>29</sup> Mustafa Al-Nashar, *On the Philosophy of Civilisation: The Dialectic of the Self and the Other towards the Construction of a Single Human Civilisation*, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Egyptian-Lebanese House, 2018), 158.

<sup>30</sup> Morin, *Are We Heading towards the Abyss?*, 80.

the application of bioethics and participation in knowledge in the fields of science and technology. "<sup>31</sup>

This led philosophy to engage with scientific progress and to express those transgressions caused by the medical and biological sciences, which have constituted a source of concern for contemporary human beings, who have become powerless before the immense scientific development that now requires an alliance among the sciences and the establishment of a dialogical relationship between philosophy and bioethics. This relationship aims to establish a balance between ethical values and immense scientific developments and represents the future of philosophical inquiry in the ethical domain. Hence, we may say that "this immense capacity to control human nature ought to be accompanied by a corresponding capacity to control human social organisations. We certainly need a new kind of authority and a new concept of relations among human beings so that we can ensure that these discoveries are not exploited against the interest of the human being. "<sup>32</sup>

This requires the efforts of philosophers, politicians, religious figures, and legal scholars to put an end to these medical and biological practices, which have come to threaten human life and dignity and tamper with the order of human life. Humanity has come to suffer from a state of crisis that heralds an unknown future, requiring the cross-fertilisation of philosophical, medical, and ethical sciences to find the necessary solutions for engaging with these health crises that have come to threaten human existence and to contribute to the convenience of international conferences that take the interests of the human being into account. This is what philosophers such as Levinas and Habermas called for, as mirrors of their age.

Philosophy attempts to answer this through cognitive intervention across various scientific fields, relying on its critical vision and methodological tools to engage with the results and research of the medical and biological sciences, which have become the greatest concern for human beings. The aim of philosophy at present is "to intervene cognitively and ontologically in existing information and ideas, to connect them, to coordinate them, and to form different discourses, in order to intervene in the numerous sciences, artistic practices, religious beliefs, and social and political actions, to clarify and define concepts and methods, and to reveal the boundaries of scientific and ideological regions. ..." "<sup>33</sup> Through its alliance with bioethics and its intervention in the sciences, philosophy has contributed to establishing bioethics as a new field of knowledge and engaging with new subjects related to the reality of human life, thereby reviving philosophical study.

## CONCLUSION

Bioethical philosophical dialogue, in light of the scientific discoveries that threaten human existence, aims to move beyond admiration and fascination to questioning to engage with discoveries that have become a danger to humanity's future. It has opened a horizon of questioning, discussion, and constructive criticism for establishing a new philosophical discourse encompassing the totality of human activity in the fields of science, philosophy, politics, and law to address the problems that have led to the deterioration of the biosphere.

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<sup>31</sup> Al-Nashar, *Philosophical Therapy*, 15.

<sup>32</sup> Zakaria, *Scientific Thinking*, 173.

<sup>33</sup> Fathi Al-Triki, *The Philosophy of Everyday Life*, 1st ed. (Tunisia: Mediterranean Publishing House, 2009), 42-43.

This discourse has been embodied through communication and dialogue among human groups, philosophers, politicians, religious figures, legal scholars, and physicians to put an end to the transgressions caused by the biological and medical sciences. This requires the concerted efforts of the presidents and rulers of major states, who are called upon to adopt a new policy based on rigorous and rational organisation, consultation, and dialogue and to move away from ideological conflicts, especially in light of the scientific and technical development attained by humanity in the contemporary era. This should be achieved through a consensual vision of a set of values and laws for the preservation of human rights to be implemented by the highest authorities in power to ensure goodness, progress, and a better future for humanity.

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