





induced by the Second Vatican Council was not incorporated into the “official Catholic bioethics,” as demonstrated by the theological and bioethical debate which took place on in vitro artificial fertilization and on the Vatican document *Donum Vitae*.

Gianfilippo Giustozzi’s contribution further explores this issue, reconstructing the bioethical paradigm of Elio Sgreccia in the first phase of its elaboration (1975-1986). The author shows that the handbook *Bioetica: Manuale per medici e biologi*, published by Sgreccia in 1986, already shows the theoretical structure of his bioethical paradigm based on “ontologically founded personalism.” In short, the history of Catholic bioethics could have been different if the line initially traced by the Second Vatican Council had been followed.

The editor of this special issue proposes two articles. In the first, he reconstructs some sensational cases of human vivisection and the ethical debates they triggered. The research covers the long period from Antiquity to the Industrial Revolution. The conclusion of the study is that, paradoxically, the closer we get to our current day, the number of alleged violations of medical ethics increases. In the second contribution, the author reconstructs some of the most sensational cases of abuse in human clinical trials that occurred in the twentieth century, underlining the role that those cases had in stimulating the birth and institutionalization of bioethics as a discipline.

Finally, Dawid Wieczorek offers a historical and critical analysis of Dr. Karol Gutmann’s work. Gutmann was a Polish Jewish scientist and an employee of the Krakow Institute of Forensic Medicine. The author places particular emphasis on Gutmann’s contributions to the euthanasia debate in the 1930s. Although the term “bioethics” did not yet exist, his work can be understood as relevant for the subsequent development of bioethical discourse in Poland.

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