The discourse of biopower against disturbances of the boundary between life and death

Abstract:

The aim of this article is to set the debate over euthanasia in a biopolitical context, which here becomes a thanatopolitical context. We observe a kind of aporia of cultural processes. Individualism, the value of autonomy, knowledge, selfconsciousness, opening the scope of new decisions on one side, bureaucratisation, accumulation of authority instruments in the hands of medicine (having a practical evidence in the form of the possibility to prescribe medicaments) and the legislation penetrating issues of life and death on the other. I ask a fundamental question: do the debate over and social movements concerning euthanasia break the system of bioauthority or are its extension? Debating in the context of rationalisation and legalising submits the case into the hands of administration. Assigning doctors as executors is giving power to representatives of the medical authority. But anomalies, which occur along with the technological progress, as well as a change of death criterion into brain death, drive norms accepted by the authority into a crisis. If we look at presented, also in media, individual stories of people fighting for euthanasia for themselves, we shall notice their discourse: not homo sacer, but moral individuals.

Keywords: *euthanasia, biopower, biopolitics, death, Keywords boundary*