



JOURNAL PROYECTO ÉTICA

Revista académica electrónica del Grupo Proyecto Ética

Facultad de Psicología, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

ISSN 3072-7359

Vol. 3, núm. 1 (2026) / pp. 1-2

Editorial

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The contemporary era has increasingly deepened what, from a psychoanalytic perspective, has been described as *the decline of the Name-of-the-Father*. This concept refers, fundamentally, to a shift in the organizing principle of the social order, which is progressively ceasing to be structured around relatively stable symbolic authorities –such as institutions, hierarchies, and normative frameworks, among others–.

In the transition from the juridical-political logic characteristic of the modern state to the "liquidity" that Zygmunt Bauman (2003) uses as a metaphor for the current stage of modernity, references, rules, values, and principles have become increasingly relativized and flexible. At the same time, we have witnessed the weakening of the principal and most traditional social institutions, as well as the questioning of authority, both at the societal level and within singular subjective histories. Bauman describes this process as follows:

Light, consumer-friendly capitalism did not abolish the law proffering authorities, nor did it make them redundant. It has merely brought into being and allowed to coexist authorities too numerous for any one of them to stay in authority for long, let alone to carry the 'exclusive' label. (...) When the authorities are many, they tend to cancel each other out, and the sole effective authority in the field is one who must choose between them. It is by courtesy of the chooser that a would-be authority becomes an authority. Authorities no longer command; they ingratiate themselves with the chooser; they tempt and seduce. (Bauman, 2003, p.70)

As early as 1974, Jacques Lacan referred to certain historical coordinates associated with the replacement–and even the rejection– of symbolic legality (the Name-of-the-Father), giving rise to what he called "an order that is of iron". The psychoanalyst Marcelo Barros (2014) argues that this "order of iron" is grounded in "a mode of nomination on the side of narcissism," which likewise fosters the rejection of both the subject and castration. This order of iron is linked to the aspiration for radical calculation and the elimination of the possibility of equivocation (pp. 65-66).

As the symbolic function of the law declines, other forms of regulation emerge, more rigid, impersonal, and less open to interpretation. An order thus takes shape that presents itself as unquestionable, requiring not interpretation but acceptance.

This post-paternal era, in the terms proposed by Jacques-Alain Miller (2005), paradoxically gives rise to a proliferation of rules, marked by the imperatives of political correctness and the hyper-vigilance of the order of iron (Barros, 2014), under the claim of a supposed transparency of the norm. This stands in contrast to the Law, which necessarily contains an opaque point, insofar as it always entails a dimension of indeterminacy, contradiction, or impossibility:

Normative frenzy is exercised at the expense of the Law, and this is why mechanisms of control proliferate wherever the paternal function falters. Unlike the norm, the Law is capable of not seeing, of making exceptions, of letting things pass. The Law fails. (Barros, 2014)

In other words, while the normativity established by the Law appears to become increasingly flexible, regulation through protocols, indicators, and algorithms (Sadin, 2015) is simultaneously intensified. These mechanisms are oriented toward efficiency and optimization, foreclosing any point of inconsistency. In doing so, they also foreclose the very conditions that make interpretation, deliberation, and subjective positioning possible.

Contemporary rationality, deeply shaped by neoliberal logic and the datafication of social life (Han, 2014), is organized around parameters oriented toward efficiency, performance, and optimization. The normativity grounded in the symbolic function of the Law no longer serves as the primary foundation for action, having been replaced –as Lacan anticipated– by forms of organization dominated by technology, science, and administration. Social regulation no longer depends primarily on the Law or on explicit ethical principles, but increasingly on technical, economic, and statistical mechanisms oriented toward what is most probable, most expedient, most profitable, and most efficient, where the distinction between what is permitted and what is prohibited clearly no longer constitutes the organizing principle.

In summary, we are living in a time in which statistical regularities increasingly appear to guide decision-making, and action is increasingly shaped by predictive models and algorithmic recommendations. Technical and administrative mechanisms of regulation predominate, yet the values embedded within them are seldom subjected to critical examination. They present themselves as given and inexorable, leaving little room for deliberation. Under these conditions, the place of a subject who thinks and decides, who interprets and sustains a critical reading, is placed at risk.

In this context, we believe it is essential to preserve spaces for judgment, interpretation, and responsibility, grounded in a critical and reflective stance that sustains the ethical dimension. This issue of the JOURNAL PROYECTO ÉTICA seeks to foster such spaces by taking *Ethics, Bioethics, and Professional Ethics* as its central thematic focus.

Far from both normative frenzy and the absence of all regulation, the articles gathered in this issue invite discussion and the formulation of new questions. At the same time, they embrace the challenge of restoring a measure of symbolic legality, responding to ethical interpellation, and critically examining the norms, procedures, and institutional arrangements that shape contemporary practice.

The normative domain –comprising laws, institutions, ethical principles, moral values, and professional rules– as the primary means of regulating social life, sustains a shared symbolic order that establishes criteria of legitimacy and provides orientation for actions and practices, while fostering both individual and collective responsibility.

This normative rationality, as an expression of the symbolic function of the Law that structures both social life and subjectivity, constitutes a field within which the singular experience of a subject who interprets, deliberates, decides, and assumes responsibility for those decisions can take shape. It is from this perspective that the contributions presented in this issue unfold.

We hope you enjoy reading them!

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