

# INTRODUCTION

A new year begins, bringing with it new challenges and advances that once again prompt reflection on the academic relevance of ontological dignity and respect for life, which must not succumb despite the resistance they encounter in technological models and social ideologies. Growing social tensions and rapid social change force academia to take a stand, which is why we begin this issue of our journal with topics that underline an unavoidable ethical obligation to recognize and respect that dignity.

This issue of the journal brings together a set of articles that, from different perspectives —philosophical, medical, scientific, social, and anthropological— converge on the same purpose: to reaffirm humanism as the indispensable core of all scientific and health-related actions. In these articles, personalist bioethics is presented as the foundation for combating the dehumanization of science.

This issue opens with an article by Dr. Claude Vergès Deroin and other authors, which examines the creation and functioning of University Bioethics Committees in the Panamanian context. This study reveals the institutional challenges faced by committees as they seek to integrate ethics into university culture beyond the clinical setting in order to strengthen a more participatory and transparent academic community. However, it warns that the consolidation of these committees depends on their institutional recognition, ongoing ethical training, and effective coordination with national bioethics organizations, a challenge that remains unmet.

The second chapter, by Dr. Ricardo Rivas, entitled “Transhumanism and its promises: an assessment from the perspective of personalist bioethics based on Mary Shelley’s novel *Frankenstein*,” constitutes an original dialogue between literature and contemporary ethics. Taking the metaphor of *Frankenstein* as a figure of techno-scientific modernity, the author examines the promises of trans-

humanism —superintelligence, superlongevity, and superwell-being— showing how these revive the ancient Promethean temptation to dominate human nature, then, proposes how personalist bioethics reminds us of the constitutive limits of human beings and their ontological dignity. Comparing the characteristics of literary work, the author concludes that, without ethics, progress becomes destructive.

In “Beyond Clinical Nihilism: Personalist Bioethics in the Care of Patients with Consciousness Disorders,” author Zamira Verónica Montiel Boehringer addresses one of the most complex issues in contemporary medicine: the care of patients in states of minimal consciousness. She analyzes how, through a nihilistic attitude, the care of such patients seems to strip them of their ontological value, calling for an ethic that recognizes them despite their minimal state of consciousness and, therefore, communication. The model proposed by the author should be based on prudence, responsibility, solidarity, accompaniment, and compassion that restores recognition of the patients’ dignity and humanizes medical care once again, beyond the mere calculation of utilitarian rewards.

Dr. Ramírez Zazueta’s article invites reflection in the field of community health. Inspired by the principles of CONBIOETHICS, the author proposes ten guidelines for integrating ethics into the daily practice of healthcare personnel in order to preserve dignified treatment, confidentiality, and the administration of justice with equity, remembering that health is not a mere algorithm nor can it be subject to a machine that is incapable of empathizing with the patient. Restoring the medical act to its proper dimension is essential for ethical practice.

For its part, Dr. Rodríguez’s article “Decorum in Medicine” constitutes an urgent recovery of medical humanism from the perspective of virtues. Recovering the classical notion of decorum as *decorum*, the author explores its ethical, aesthetic, and pedagogical dimensions to place it at the level of a virtue that integrates care, recognition, and responsibility. Medical practice must therefore be accompanied by decorum as practical wisdom in the face of human suffering. In this way, medical practice will once again become an art.

Dr. Ramos-Zaga's work addresses the persistent invisibility of women in clinical trials. Based on the notions of epistemic justice and relational autonomy, the author denounces that the exclusion of women under the pretext of "protection" constitutes a form of structural injustice that compromises the validity of scientific knowledge. He therefore proposes an ethical framework of responsible inclusion where epistemic equity acts as a condition of scientific legitimacy. This article provides a broader view of bioethics by analyzing the close relationship between the administration of justice in practical terms and the justice that precedes action, that is, epistemic justice.

Finally, Dr. Ana Sofía García's review of Antonio Millán-Puelles' book *Ética y Realismo* highlights the value of an ethic based on the truth of the human being and the objectivity of good, as opposed to contemporary relativism. Millán-Puelles proposes a morality founded on the rational and free nature of the person, where prudence stands as a cardinal virtue. The review highlights Millán Puelles' experience of ethics as a realistic ethic that allows us to face the dilemmas of life, technology, and science from the truth of our being.

The articles collected in this issue share the same common thread mentioned at the beginning: the recognition of human dignity is the path to humanizing science and recovering the true meaning of medical practice, and they highlight bioethics as the interdisciplinary field from which it is possible to rethink the good that precedes human freedom.

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