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Editorial

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In an interview in 1977, Michel Foucault outlined a sort of definition of the concept of *dispositif*: "a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions (...). The *dispositif* is the network that can be established between these elements... (...). [It is] a kind of formation which, at a given historical moment, has as its essential function responding to an urgency. The *dispositif* therefore has an essentially strategic function. (...) this implies a certain manipulation of relations of forces, of a rational and concerted intervention in these relations of forces..." He added: "it is always inscribed in a play of power, but also tied to the limits of knowledge" (Agamben, 2014, p. 8).

That is to say, for Foucault, the *dispositif* constitutes a broad and heterogeneous ensemble of elements, including both the linguistic and the non-linguistic, and, at the same time, it is the network established among these elements. It possesses a strategic function and is always inscribed in a relation of power. Moreover, the *dispositif* results from the intersection of relations of power and relations of knowledge.

The Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, who worked on this notion in his book *What is a Dispositif?*¹, begins with the passage cited above and takes up the Foucauldian concept, but expands it. He proposes his own definition of *dispositif* by drawing a distinction between living beings, *dispositifs*, and subjects. In that conceptual path, he calls *dispositif* "literally anything that in some way has the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, and secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, and discourses of living beings" (p. 18). The notion of subject, in turn, is defined as "what results from the relations and (...) from the hand-to-hand encounter between living beings and *dispositifs*". For Agamben, the current conjuncture marked by capitalism is characterized by a massive accumulation and proliferation of *dispositifs*, producing a vast increase in processes of subjectivation, which then give rise to a multiplication of masks proper to the narrow field of personal identity.

¹ Also translated as: *What is an Apparatus?* AGAMBEN, G. (2014). *¿Qué es un dispositivo?* Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo Editora.

In this sense, it becomes necessary to distinguish those dispositifs that may contribute an added value to the field of subjectivity. That is, returning to Foucault, those that bring into play power relations, relations of knowledge, and the dimension of the body –we add here, the libidinal body, which distinguishes the speaking-being, the parlêtre, from the mere living being– with a strategic function of concerted intervention. From this perspective, a particular ethics becomes fundamental, one that questions the power inherent in professional knowledge at stake in each intervention. An ethics oriented toward the singular and subjective unfolding.

The central theme of this issue is entitled *Experiences of Dispositifs*, under which we have gathered articles that recount moments of invention, of supplementation of prior knowledge, in order to produce something new, to find ways of dealing with what bursts forth. All these dispositifs share a common denominator: the purpose of addressing malaise, by receiving and accommodating forms of suffering proper to the subject of language. In these configurations, where discourses, strategies of intervention, institutions, and decisions intertwine, the aim is to provide treatment, a response; in other words, to propose a know-how with suffering.

The Dossier, *Perspectives on Problematic Consumption*, includes articles that analyse, through rigorous theoretical approaches from Psychology and Law, different views on the multiple facets of this issue and on the ways of addressing and treating this mental health problem. With the contribution of these texts, understanding the underlying ideologies, the conceptions sustained by each perspective, and their explicit and implicit purposes becomes an essential tool for reflecting in concrete practice on the dispositifs of intervention at play.

In a similar vein, the book reviewed in this issue constitutes a rich contribution to the construction of dispositifs for the treatment of young people in conflict with the criminal law. The article devoted to the book highlights one of its central points: the author's insistence on the need to read the subjective and singular dimension intertwined within juridical-institutional dispositifs.

We are deeply grateful to those who participated in this issue of the *JOURNAL PROYECTO ÉTICA* for sharing their practices and expressing their reflections, an attitude we value, one that seeks to reappraise the richness of exchanging experiences among diverse actors from different disciplines and institutions, as a way of nurturing and expanding thought and strengthening one's own practice. We now make these texts available for your reading. Onward!

Buenos Aires, septiembre 2025

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