

Bodies in context: the bodily/emotional dimension as a category for understanding the world

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This issue of RELACES includes a set of articles which, taking bodies/emotions as the core nodes of the capitalist accumulation regimes, and of the regulation of life, ponder upon issues such as violence, the feminine, politics, medical interventions, migration, the carnival, and labor. These articles set themselves in dialogue with the emphasis placed by current sociology on the centrality of bodies/emotions (Scribano, 2012) for the problematizing of the social. Bodies/emotions are linked, not in terms of instrumentality or mediation, but in the forms of experiencing, belonging, and being in the world. This entails, among other issues, the need to understand that actors behave from, and through, their corporeal materiality and, in this sense, no action is possible without the body (Vergara, 2011). Bodies, given that human condition is imminently corporeal, are thus placed as a central locus of conflict and order.

A sociological approach to bodies/emotions is far from being a novelty; the corporal/emotional dimension has been a part of sociology since the classical social theory (Scribano, 2013). The possibility of a problematization of the issue, using bodies/emotions (Scribano 2012) as a key, allows for a dialectical approach to the narratives of the subjects—as those who have first-hand knowledge of the world—together with the forms of social structuration in the capitalist accumulation regime (Vergara 2014). Therefore, the bodily emerges as the scenario of disputes and disciplining. As a result, the modes of social and political regulation, within the framework of the capitalist accumulation regime, begin with the regulation of bodies/emotions, as primary forms of experiencing the world.

Current capitalist systems, as forms of structuration of societies, require being placed in privileged position of control of bodies in order to define, enable, and propitiate specific ways of acting/feeling of the actors. Thus, everyday life, the ways by which the production and reproduction of life within the frame of Twenty First Century capitalism are

enacted, becomes a series of challenges for the social sciences, as the questions about violence, politics, labor, migration, and corporal transformations, entail the need to begin with the problematizing of bodies/emotions as central dimensions for the understanding of the social. Beyond the physical/biological constitution of bodies, the articles included in this issue concern themselves with looking into the different levels impinging, not only on the sensing of the world in a variety of contexts, but also on the ways by which actions orient and reorient themselves in a specific environment through discipline, the politics of morality, and normalization.

Given their historic-social character, societies produce and reproduce particular ways of regulating, ordering, and embodying specific practices in terms of a particular regime of sensibilities. This regime of sensibilities regulates and makes bearable the ways in which the feelings of the world are perceived. Both mechanisms (to regulate and to make bearable) are the conditions enabling the long-term reproduction of capitalism. The forms of social and political regulations are anchored, not only in the behavior of the subjects, but, previously, in the ways in which these subjects perceive, understand, experience, and feel the world that surrounds them. In this sense, regimes of sensibilities emerge from moral frames supported by the normativity of gender and sexuality as forms of classification and intervention upon the body of the other. This is the background the first article included in this issue.

The situations analyzed in this issue of RELACES account for an eminently social body/emotion feature, affecting and affected by the context. The practical-corporal dispositions for feeling, acting, thinking, and experiencing the world are housed in bodies/emotions. The first article in this issue is titled *“Between moral issues and clinical practices: professionals pioneering trans bodily construction treatments in Argentina (1998-2012)”* and its author is Anhí Farji Neer (Argentina). This article recasts a

set of arguments made by professionals involved in the practices of corporal constructions of trans persons about bodies and non-normative sexualities. The junctures of pioneering practices, illegality, and social rejection account for a scenario in which the treatment of bodies and the handling of petitions for trans corporal reconstruction are handled from a moral perspective. The good, desirable, possible, risky, appropriate or inappropriate, emerge from discourses that assume specialists anchored in the schemes of classification and understanding of the world underpinned by the normativity of gender and sexuality. In other words, traditional narratives linked to the control of bodies and sexualities have explicitly come to the forefront in relation to the issue, adjusting to a context of appraisal of individual liberties, and obscuring reproduction of moral sense linked to the binary gender matrix.

Eloy Maya Pérez (México) and Edgar C. Jarillo Soto (México) are the authors of the second article: *"Affective experience of migrant couples during the period of absence-waiting in the community of Caxuxi, Hidalgo, Mexico."* The authors reclaim and problematize the emotional dimension of migration in the context of a qualitative research project about of wife of migrant. The absent-waiting body of the migrant creates tensions in the ways women face the cultural dispositions regulating the ways of being, feeling, and acting. Migration and the absent-awaited body are deployed as exercises of power and control of and over bodies. Migration acts as a political exercise that acts as a "governing of life", according to the authors, over the bodies/emotions of people, as a fact that, positioned as a totality, marks and subdues those linked to it. The bodies/emotions of persons whose couple are migrants are subjects to structures of production and reproduction of life by which, not only the sense of everyday life, but also ways of being and feeling with others, are assumed under the guiding fact of migration.

The third article is a contribution by Paola Chaparro Medina (México) and Brenda Araceli Bustos García (México) titled: *"Exception device in contemporary societies: notes for a reflection upon the female body."* The authors propose an analysis of the feminine body as a surface inscribed with cultural signs, plausible of being problematized, in terms of the sociology of body/emotions, in order to address the violence to which Mexican women are systematically exposed. At the same time the authors problematize the public sphere by taking issue with the media for its particularization of situations, which obscures the massive, and eminently political, features of those situations. The structures of production and

reproduction of violence over the feminine body are enabled, according to the authors, not only by what they call an exception device resulting from the articulation of family, gender, and sexuality, but also as the result of the conception of these bodies as *nuda vida*.

The fourth article, *"Between hatred and consternation: emotional traces in the early writings of José Martí,"* is a contribution by Oleski Miranda Navarro (United States), who takes a series of José Martí's early text in order to problematize the emotional dimension of his political writings. Hate, irony, and a sense of consternation are part of his writings in the context of anti-colonial activism. According to Miranda Navarro "The deep sense of José Martí's prose and fiction in these early texts is revealed as a succession of events that form and shape his thinking, given that it derives logically and necessarily from a maturing process marked by experience." In this sense, using the corporal/emotional as a key for re-reading José Martí's texts, accounts for them as the scenario where frames of understanding and interpretation of the world are inscribed, produced and reproduced as concrete practices of being.

Marilé Di Filippo (Argentina), is the author of the fifth article *"Political corporeality of (and in) the festivity. Reflections on the carnival,"* in which she delves into the unique experience of the *carnival-cumple de Pocho*, a festivity in the city of Rosario. The body in the context of festivity is problematized as the locus of tension between festivity and organization. Bodies in the context of carnival are approached as central nodes of social practices and epicenters of festivity, and put in tension along dilemmatic and problematic (non-polar) axes adopted by the festivity. This ambiguity among the possible connections between festivity, body and politics is an axis that crosses the whole of the text. The author concludes with a set of questions that reveal the complexity of life when analyzed as a bio-politics that sometimes, as a politics of life, enhances and expands life, but as a bio-power –as a form of regulating bodies –limits and conditions life, although making the festivity possible. The out of the usual, the festive, the carnival, emerges as a tension locus where, on the one hand the processes of social structuration, anchored in bodies/emotion, enable/disable certain (but not all) of the practices linked to the accumulation regimes, but on the other hand are not closed totalities, and reveal overlaps and folds which enable corporal inversions and dispositions (Cena, 2017).

Along these same tension lines we find our next article: *"Sapucaí as art of existence. Modes of*

"living being" *tarefero in Misiones*," by María Luz Roa (Argentina). She analyzes the transformation of subjectivities of young harvesters (*tareferos*) of *yerba mate* using ethnographic data based on eight stays in the missionary cities of Oberá and Montecarlo. From phenomenological perspective, Luz Roa reveals how the subject's modes of feeling in the world account for the procedural aspect of being-in-the-world. This deployment of being by the young men in the places where *yerba mate* is harvested reveals the existence of some spaces for enjoyment which imply forms of experiencing and transforming the suffering of the *tarefero*.

The final article included in this issue is by Marcos Bote (Spain): "*Medical tattoos: a literature review*." Here the author presents an exploratory study of the set of innovative practices of permanent body inscription that give information to medical services in case of emergency. For example, inscription that warn not apply resuscitation procedures, or explanations about the diabetic status of the patient. The so called "medical tattoos" reveal a complex set of issues, such as the dilemma if medical professionals should comply with them or not. In the first of the examples given by the author (resuscitation procedures) the situation implies the possible jeopardizing of an emergency intervention; in the case of the second example (diabetic patients), we are faced with a case of recognition and visibility of a medical diagnosis.

Two book reviews close this issue. Their interest lie not only in the timely relevance of the books reviewed, but also in their careful and critical reconstructions of the texts. The first review by Florencia Chahbenderian (Argentina), "*Scenarios of neocolonial domination in Argentina: reflections from sociology of bodies/emotions from politics, morals and love*," is about the book "Normalization, enjoyment and bodies/emotions: Argentine sensibilities" (2017) by Adrián Scribano, published by Nova Science. Chahbenderian states that Scribano's book is a detailed and ambitious study of contemporary Argentinian social sensibilities. The second review by Maia Wasserman (Argentina) and Camila Weinmann (Argentina), "An overview of some social policies world: Intersections between the study of the social policies and the sociology of the bodies and emotions in the XXI century", is about the book by Angélica De Sena: "Social intervention at the beginning of the 21st century: conditional transfers in the global order" (2018), published in Buenos Aires by *Estudios Sociológicos Editora*. Written at the intersections of the critical analyses of social policies and the sociology of bodies/emotions, the book gives a global account of the Conditional Income Transfer Programs

in the Twenty First Century, including the cases of international experiences in India, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Spain, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina.

The pieces included in this issue, number 26 of RELACES, reveal the potentials of the emotional/corporal dimension for social analysis. The diverse contexts and problematics here presented, such as violence, interventions and transformations of bodies, waiting, labor, and the festive, account for complex dialogues and tensions between the capitalist accumulation regime, production and reproduction of life, and the experiencing of the world by, and from, the bodily/emotional dimension of the agents.

We thank the authors and all those who have sent us their manuscripts. We remind you that the call for articles is permanently open.

To conclude, we must reiterate that, since issue number 15 of RELACES, we began to publish up to two articles in English in each issue. As we have been reminding you for a long time: in RELACES, together with all its Editorial Team and the Editorial Board, we believe it is necessary to take up each article of our journal as a node that allows us to continue down the path of dialogue and scientific/academic exchange as a social and political task in order to achieve a freer and more autonomous society. It is in the previous context that we want to thank all those who trust us as a vehicle to instantiate such dialogue.

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