

Presentation

The human body expresses a complex interrelationship in the world. This emerges from natural dynamics, and their evolution is an intergenesis of psychic and social phenomena. It can't be reduced to nature. It refers us to what is unique to each individual, and consequently to what is foreign, external or strange. It constitutes a closure that defines the individual, being both a sensitive entity with numerous contact channels with its surroundings, which also includes other human bodies. The third number of **INTERdisciplina** underscores this generic reference of *Bodies* as an approach to a key issue in the understanding of social reality from a humanistic perspective, and to understand, from the social point of view, the contributions of the research in philosophy of the body, cultural history of the anatomy, as well as the approximations queer, feminist theories and the psychoanalytical, and literary studies.

Bodies alludes to a field in itself: the human species; in other words, our identity. It also refers to diversities; one of these related to sexes: a spectrum that is not restricted to the man-woman distinction. As well as polychromatic physiognomies. Combined with whatever is common and different, the bodies simultaneously express what is unique, because each incorporates the non-transferrable experiences of pleasure and pain, for example.

The body is a dialogical entity *par excellence*, as it condenses the relationship between different behavioural logics that, on occasion, can be antagonistic, such as those that come into play in oppositions like natural-social, individual-society, identity-otherness, self-other, public-private, etc., that don't tend to suppress each other mutually, but rather represent a dynamic and complex unit. This multidimensional quality of bodies, in which the alchemy of the living organism—associated, for example, with the reproductive, disease and aging processes—combined with the capacities and functions of psychic life—encompassing, among other traits, emotions, perceptions, imagination and cognition—is the condition that justifies the study of these processes from an interdisciplinary viewpoint.

Notwithstanding, the real argument for studying bodies as the guiding theme of this volume is that the corporal dimension also encompasses self-representations of one's body and their multiple aspects, as well as the significance attached to the diversity of bodies and their many component parts. These representations and significances are a socio-cultural expression and a concrete historical construct, in such a way that they not only reflect the tensions generated by the

interplay of oppositions previously mentioned, but also trigger them and reproduce them.

The study of bodies includes research into social issues of utmost importance, such as exclusion. Understanding attitudes towards what is different or strange is not only part of the brief assumed by social sciences, but also of the humanities, ethics and esthetics.

The confirmation that bodies, too, play a part in human affinities is another reason for their study from an integral and contextualized perspective, thus enabling coexistence processes based on respect and dignity. The aspiration that nothing human is strange to us can be accomplished in this case with an act of freedom: to choose the erotic, ludic and poetic experiences that solve, without detriment to anyone, one's own needs, aspirations and desires implies the possibility of recognizing, empathically, the right that others have to exercise, with that same purpose, their own creative ability.