

Bodies/emotions and the seekers of hope

By Adrian Scribano

With this issue, we celebrate the 50th issue of our journal. What does it mean to celebrate, in the Argentine and Latin American context, the publication of a journal reaching 50 issues? Quite simply, a miracle. However, since miracles are inexplicable, to paraphrase Karl Marx, we will have to delve into the hazy realm of the religion of sociology to understand what it means to produce a journal for 50 issues.

However, before proceeding with the explanation of what we have experienced with this number of RELACES issues, let us speak forcefully about the situation we are living through. In that sense, it is important, once again, to condemn all forms of imperialism, colonialism, and the suppression of life. In this regard, I recall, as a starting point for what we will write about RELACES, an anecdote we experienced as a collective many years ago. One of the editors of our book said to us, "Well, what a good book, but could you give us some good news?" To which I replied: "We do not have any good news. We do not deliver good news; we try to reflect, interpret, and change the world".

And that is why the logic of writing, at the same time, it may seem superfluous and, if you will, even puerile in contexts like the one we are experiencing in Argentina, Latin America, and the world; nonetheless, it compels us to speak the truth. Moreover, the truth is that there are wars right now, and these wars lead to experiences, to lives, to ways of life teetering between exposure, desolation, loss of meaning, and the logic of death. We must point them out; we must highlight their causes and origins in and through the craft of writing. That is why words fail us to express how we can feel joy in a world that seems to have no way out.

Moreover, going back to the anecdote, I think RELACES has always been—and that is why we emphasised it in the title—a seeker of hope, of hopeful practices, placing its hope in collective actions

that lead to plurality, to the common good, to another world, a different world.

The first thing this implies is the exercise of a creative praxis. A praxis that makes things happen, which is perseverance. Because there have been no fewer than 100 people involved throughout this time, from those who have done the layouts, granted access to the platforms, served as evaluators, and more. But what does "verifying that" mean? To be persistent is to verify that a purpose is being fulfilled over time.

Having a purpose implies not only remaining inert or only talking about oneself but also persisting in the development of a collective project like this one. Because, beyond the metaphors, a journal like this cannot be created without the collective. It involves recognising that a group of human beings has maintained an unwavering purpose throughout all these years, which implies the localisation and geospatiality of a will for change and transformation as an opposition to a social science comfortable with the rules provided by the mainstream up to that point—a will to go beyond what was acceptable, beyond what was considered good to reproduce. Fifty issues ago, we stopped being the mouthpieces of other voices.

Precisely this consistency, this constant presence, this being there, leads us to a characteristic of the Relaces Project: forging a theoretical identity that can be analysed in the interplay among the covers, the titles, and the presentations. Fortunately, we come to witness the identity of a discipline that has been systematically developing on the continent. There are other experiences, certainly! That of our dear friend Mauro Koury and others who came after.

However, what is important to keep in mind is that we started with an original and new project, and our identity has remained, grown, and transformed because no identity can endure without transformation, because no identity can transcend

the moment without the logic of movement. In that context, it is very important to emphasise that our proposal 50 issues ago is the same as the one we have now.

Opening a space for discussion from which bodies/emotions help us understand reality, and this body-bar-emotion relationship involves a way of feeling-thinking that is different from what it means to do sociology of bodies on the one hand and of emotions on the other. Of course, we have not exercised any policing over the articles published, and therefore, many articles do not share this identity. However, because of that diversity, because of that flow of acceptance of difference, we have managed to become what we are now: different.

Why? Because we have become, first and foremost, a community, and secondly, a collective of people who recognise others according to the logic of acceptance. It is interesting to note that the word 'dreaded' in the logic of publication quantification—acceptance—is here transformed into an indicator of hospitality. Here, articles and ideas have been received with a welcoming perspective, from the logic of working with others in their differences, and we have never rejected anything because of those differences. Yes, of course, we have rejected work for quality issues, inadequate presentation, and so on.

In this context, it is important to emphasise the journal's network nature. It began as a proposal from a group in Córdoba, which immediately expanded to include Córdoba and Villa María, the universities, obviously, and then extended to Córdoba, Villa María, and San Francisco. This network logic meant groups within groups, possibilities within possibilities, and, of course, mediations within mediations.

Then came the connection with ALAS, and what that connection allowed us to do was, through the Working Group on Bodies and Emotions of the Latin American Sociological Association, give it an international character. Alternatively, from the moment we were born, we were international because we had created the logic of the ALAS group in 2007. So, it was like a process of aggregating collective efforts that went from being echoes, distant resonances, to being built into these networks that, after many years, culminated in the current space we have in the International Sociological Association and our beloved, much-loved, and directly created network from RELACES: REDISS, the International Network of Sociology of Sensibilities.

This means that publishing a journal for 50 issues is not a matter of commerce, not a matter of commodifying academia, not a matter of, let us say, highly reformist reforms, but rather a commitment to developing a long-term project, allowing it to take root, to become grounded, in the exchanges between networks. Moreover, of course, other networks came to our aid—networks perhaps in anthropology, others more focused on health studies, disability studies, philosophy, and so on. Nevertheless, as I said before, we cultivated a sense of hospitality within this set of networks; they were welcomed and included in the reflections because the space was intended to be open, and it remains so.

The journal's format, the topics it addresses, the logic of the exchange, and the structure of the dialogue—both outward and inward—all point to something we have proposed from the beginning: that the sociology of bodies and emotions is critical. It is a sociology that, as I said at the beginning, does not seek to be a mouthpiece for other voices; it seeks to revive sociological thought with the logic of its critical approach, drawing on the Latin American classics, the European classics, and other regions. It engages with something important: the core of the 21st-century conflict, which began and continues to be the relationship between commodification and the modification of bodies/emotions as the basis of transglobal capitalism. This is very clearly seen today as an effect of this society of the owners' democracy, a society based on consumption, on immediate gratification through consumption, on the harsh realities of the world of "no," and on the ever-increasing exaggeration of the fortunes of the few. This has led the journal to demonstrate, from its inception and continuing to do so, that we are interested in something, as Herbert Marcuse said regarding his book *Eros and Civilisation*: "I am interested in psychological concepts because they have become political categories." This journal has demonstrated throughout these years and issues that bodies/emotions have become political categories. So, if one asks how to describe the relations of inequality, the coloniality, and the market structure of contemporary societies, surely one of the fundamental answers will be through, in, and by bodies/emotions. This journal has dedicated itself to this purpose in the form of both theoretical and praxeological critique, in terms of what we receive and transform, and in terms of what we share, what we do, and those who have made this possible.

Finally, in connection with the critical task of the Sociology of Bodies/Emotions and the publication itself, it is important to emphasise that making public involves one of the most crucial moments in constructing the commons. The journal makes public a set of processes that involve networks and constitute characteristics and chains with others, connections, in such a way that the public becomes a space for expression. And that is what the journal is: a public expression of an analysis rooted in bodies and emotions that allows us to understand that Latin American society continues to reproduce colonial logics, logics of suppressing autonomy, the logic of dependence on desires, and the logic of structuring new forms of imperialism.

However, beyond this, the journal also presents itself as a hopeful practice: a reflection of what we are trying to bring into dialogue, make public, and build together. It is about understanding that, from the very beginning—from the start of the colonial period, the rise of empires, and the consolidation of multiple forms of oppression—Latin America has been a continent permeated by hope. And, in any case, this history has made Latin Americans persistent seekers of hope.

This seeker of hope recognises the other in their moment of formation and vulnerability, and transforms them into a companion: in being with them, in sharing experiences, and inhabiting a time that resists, that also criticises, rebels, and questions capitalism as the only prevailing totality on the planet. And that's why we, the writers and analysts who seek hope, find some of it—what we can access, what we can offer—on the other side of the folds of class relations, positions, and forms of reproduction of intellectual, economic, and cultural capital: a space for the search for hope.

Since this is a somewhat different presentation from those we've had so far, and because it is celebratory, the articles in this issue will also be presented differently. But there is a central theme that begins with this critique of the Brazilian public education system, where it is very clear that the body/emotions theory, the body-bar-emotions perspective, is used as a social critique. And this is then reinforced by the logic of empowerment in feminist activism, which also opens us up to a dimension that has always been reflected in the journal, in one way or another: the history of the political form of bodies/emotions. And in that sense, it can become the central point for continuing to think about how this logic of providing perspectives on an individual level is possible; for

example, presenting what we were saying, the second article related to Mexico and feminism, the third article related to Eva Illouz's proposal and the attention given to the agents, to the people who begin to interrelate critique, the collective, embodied, the way of expressively presenting themselves to the world as feminist critique, and ultimately the healing practices of a therapeutic narrative. So, there, this creates tension within the logic of critique, the logic of constructing body-emotions, and the logic of presenting body-emotions in themselves as part of this critique. And we return, in any case, to the intention we mentioned earlier regarding the Sociology of Bodies and Emotions—for us, body-emotions—in terms of not denying the entry of other perspectives, inhabiting the world of critique from a pluralistic standpoint, and considering the dimensions of body-emotions that are becoming increasingly complex, increasingly structural and structural at the same time, this tension between what is inherent in the structure and what is constructed by individuals.

Where, for example, if one looks at the article comparing Ecuador and Cuba, their religious practices, their ways of feeling and thinking, and the logic of intercultural grammar, we will find this logic of ritual and the imaginary, this logic of celebration, so to speak. But in this sense, it must be emphasised that RELACES has demonstrated from the beginning what we have been proposing, and which many have joined in various ways: this perspective of bodies/emotions has its own logic for conducting creative-expressive research, for documenting, for developing a theoretical hermeneutics, a diverse hermeneutic praxis, and a new epistemology, or a new socio-bio-epistemology, as I proposed in my latest book, from the perspective of bodies and emotions. Moreover, this fourth work leads us to this analysis of practices with older adults, this work with people from other age groups, because, interestingly, in issue 50, we unintentionally constructed this intersectionality where, starting from the logic of quilombola spaces in Brazil, we began to examine the logic of bodies and emotions in fragility, but also in perceptions of quality of life.

So, the central point of these six articles that navigate Spanish and Portuguese is that, in the first part of this introduction and presentation, human beings have been epigenetically and phylogenetically constituted as seekers of hope. In critique, in observing the logic of oppression but also making it visible, because everything that is represented is transformed, everything that is observed no longer remains unalterable, everything that is observed and

published has already been transformed. So, one of the things that the journal, and what many of us have wanted from the beginning, has achieved is to put things in the public eye, to make them public, and to make public that which is not meant to be shown.

The politics of the whole senses is present in this 50th issue, from the gaze, from the body, song, the logic of wisdom, the logic of imagery, the logic of expressiveness, the logic of ages. Class, age, and gender cross the basic, enormously fundamental threshold of a journal that has already lasted (and will last more) 50 issues. Those of us who are here now will likely not be here anymore, but this logic will remain: from here we have a way of giving perspective to a set of practices that, while academia and the scientific system label them scientific research, for us they are also transformative praxis.

A transformative praxis that means not leaving things as they were before, even in the smallest, even in the smallest, even in the short term, as they say in popular parlance, even if it's, let's say, in the way we treat each other and even in the way we want to be treated. So much can be said, even about our own mistakes, much can be said even about our shortcomings, much can be said even about our qualities. However, surely something we must say is thank you to all those who have participated in these 50 issues, especially bearing in mind what we said at the beginning, consistency is the indicator of an identity that continues to search for itself and that is based on the drive that the discourse and practice of a scandalous love has to build communities that return and that represent human beings as seekers of hope.

After these words of thanks, we will briefly present the contents of this 50th issue of RELACES. First, Joziane Ferraz de Assis presents an article entitled "Public Education Policies in Brazil: What Subjects Are We Interested in Forming Today?", in which she reflects on the bodies and emotions that are constituted by the legal updates to secondary education in Brazil, Law No. 13.415/2017 (Brazil, 2017) and Law No. 14.945/2024 (Brazil, 2024), which comprise the New Secondary Education system.

Next, Tomasso Gravante and Daniela Serrano López write "Empowerment as a Biographical Impact in Feminist Activism: The Case of the Performance 'A Rapist in Your Path' in Mexico City." There, the authors analyse the empowerment

process experienced by the women who participated in three performances of "A Rapist in Your Path" in Mexico City in 2019, specifically reflecting on anger, indignation, and hope.

The third article is titled "Therapeutic Narrative in Multi-Level Marketing Companies: An Analysis of Emotional Capitalism from the Perspective of Eva Illouz." In it, Jorge David Castellanos Nieves, using Illouz's theory of emotional capitalism, analyses the discourses of eight prominent Latin American leaders in multi-level marketing and direct sales companies.

Fourth, Cesar Salinas Ramos's article, "SentisPraxisPensares: Religious-Popular Festivals in the Construction of Social Subjectivities in the Pilgrimage of Our Lady of El Cisne-Ecuador and in the Parrandas de Remedios-Cuba," proposes a comparative reading of the Pilgrimage of Our Lady of El Cisne in Ecuador and the Parrandas de Remedios in Cuba, understood as privileged settings for the construction of social subjectivity. Through an experimental, multi-sited ethnography, the work explores the symbolic frameworks that emerge around sacred images, rituals, and festive expressions, leading to a reflection on the relationships among feelings, praxis, and thought.

For their part, Claudio Luis Bio and Leonardo Daniel Marsico, in their article "Emotional and Subjective Narratives of People with Disabilities: Cases of Adapted Skiing in Bariloche (Argentina) at the Beginning of the 21st Century," recover emotional narratives of people with disabilities who participated in adapted skiing experiences in Bariloche. Using a lived-experience approach, the article shows how these practices not only transform relationships with one's own body and environment but also reconfigure social bonds, perceptions, and horizons of possibility, both for participants and their close circles.

Sixth, the work of Iago José Freire Silva and collaborators examines the sociodemographic determinants and health conditions that affect the quality of life of elderly quilombola people in Brazil, in their article titled "Sociodemographic Factors and Health Conditions as Determinants of the Quality of Life of Elderly Quilombola People." A quantitative study reveals the complex interactions among frailty, depressive symptoms, and perceived well-being, highlighting the importance of considering structural and contextual factors in analysing the living conditions of historically marginalised populations.

Finally, the seventh article, by Giulia Salzano, "Sociology of Empathy: A Map," focuses on the central role empathy has acquired in the social sciences. Through a review of contemporary sociology, the

work reconstructs the main theoretical perspectives that have addressed this phenomenon, highlighting the contributions of authors such as Candace Clark, Arlie Hochschild, and Natalia Ruiz-Junco. The author proposes understanding empathy as a socially situated process, whose distribution, forms, and scope can be analysed from a cartographic perspective.

Lastly, María Victoria Mairano and Francisco Falconier present two book reviews. The first refers to the compilation “Sensibilities and Emotion on a Trans-globalisation Era” by Adrian Scribano, Silvia Cataldi, and Fabricio Martire, and the second to the book “Human Beings and Their Images: Imagination, Mimesis, Performativity” by Christoph Wulf.

Finally, we thank the authors, editorial board, editorial team, and all those who have submitted their manuscripts for joining us over these years of RELACES. We remind you that the call for articles is permanently open.

We must reiterate that, starting with issue 15 of RELACES, we began publishing up to two articles in English per issue. As we have been emphasising for some time now, at RELACES, the entire Editorial Team and the Editorial Board believe it is essential to consider each article in our journal as a node that allows us to continue along the path of dialogue and exchange.