

Plurality as a problem, plurality as a solution. Materialities, identities, and bodies/emotions

By Adrian Scribano

This issue is plotted around plurality, gender identities, in pandemic emotions, of body/emotion practices, claims of identities, writings and corporality.

When José Martí wrote the moral and political challenge for Latin America that our identity is both our problem and our solution (Scribano, 2004), he bequeathed us a powerful analytical tool, which, to put it in words closer to current Social Sciences, can be called immanent criticism (*sensu* Critical Theory¹)

The conflictual nodes of the present refer to previous conflict networks and prophesy those of the future (*sensu* Melucci²) it is in this context that the production, management and reproduction of plurality is one of the basic nodes of the conflict matrices that, inherited from the last century, it has been redefined in these first twenty years of the 21st century.

Since the beginning of 2020 in pandemic contexts and the vertiginous expansion of the virtual/mobile/digital world, plurality is a challenge, but also a resource that marks the political economy of morals, the politics of sensitivities and emotional ecologies. Genders, ethnicities, ages, and classes claim plural and intersectional identities.

We have recently published various approaches to emotions in different continents³ and especially in Latin America⁴ where it is possible to see that the claim of plurality is a call to the elaboration of multiple and complex emotional ecologies.

An example was constituted by Luther

1 Robert J. Antonio *The British Journal of Sociology* Vol. 32, No. 3 (Sep., 1981), pp. 330-345

2 Melucci, Alberto (1989) *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Edited by John Keane and Paul Mier. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

3 Scribano A. 'Other emotions: A global look at the politics of sensitivities.' *International Sociology*. June 2021. doi: 10.1177 / 02685809211018080

4 Scribano A. Emotions and politics of sensitivities in Latin America. *International Sociology*. June 2021. doi: 10.1177 / 0268580921994515

Martin King who argued:

“In a multiracial society, no group can make it alone. It is a myth to believe that the Irish, the Italians and the Jews—the ethnic groups that Black Power advocates cite as justification for their views—rose to power through separatism. It is true that they stuck together. But their group unity was always enlarged by joining in alliances with other groups such as political machines and trade unions. To succeed in a pluralistic society, and an often hostile one at that, the Negro obviously needs organized strength, but that strength will only be effective when it is consolidated through constructive alliances with the majority group.” (King, 2010: 51)

It is visible how “force” is the acceptance of plurality itself where, being with the diverse, generates the power of the acceptance of geometry between the multiple and the different.

Plurality is nothing more than one way of the common through the recognition and response between different people, but in interrelation, as Mounier affirmed:

“The nature of the person now discloses its fundamental tension. It is constituted by a double movement, contradictory in appearance but in fact dialectical, on the one hand towards the affirmation of personal absolutes that resist any limitation, and on the other towards the creation of a universal union of the world of persons” (Mounier, 1962: 29)

The co-constitution of the plural involves a radical interrelation between intertwined autonomies, each “part” occupies in the dialectic and geometry of the person (individual, actor, agent, subject, and author) a space that is shared from own identity.

The plural in bodies/emotions is a modality of autonomies that are interrelated as a platform for a being-in-the-world shared in diversity, difference, and multiplicity.

Plurality as a process and plurality, as a result, implies that beyond diverse and different existences, human beings are always on the brink of inequality resulting from the privatization of difference in favor of a few. Private implies the privations from which it comes, private is the result of the consecration of a unilateral appropriation. Plurality is an antidote, at least partially, to inequality.

Plurality as a multiplicity of options opens the door to shared bodies/emotions without appropriation or impairment; It is an action that transcends the reproduction of the given, guiding the interrelationships towards multiple person geometries.

In this sense, plurality is by definition de-colonizing, plurality is related to resistance to dependency, rejection of occupation and establishes the horizon for a critical hermeneutic of skins, fluids and tones of the possible senses of autonomous bodies/emotions. . Anti-colonial social practices are nurtured and threaded in plurality as a feature of doing and feeling-thinking, as a characteristic of policies of different sensibilities based on the co-experience of the diverse in a common being.

There is a direct connection between the plurality of experiences and experiences of the body, emotions and the constitution of different emotional ecologies characterized by three factors: first, in each politics of sensitivities, a set of emotions are constituted connected by family airs, practice kinships, emotional proximity and range. Second, this set of emotions constitutes a reference system for each of these emotions in a particular geopolitical and geocultural context that give them a specific valence. Third, they are groups of feeling practices whose particular experience regarding an element of life can only be understood in its collective context.

It is in this framework that here we invoke plurality insofar as it involves an indeterminate and complex game between similarity and difference, between particular and universal, between the personal and the communal.

From the perspective of similarity and difference, plurality involves work on processes, objects and personal geometries that work/operate with each other and with other geometries by proximity and distance of characters, that is, there is a dialectic of the person what a radical relationality implies between the different positions that are acquired in the geometry of the interaction according to features of the living beings that participate in it.

From the perspective of the particular and the universal, plurality signals in the direction of the constitution of the particular with marks of the

universal and the elaboration of the universal as a result of particular emphasis or particularity. In this sense, plurality is both part and whole, it is point and line, and puzzle and piece at the same time.

In another direction, plurality implies what I know is as a person and what the person is the result of the common, plurality is a call to an identity whose response is already in the community, in the collective, and in the societal.

From these three perspectives of plurality, it is possible to understand how emotional bodies become a source of order and conflict, a locus of domination and rebellion. Plurality is a space of dispute for autonomy and identity recognition, which is why it is both the problem and the solution.

The first writing is proposed by **Oliva López Sánchez (Mexico)** and **Alba Luz Robles Mendoza (Mexico)**, entitled **“Socio-emotional processes of university students during remote schooling due to the emergency measures of COVID 19”**. The article works on different feelings related to the migration from face-to-face to virtual schooling, within the framework of the measures of the federal social distancing program in Mexico “Stay at home.” Faced with the COVID 19 contingency and the metamorphoses in the education processes, we work with university students and their feelings such as anxiety, anguish, stress, uncertainty and fear. The writing starts from “a sociocultural perspective of emotions, the features of social interactions and cultural meanings that are generating emotional alterations in university students are identified [...] The analysis allows us to understand that anxiety, anguish, stress, uncertainty and the fear reported by the students are not maladaptive responses that reflect a psychological vulnerability, but are due to micro, meso and macrosocial conditions exacerbated by the health emergency”.

Raúl Antón Cuadrado (Argentina) and **Valeria Levratto (Spain)** propose the second paper in this issue of RELACES, entitled **“The construction of digital identity in social networks: a quantitative study in Argentina and Spain. The image as a determining element in digital identity and action”**. The article analyzes the construction of virtual identities through the exploration of the information present in the profiles of users of virtual environments, identifying the ways in which different elements in the construction of the digital footprint, identity and action acquire importance in social networks. . The article concludes that “it is important to emphasize how our identities on the web are the sum of each trace that we produce about ourselves and that they do not come only from our image but also from the

written information that we leave and that helps others to identify, recognize and understand each other”.

“The origin of the heterosexists gods: theories of the body in Descartes and Hobbes” proposed by **José Luis Espericueta (Mexico)** is the third article. One of the fundamental purposes of the writing is to explore the ways in which some philosophical foundations have served directly or indirectly to exclude and oppress dissident identities. “For this, the main characteristics of the theories of the human body in the thinking of the fathers of modernity René Descartes and Thomas Hobbes will be analyzed under three points: the role of the body in the framework of each philosophical system, its particular treatment and the consequences derived from each type of approach”. The writing concludes that bodies are the nucleus by and from which power relations are based, constituting, in other words, places where true battlefields are gestated.

The fourth article is by **Jimena Silva Segovia (Chile)** and **Estefany Castillo Ravanal (Chile)** and is entitled **“Study of the commercialized emotions that circulate among sex workers, male miners and their partners, in the mining culture of Antofagasta, Chile”**. The purpose of the paper is to explore the emotions present in mining workers linked to the large copper mining in Antofagasta, their partners and sex workers. The authors carry out an analysis based on conducting interviews and recover the positions of power in which the participants find themselves. The article concludes that “as a relevant finding, we find that a predominant emotion in the participants of the triad is loneliness”, either as a motive in the search for companionship and sexual services, as a way of experiencing the domestic space, marital ties, care and sexual desire, and / or as a search for company, affection and pleasure.

Ponce León, Juan José (Ecuador), proposes the fifth article in this issue **“Genesis of animalistic subjectivities: emotions, bodies and inter-species relations”**. The writing is positioned from the field of Critical Animal Studies and investigates the configuration of the ethical-political subject of anti-species animalisms in Ecuador, taking bodies / emotions as the nodal analytical element. The author concludes that “the subject is transformed through the daily bond, defense, protection and loss that he experiences in his life trajectory with other animals. The emotions that transverse this socio-affective process are catalysts of this subjective transformation: guilt, sadness, pain, among others, are essential to start a permanent and unfinished process of constitution. Traumatic experiences with

animals make it possible to sharpen the alchemical process of subjectivation.”

“When the word intertwines with movement: it is not just melee” is the sixth article in this issue of RELACES and is proposed by **Santiago Battezzati (Argentina)**. The article recovers an ethnographic work with students of theater acting and problematizes the importance and usefulness of the word in the learning of corporal practices. The article gives “account of certain uses of the word of the teachers, which overlap and occur together with the movement and performance of the students. Unlike the conceptual or propositional word, teachers make use of certain words that intertwine particularly well with the movement that is being observed, and that have only just made sense in that specific context [...] Specifically to these uses of the word as they are the epitome of a way in which word and movement are constantly intertwined and superimposed in the learning of acting”.

The last article in this issue is proposed by **Tyagi, Ritu (India)** and is entitled **“Women Bodies and Emotions in Writings by Dalit Women Writers in India”**. Ritu Tyagi recovers a series of texts where different Dalit authors describe their bodies through an autobiographical exercise. The bodies of Dalit writers are presented and approached in different ways that dispute the installed senses, which subvert the docile image historically situated on their bodies. The writers revalue the different aspects of the human experience, starting from a journey through their bodily / emotional experiences. The article concludes that “Dalit women writing presents a counter narrative in which women tend to occupy subject positions and subverts the androcentric script in a manner that provides agency to women characters. But that is not all, Dalit women writing locates itself at the crossroads of gender and caste politics and stands at the vantage point from where writers can investigate the conjuncture of caste and gender in order to challenge the systemic violence inflicted by Brahmanical patriarchy on women in general”.

The issue ends with two significant reviews. The first of them proposed by **Fabio Lopes Alves, Claudia Barcelos de Moura Abreu and Tânia Maria Rechia Schroeder (Brazil)** is entitled **“The pandemic effects in daily life of brazilians: a view from the sociology and anthropology of emotions”** and analyzes the recent publication **Koury, Mauro Guilherme Pinheiro (org.) “Pandemic times: reflections on Brazil”**. The second of them reviews the recent book by **Andrieu, B. e Nobrega, TP “Emergir na Natureza: Ensaios de Ecologia Corporal”** and is made by **Felipe Freddo Breunig, Camila Barbosa Campelo**

and **Maria Isabel Brandão de Souza Mendes (Brazil)** and is entitled **“Being body with nature, being nature with body”**.

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

We must reiterate that from issue 15 of RELACES we began to publish up to two articles in English per issue. As we have been reiterating for a long time: at RELACES, its entire Editorial Team and the entire Editorial Board believe it is necessary to take up each article in our journal as a node that allows us to continue the path of dialogue and scientific/academic exchange as a social activity and policy to achieve a freer and more autonomous society. It is in the above context that we want to thank all those who trust us as a vehicle to initiate this dialogue.

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